Weekly Legislative Update
October 7, 2013

Congressional Outlook

Week of October 7th

Congress remains at an impasse on federal government funding. House Republicans plan to continue their strategy of passing piecemeal spending measures. Next up: funding the FDA. The House may also single out other activities for funding such as Head Start, American Indian programs, border control agencies, and the National Weather Service. Senate Democrats have said they will oppose any short-term spending bills that do not provide money for the whole government.

Meanwhile the Treasury estimates that the government will run out of borrowing authority on October 17 and will have to operate with cash on hand. Speaker John Boehner said the House cannot pass an increase to the U.S. debt ceiling without packaging it with other provisions, like instructions for tax reform, which is a nonstarter for President Barack Obama.

In other news, the continuation of the current budget standoff over the government shutdown will likely keep the water resources development bill (H.R. 3080) from coming to the House floor next week, as previously scheduled.

Week in Review

House Passes Narrow CRs; Senate Rejects House Strategy; Shutdown Continues

As the federal government shutdown enters its second week, the House last week passed four narrowly crafted continuing resolutions (CRs) to fund specific agencies until December 15, to which the Senate rejected for reopening only parts of the government and not all agencies and
programs. The bills would have funded national parks; veterans’ services; the Washington, D.C. government; and the National Institutes of Health. The House did pass a bill (H.R. 3223) with a 407-0 vote that would provide federal workers who are furloughed during the government shutdown with retroactive pay “as soon as practicable” after the lapse in appropriations ends. The Senate may take up H.R. 3223 this week.

"Glitches" Mar Opening Day for Obamacare

October 1st marked the long awaited first day of enrollment in the state health care exchanges established under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). While the White House celebrated the federal exchanges and the state-run marketplaces, President Obama was forced to admit that there were problems with several state enrollment websites and with sign up on the federally-run exchange, referring to them as “glitches.” Despite these “glitches,” the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced that the 36 health care exchanges it is running had tremendous interest. Over 6 million visitors logged into the federal exchanges, and almost 200,000 phone calls were made to call centers.

Does Anyone Want to Run DHS?

Former Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano left the agency weeks ago to be the head of the University of California System. White House officials admitted last week that there are no nominees forthcoming, causing stakeholders to question whether any top tier candidates want to run one of the largest, most complex federal agencies. For more, click here.

Stakeholders Concerned Over Government Shutdown's Impact on Preparedness

With Hurricane Karen bearing down on the Gulf Coast, emergency preparedness officials are raising questions about how badly the nation's disaster preparedness systems will fare given the federal government shutdown. For more, click here.

Congressional Hearing Schedule

**Tuesday, October 8**
- Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, Jobs, Rural Economic Growth and Energy Innovation Subcommittee hearing on "Investing in Small Town America: The Importance of a Comprehensive Farm Bill."

**Wednesday, October 9**
- House Small Business Committee hearing on "The Effects of the Health Law's Definitions of Full-Time Employee on Small Businesses."
- House Financial Services Committee, Housing and Insurance Subcommittee hearing on the status of the National Flood Insurance Program.

**Thursday, October 10**
• House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee meeting of the Special Panel on 21st Century Freight Transportation on "Funding the Nation's Freight System."
• House Natural Resources Committee, Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee hearing on "EPA vs. American Mining Jobs: The Obama Administration's Regulatory Assault on the Economy."
• Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee hearing on "Impact of a Default on Financial Stability and Economic Growth."