Weekly Legislative Update
December 2, 2013

Congressional Outlook

Week of December 2nd

The House of Representatives returns today and the Senate will reconvene next week. Lawmakers will spend the month trying to wrap up work on defense authorization, a budget resolution and the farm bill.

Later today, the House is scheduled to vote on a bill (H.R. 3588) that would exempt fire hydrants from requirements of a 2011 law restricting the amount of lead in pipes and fixtures. The Environmental Protection Agency said in October that it would include hydrants in rules to implement the law. The law gave makers, sellers and utilities three years - until January 4, 2014 - to comply with restrictions on the lead content of fixtures associated with drinking water. Supporters of the bill say the law was not intended to cover fire hydrants and that the EPA's interpretation could ban the installation of fire hydrants that do not comply with the lead-free requirements.

The House is scheduled to vote tomorrow on a measure that would reauthorize for 10 years a law that bans plastic guns that aren't detectable by walk-through metal detectors.

Pre-conference discussions on the defense authorization are expected this week. House and Senate defense leaders have to make some key decisions on topics such as the military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and curbing sexual assault in the armed forces. Also, staff and member-level negotiations on the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2013 will continue.

Congressional negotiators face a self-imposed December 13 deadline to come up with a fiscal year 2014 budget agreement. It is reported that lawmakers' latest attempt at crafting a budget plan has hit a dead-end and is not going anywhere. This will likely lead to a year-long continuing resolution with funding levels the same as FY 2013 (post sequester). For more on the budget negotiations, click here.
Week in Review

Congress was not in session the week of November 25. We hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday.

White House Six-Month Regulatory Agenda Includes Hundreds of New Rules

The White House last week released its biannual "Unified Agenda of Federal Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions", which includes expected rules regulating greenhouse gas emissions from power plants, hydraulic fracturing ("fracking") on public lands, and updates to endangered species and energy efficiency policies, among other rulemaking activities. The plan contains both long- and short-term rulemaking plans for every agency of the executive branch and is available [here](#).

Congressional Hearing Schedule

Tuesday, December 3

- House Education and the Workforce Committee's Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee hearing on "Keeping College Within Reach: Strengthening Pell Grants for Future Generations."
- House Judiciary Committee hearing on "The President's Constitutional Duty to Faithfully Execute the Laws.
- House Rules Committee meets to formulate a rule on H.R.3309, the "Innovation Act"; and H.R.1105, the "Small Business Capital Access and Job Preservation Act."

Wednesday, December 4

- House Ways and Means Committee's Health Subcommittee hearing on "the Challenges of the Affordable Care Act."
- House Financial Services Committee's Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit Subcommittee hearing on "Examining Regulatory Relief Proposals for Community Financial Institutions."