

Week Ahead

Legislative Focus: Budget and Appropriations Hearings

This week the House and Senate continue a full slate of almost 30 appropriations hearings, and testimony from Attorney General Jeff Sessions before Senate Select Intelligence Committee on Tuesday. Today, the Senate will convene to continue consideration of sanctions on Iran's ballistic missile program (S. 722), and later vote to confirm the assistant secretary of Defense. The House convenes at 2 p.m. for consideration of 10 energy related bills under suspension of the rules. On Tuesday, the House will consider two bills including, H.R. 2581 on verifying recipients of health insurance premium tax credit or subsidies, and is expected to vote on two more bills on taxes within Obamacare (H.R. 1215, H.R. 2579) later this week. Later today the House Military Construction-VA appropriations subcommittee will mark up the first FY18 appropriations bill.

Senate Floor: Convenes at 4 p.m. to continue consideration of S. 722 on sanctions on those aiding Iran's ballistic missile development. At 5:30 p.m., the Senate is expected to vote on the nomination of Kenneth P. Rapuano to be an assistant secretary of Defense. The Senate is then expected to hold a voice vote on the motion to proceed on the sanctions bill.

House Floor: The House convenes at 2 p.m. for consideration of 10 bills under suspension of the rules.

Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee

- Full committee hearing on "Agricultural Research: Perspectives on Past and Future Successes for the 2018 Farm Bill." Thursday, June 15 at 9:30 a.m.

Senate Appropriations Committee

- Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies hearing on the proposed budget request and justification for FY2018 for the Justice Department. Witnesses include Deputy AG Rod Rosenstein. Tuesday, June 13 at 10:00 a.m.
- Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies hearing on the budget estimates and justification for FY2018 for the Agriculture Department. Witnesses include Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue. Tuesday, June 13 at 10:30 a.m.
- Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on the proposed budget estimates and justification for FY2018 for the Transportation Department. Witnesses include Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao. Tuesday, June 13 at 2:30 p.m.

- Defense Subcommittee hearing on the proposed budget estimates and justification for FY2018 for the Defense Department. Witnesses include Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford and Secretary of Defense James Mattis. Wednesday, June 14 at 10:30 a.m.
- Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on proposed budget estimates and justification for FY2018 for the Health and Human Services Department. Witnesses include Secretary of Health and Human Services Tom Price. Thursday, June 15 at 10 a.m.

Senate Armed Services Committee

- Full committee hearing on "Department of Defense Budget Posture." Witnesses include Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford and Secretary of Defense James Mattis. Tuesday, June 13 at 9:30 a.m.

Senate Budget Committee

- Full committee hearing on the president's proposed budget request for FY2018 and revenue proposals. Tuesday, June 13 at 10 a.m.

Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee

- Full committee hearing on "Paving the Way for Self-Driving Vehicles." Wednesday, June 14 at 10 a.m.

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

- Water and Power Subcommittee hearing on pending legislation, including S.677, the "Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act"; S.685, the "Clean Water for Rural Communities"; S.930, the "Western Area Power Administration Transparency Act"; S.1012, the "New Mexico Drought Preparedness Act". Wednesday, June 14 at 2 p.m.
- Full committee hearing on proposed budget request for FY2018 for the Forest Service. Thursday, June 15 at 10 a.m.

Senate Environment and Public Works Committee

- Full committee hearing on the nominations to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission; and Susan Bodine to be assistant EPA administrator of the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. Tuesday, June 13 at 10 a.m.

Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee

- Full committee hearing on "The Cost of Prescription Drugs: How the Drug Delivery System Affects What Patients Pay." Tuesday, June 13 at 10 a.m.

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

- Full committee markup to vote on the nomination of Brock Long to be administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Monday, June 12 at 5:30 p.m.

Senate Judiciary Committee

- Full committee markup on pending nominations, including Lee Cissna to be director of Citizenship and Immigration Services. Thursday, June 15 at 10 a.m.

Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee

- Full committee hearing on "Tax Reform: Removing Barriers to Small Business Growth." Wednesday, June 14 at 3 p.m.

Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee

- Full committee hearing on "FY2018 Budget for Veterans' Programs and FY2019 Advance Appropriations Requests." Wednesday, June 14 at 2:30 p.m.

House Appropriations Committee

- Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee hearing on the Treasury Department's budget. Witnesses include Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. Monday, June 12 at 4 p.m.
- Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Subcommittee markup of the FY2018 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill - Subcommittee Draft. Monday, June 12 at 7 p.m.
- Homeland Security Subcommittee hearing on the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and Customs and Border Protection FY2018 budget request. Tuesday, June 13 at 10 a.m.
- Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on the "Department of Justice Budget." Witnesses include Deputy AG Rod Rosenstein. Tuesday, June 13 at 2 p.m.
- State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Subcommittee hearing on the Treasury Department's budget for international programs. Witnesses include Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin. Wednesday, June 14 at 10 a.m.
- Defense Subcommittee hearing on the Defense Department budget. Witnesses include Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford and Secretary of Defense James Mattis. Thursday, June 15 at 9 a.m.
- Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on the Transportation Department's budget. Witnesses include Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao. Thursday, June 15 at 9:30 a.m.
- Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on the Environmental Protection Agency's budget. Witnesses include EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. Thursday, June 15 at 1 p.m.

House Armed Services Committee

- Full committee hearing on "The FY2018 National Defense Authorization Budget Request from the Department of Defense." Witnesses include Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford and Secretary of Defense James Mattis. Monday, June 12 at 7 p.m.

House Education and the Workforce Committee

- Higher Education and Workforce Development Subcommittee hearing on "Helping Americans Get Back to Work: Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act." Thursday, June 15 at 10 a.m

House Energy and Commerce Committee

- Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection Subcommittee hearing on "Disrupter Series: Update on IOT (Internet of Things) Opportunities and Challenges." Tuesday, June 13 at 10:30 a.m.

- Energy Subcommittee hearing on "States' Perspectives on Energy Security Planning, Emergency Preparedness, and State Energy Programs." Wednesday, June 14 at 10 a.m.
- Health Subcommittee hearing on "Examining the Extension of Safety Net Health Programs." Wednesday, June 14 at 10:15 a.m.

House Homeland Security Committee

- Full committee markup of H.R.2825, the "Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act of 2017." Wednesday, June 14 at 11 a.m.

House Natural Resources Committee

- Federal Lands Subcommittee hearing on the "Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017." Thursday, June 15 at 10 a.m.

Michigan Newsmakers

Upper Michigan Source—June 7th, 2017

Bipartisan Soo Locks Modernization Act Introduced

U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow, Representative Jack Bergman, U.S. Senator Gary Peters, and Representatives Sandy Levin, Fred Upton, Bill Huizenga, Tim Walberg, Dan Kildee, Mike Bishop, Debbie Dingell, Brenda Lawrence, John Moolenaar, Dave Trott, and Paul Mitchell today introduced the bipartisan Soo Locks Modernization Act.

Latest Developments

President Trump Shares Infrastructure Goals

President Trump has unveiled new goals for his administration's infrastructure initiative, breaking down the proposed $200 billion in new federal funding. Under the plan, President Trump promises $100 billion for local prioritization of infrastructure needs, $25 billion for rural infrastructure, and $15 billion for transformative projects. The administration has stated that the $100 billion would be sent to state and local governments to spend on their own projects, with little input from the federal government. While the new breakdown does not provide a timeline for when states would receive funding, the President's FY18 budget asked for $200 billion in federal spending over 10 years. For the first time the administration has also included a program to put 1 million apprentices to work within two years, as a part of the infrastructure initiative. Additionally, in a speech at the Department of Transportation on Friday, President Trump called once again for streamlining the project delivery and environmental review process, urging reducing the average permit process from 10 years to no more than 2 years and developing a council charged with helping project managers through the permitting process. The administration is expected to share a more details infrastructure plan in the upcoming weeks or months.

Wildfire Disaster Funding Act Reintroduced

On Thursday Congressmen Mike Simpson (R-ID) and Kurt Schrader (D-OR) reintroduced H.R. 2862, the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, which would change the process for funding wildfire suppression. Currently, Congress budgets for wildfire suppression based on the rolling ten-year average of wildfire costs. The administration's FY18 budget request includes fire suppression funding at this level. When these funds are insufficient, however, agencies must borrow funds from non-fire accounts to pay for fire suppression,

which limits resources for other purposes. Under the proposed legislation, wildfires would be treated like other natural disasters when appropriated wildfire funds are exhausted. The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act was previously introduced in the 113th (H.R. 3992 & S. 1875) and 114th (H.R. 167 & S. 235) Congresses and attracted bipartisan cosponsors. None advanced out of committee. A discharge petition in 2014 failed to attract the required signatures.

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