Weekly Legislative Update
Week of April 7, 2014

Congressional Outlook

Week of April 7th

The House and Senate are in session this week, but leave at the end of the week until April 28. The House will take up its Fiscal Year 2015 budget resolution, introduced last week by Budget Chair Paul Ryan (R-WI) and two budget reform bills. The House Appropriations Committee will mark up draft Military Construction-VA and Legislative Branch Appropriations bills and funding allocations for other spending bills. The House Ways and Means Committee plans a hearing tomorrow on permanent extension of business tax breaks. The Senate Finance Committee voted last to revive almost all of the 55 tax breaks that expired on December 31, extending them through the end of 2015. House Ways and Means Chairman Dave Camp (R-MI) said he wants to focus on making some provisions permanent and repealing others.

The Senate will consider extending jobless aid this week. A five-month extension is expected to pass in the Senate on Monday with some bipartisan support. However, House Republicans indicated Friday that they won't follow suit, at least not on the Senate bill as written. The Senate will also consider an equal pay measure under which employers would face tougher standards when defending themselves against claims of sex discrimination in wages, and could be required to pay punitive damages under the measure. The bill also would establish a grant program focused on negotiation skills for women.

Week in Review

Ryan Budget Wins Committee Backing, Leadership Confident Plan Will Pass House Vote

On Wednesday, the House Budget Committee passed the House FY 2015 budget proposal, setting the stage for a House vote on the plan this week. GOP leaders say they are confident they have the votes to pass the proposal when it goes to the floor, however, there is concern that
some Republicans will vote against it. With 217 votes needed for passage, and no Democratic support expected, House leadership cannot afford to lose more than 16 Republican votes. In 2012 and 2013, 10 Republicans voted against Ryan's budget proposals. For more, [click here](#).

**Permanent Extension of Tax Breaks Considered in House Ways and Means**

The House Ways and Means Committee has scheduled a hearing for tomorrow on the permanent extension of business tax breaks. The Senate Finance Committee voted April 3 to revive almost all of the 55 tax breaks that expired on Dec. 31, extending them through the end of 2015 and providing benefits for wind energy, U.S.-based multinational corporations and motor sports track owners. Ways and Means Chairman Dave Camp has said he wants to focus on making some provisions permanent and repealing others. [Click here](#) to read more from Bloomberg's Richard Rubin.

**Judge Vacates EPA's Water Transfer Rule, Opening Door to Permit Mandate**

A federal judge on March 28 overturned the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) rule exempting some water transfers from Clean Water Act (CWA) permit requirements because the agency misinterpreted the law's requirements, a ruling that if not stayed could require new and ongoing transfer operations to seek permits or face enforcement actions. For more, [click here](#).

**Four House Bills Introduced to Update the Endangered Species Act**

House Natural Resources Committee Chairman Doc Hastings (R-WA), Rep. Cynthia Lummis (R-WY), Rep. Randy Neugebauer (R-TX), and Rep. Bill Huizenga (R-MI) have introduced four bills to improve and update the Endangered Species Act (ESA), all of which focus on transparency, process and litigation cost, and scientific data used in the listing process. Notably, the bills are supported by all of the Members of the ESA Congressional Working Group (all Republicans) and are based on the recommendations and findings of their recent report and input from a broad array of stakeholders, including the Western Governors' Association. For more, [click here](#).

**Court Upholds FWS Settlement on Hundreds of ESA Listings**

A federal court in Washington, D.C., last week upheld a pair of settlements between the Obama Administration and environmental groups over the acceleration of Endangered Species Act (ESA) decisions, concluding that a homebuilders' coalition that sued over the settlements lacked standing to challenge them. The decision marked the fourth time in a row federal courts have determined groups have no basis for challenging the legal agreement signed with WildEarth Guardians and the Center for Biological Diversity setting deadlines for the Fish and Wildlife Service to issue final Endangered Species Act listing decisions for more than 250 candidate species by the end of September 2016.

**Feinstein Broadens Drought Bill to Attract GOP Support**

Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) has reintroduced a bill to deal with California's historic drought with a broader focus and a new, bipartisan lineup of co-sponsors. The bill, S. 2198 introduced last week, drops "California" from the title to become the "Emergency Drought Relief Act of 2014."
The new version also adds Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and Sens. Dean Heller (R-NV) and Jay Rockefeller (D-WV) as co-sponsors, alongside original sponsors Sens. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Ron Wyden (D-OR). For more, click here.

### Congressional Schedule

#### Monday, April 7
- House Appropriations Committee's Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "American Indian and Alaskan Native Public and Outside Witness." (Part One)
- House Appropriations Committee's Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "American Indian and Alaskan Native Public and Outside Witness." (Part Two)
- House Appropriations Committee's Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee hearing on "FY2015 Budget Hearing - Internal Revenue Service (IRS)."
- House Energy and Commerce Committee's Health Subcommittee hearing on "Improving Predictability and Transparency in DEA and FDA Regulation," to review H.R.4299, the "Improving Regulatory Transparency for New Medical Therapies Act"; H.R.4069, the "Ensuring Patient Access and Effective Drug Enforcement Act"; and H.R.4250, the "Sunscreen Innovation Act."
- House Rules Committee meeting to formulate a rule on H.Con.Res.96, establishing the budget for the United States Government for FY2015 and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for FY2016 through FY2024.

#### Tuesday, April 8
- House Appropriations Committee's Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "American Indian and Alaskan Native Public and Outside Witness." (Part Three)
- House Veterans' Affairs Committee's Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee markup of H.R.3593, the "VA Construction Assistance Act of 2013"; H.R.4261, the "Gulf War Health Research Reform Act of 2014"; H.R.4281, the "Protecting Business Opportunities for Veterans Act of 2014"; H.R.4370, to improve the information security of the Department of Veterans Affairs by directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out certain actions to improve the transparency and the governance of the information security program of the Department; H.R.4374, to amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to adopt and implement a standard identification protocol for use in the tracking and procurement of biological implants by the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R.4356, the "Department of Veterans Affairs Information Security Protection Act."
- House Appropriations Committee's Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "FY2015 Budget Hearing - USDA Field Agencies."
- House Homeland Security Committee's Border and Maritime Security Subcommittee hearing on "Authorizing Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs
Enforcement.

- House Ways and Means Committee hearing on "Benefits of Permanent Tax Policy for America's Job Creators."
- House Education and the Workforce Committee markup of H.R.4366, the "Strengthening Education through Research Act"; and H.R.10, the "Success and Opportunity through Quality Charter Schools Act."
- House Energy and Commerce Committee's Health Subcommittee hearing on "Examining the Implementation of the Tobacco Control Act."
- House Appropriations Committee's Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "FY2015 Budget Hearing - Department of Education."
- House Appropriations Committee's Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "American Indian and Alaskan Native Public and Outside Witness." (Part Four)
- House Natural Resources Committee's Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee hearing on "American Energy Jobs: Opportunities for Women and Minorities."
- House Natural Resources Committee's Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs Subcommittee hearing on H.R.187, to correct the boundaries of the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit L06, Topsail, North Carolina; H.R.277, to revise the boundaries of John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Sachuest Point Unit RI-04P, Easton Beach Unit RI-05P, Almy Pond Unit RI-06, and Hazards Beach Unit RI-07 in Rhode Island; H.R.1810, to revise the boundaries of John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Gasparilla Island Unit in Florida; H.R.1811, to remove from the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System areas included in Florida System Unit P-16, and for other purposes; H.R.2057, to remove from the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System the areas comprising Bay County Unit P-31P in Florida; H.R.3226, to remove from the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System certain properties in South Carolina; H.R.3227, to remove from the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System certain properties in South Carolina; H.R.3572, to revise the boundaries of certain John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System units in North Carolina; H.R.4222, to correct the boundaries of John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System in Gulf County Florida.
- House Ways and Means Committee's Health Subcommittee hearing on "Treasury Department's Final Employer Mandate and Employer Reporting Requirements Regulations."
- House Veterans' Affairs Committee's Economic Opportunity Subcommittee markup of H.R.2942, to reestablish the Professional Certification and Licensure Advisory Committee of the Department of Veterans Affairs; H.R.3056, the "Warriors' Peer-Outreach Pilot Program Act"; H.R.3614, the "Military Skills to Careers Act"; H.R.4037, the "Improving Veterans' Access to Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Act of 2014"; H.R.4038, the "Veterans Benefits Administration Information Technology Improvement Act of 2014"; H.R.4147, the "Student Veterans IT Upgrade Act"; H.R.4150, the "Veterans Employment and Training Service Longitudinal Study Act of 2014"; and H.R.4151, the "Veterans Education Survey Act of 2014."
- Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee markup of S.1294, the "Tennessee Wilderness Act."
• Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee hearing on "Advanced Biofuels: Creating Jobs and Lower Prices at the Pump."
• Senate Finance Committee hearing on "Protecting Taxpayers from Incompetent and Unethical Return Preparers.
• Senate Budget Committee hearing on "Supporting Broad-Based Economic Growth and Fiscal Responsibility through a Fairer Tax Code."
• Senate Judiciary Committee markup of S.1720, the "Patent Transparency and Improvements Act of 2013."

Wednesday, April 9
• Joint Economic Committee hearing on "The Economic Impact of Increased Natural Gas Production."
• House Veterans’ Affairs Committee hearing on "A Continued Assessment of Delays in VA Medical Care and Preventable Veteran Deaths."
• House Homeland Security Committee hearing on "The Boston Marathon Bombings, One Year On: A Look Back to Look Forward."
• House Science, Space, and Technology Committee Research and Technology Subcommittee hearing on "Prizes to Spur Innovation and Technology Breakthroughs."
• House Energy and Commerce Committee's Energy and Power Subcommittee markup of H.R.6, the "Domestic Prosperity and Global Freedom Act," to provide for expedited approval of exportation of natural gas to World Trade Organization countries.
• House Natural Resources Committee markup of H.R.503, the "National Desert Storm and Desert Shield War Memorial Act"; H.R.863, the "Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Women's History Museum Act of 2013"; H.R.2208, the "North American Wetlands Conservation Extension Act of 2013"; H.R.2430, the "Hinchliffe Stadium Heritage Act of 2013"; H.R.3802, to extend the legislative authority of the Adams Memorial Foundation to establish a commemorative work in honor of former President John Adams and his legacy; H.R.4002, to revoke the charter of incorporation of the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma at the request of that tribe; H.R.4017, to designate a peak located in Nevada as "Mount Reagan"; H.R.4120, to amend the National Law Enforcement Museum Act to extend the termination date; H.R.4253, the "Bureau of Land Management Withdrawn Military Lands Efficiency and Savings Act"; H.R.4309, to amend the Sikes Act to make certain improvements to the administration of cooperative agreements for land management related to Department of Defense readiness activities.
• House Small Business Committee hearing on "The Biggest Tax Problems for Small Businesses."
• House Ways and Means Committee's Trade Subcommittee hearing on "Trade Implications of U.S. Energy Policy and the Export of Liquefied Natural Gas."
• House Oversight and Government Reform Committee's Energy Policy, Health Care, and Entitlements Subcommittee hearing on "Examining Ways the Social Security Administration Can Improve the Disability Review Process."
• House Appropriations Committee's Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "FY2015 Budget Hearing - Department of Commerce."
• Senate Appropriations Committee Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "The FY2015 Budget Request for The Environmental Protection Agency."
• Senate Appropriations Committee's Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on an assessment on how to keep our railways safe for passengers and communities. Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on "Examining the Comcast-Time Warner Cable Merger and the Impact on Consumers."
• Senate Rules and Administration Committee hearing on "Election Administration: Making Voter Rolls More Complete and More Accurate."
• Senate Appropriations Committee's Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and
Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on proposed budget estimates for FY2015 for the Labor Department.

- Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee's Primary Health and Aging Subcommittee hearing on "Addressing Primary Care Access and Workforce Challenges: Voices from the Field.

- Senate Rules and Administration Committee markup of S.1728, to amend the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act to improve ballot accessibility to uniformed services voters and overseas voters; S.1937, the "Elections Preparedness Requires Early Planning (Elections PREP) Act"; S.1947, the "Government Publishing Office Act of 2014."

- Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee hearing on the FY2015 Budget Request for the Small Business Administration."

- Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee markup of S.429, the "Concrete Masonry Products Research, Education and Promotion Act of 2013"; S.1014, the "Youth Sports Concussion Act"; S.1406, the "Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act"; S.1275, the "Revitalizing the Economy of Fisheries (REFI) Pacific Act"; S.1379, the "Federal Communications Commission Consolidated Reporting Act of 2013"; S.1468, the "Revitalize American Manufacturing and Innovation Act of 2013"; S.1793, the "Nicholas and Zachary Burt Memorial Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act of 2013"; S.1925, the "Driver Privacy Act"; S.2022, the "Forensic Science and Standards Act of 2014"; S.2028, the "Sport Fish Restoration and Recreational Boating Safety Act of 2014"; S.2030, the "National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2014"; S.2076, the "U.S. Merchant Marine Academy of Visitors Enhancement Act"; S.2140, to improve the transition between experimental permits and commercial licenses for commercial reusable launch vehicles; H.R.2052, the "Global Investment in American Jobs Act"; and to vote on the nomination of David Arroyo to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and nominations for promotion in the United States Coast Guard.

- Senate Appropriations Committee's Energy and Water Development Subcommittee hearing on "A review of the President's FY2015 funding request and budget justification for the U.S. Department of Energy."

**Thursday, April 10**

- House Appropriations Committee's Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on FY2015 appropriations for agencies under its jurisdiction. (Part One)

- House Judiciary Committee's Courts, Intellectual Property and the Internet Subcommittee hearing on "Should the Department of Commerce Relinquish Direct Oversight Over ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers)?"

- House Oversight and Government Reform Committee markup of a resolution holding Lois G. Lerner, former IRS director of exempt organizations, in contempt of Congress for refusing to answer questions before Congress on May 22, 2013 and March 5, 2014, at a hearing entitled, "Targeting Americans for their Political Beliefs."

- House Natural Resources Committee hearing on "Tribal Forest Management: A Model for Promoting Healthy Forests and Rural Jobs."


- House Appropriations Committee's Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "FY2015 Budget Hearing - Department of Housing and Urban Development."

- House Appropriations Committee's Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on FY2015 appropriations for agencies under its jurisdiction. (Part Two)
• Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee hearing on "Keeping the lights on - Are we doing enough to ensure the reliability and security of the US electric grid?"
• Senate Finance Committee hearing on "The President's Budget for FY2015."
• Senate Appropriations Committee's Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "The Department of Commerce's FY2015 Budget Request."
• Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee hearing on "Expanding Access to Quality Early Learning: the Strong Start for America's Children Act."