

Week Ahead

Legislative Focus: Energy Debate Begins in the Senate, House Returns Next Week
As Capitol Hill continues to thaw from Winter Storm Jonas, the Senate is in session while the House is on recess through next week. On Tuesday morning, the Senate met briefly and completed the Rule 14 process for S. 2464, an abortion-related bill, allowing the legislation to bypass committee action and go directly to the Senate floor. Debate begins today on S. 2012, The Energy Policy Modernization Act, which would permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund and require infrastructure upgrades to ensure power grid reliability and security. The Senate will vote also at 5:30 p.m. on the nomination of John Michael Vazquez as U.S. district judge for New Jersey.

Congressional Democrats are on their annual policy retreat in Baltimore tonight through Friday.

Senate Floor: Convenes at 11 a.m. to begin debate on S. 2012 and is expected to hold a vote at 5:30 p.m. on a judicial nomination.

House Floor: In recess until next week, reconvening Monday, Feb. 1.

Senate Armed Services Committee

- Emerging Threats and Capabilities subcommittee hearing titled “Counterterrorism Strategy: Understanding ISIL.” Wednesday, January 27 at 2:30 p.m.

Senate Finance Committee

- Full committee hearing on "Helping Americans Prepare for Retirement: Increasing Access, Participation and Coverage in Retirement Savings Plans." Thursday, January 28 at 9:30 a.m.

Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee

- Full committee hearing titled “Generic Drug User Fee Amendments: Accelerating Patient Access to Generic Drugs.” Thursday, January 28 at 10 a.m.

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

- Investigations subcommittee hearing titled "Adequacy of the Department of Health and Human Services' Efforts to Protect Unaccompanied Alien Children from Human Trafficking. Thursday, January 28 at 10 a.m.

Senate Judiciary Committee

- Full committee hearing on the impact of heroin and prescription drug abuse. **Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin** will testify before the committee. Wednesday, January 27 at 10 a.m.
- Full committee markup of S. 247, the Expatriate Terrorist Act; S. 2040, Justice against Sponsors of Terrorism Act; S. 483, Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act; HR 1428, Judicial Redress Act. Thursday, January 28 at 10 a.m.

Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee

- Full committee hearing on "Reauthorization of the SBIR/STTR Programs - The Importance of Small Business Innovation to National and Economic Security." Thursday, January 28 at 10 a.m.

Michigan Newsmakers

Sen. Debbie Stabenow

Business Insider—January 20th, 2016

Senate Bill Aims to Make School Lunches Tastier

School meals could become a bit tastier under legislation approved by a Senate committee.

Latest Developments

States Ask Supreme Court to Stay Clean Power Plan Rule

Yesterday a coalition of 25 states led by West Virginia petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court to stay the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Power Plan (CPP) implementation as it makes its way through the courts. The petition follows last week's decision by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals to not issue a stay while it hears the dispute on an expedited schedule, with oral arguments scheduled for June 2. Under the CPP, states are required to submit a compliance plan for how they will reduce carbon emissions or an initial plan with a two-year extension request by Sept. 6, 2016. The Obama administration and EPA will have the option of responding to the stay application before the Court acts.

Interior Proposes Rule to Curb Methane From Natural Gas Production

Last Friday the Department of the Interior proposed a monthly cap on the amount of methane that natural gas drillers can burn off from their wells on public lands. The rule, which the Bureau of Land Management estimates will eliminate up to 4.2 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, would mostly apply to procurers of natural gas on public lands in Western states. A fact sheet on the proposed rule can be found here.