Congressional Outlook

**Week of September 23rd**

Last week by a vote of 230-189, the House passed a short-term continuing resolution (CR) to continue federal government funding past the start of the fiscal year. The CR includes a provision to defund the 2010 health-care law. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said he intends to strip out the health-care provision and send the measure back to the House. The House of Representatives intended to be in recess this week, but remained in Washington to consider the Senate’s new version of the stopgap funding bill. Legislative business in the House will not begin until Wednesday, as threat of a possible government shut down next week looms. For more on possible government shut down, click here.

Week in Review

**House Passes Short-Term Continuing Resolution that Defunds Affordable Care Act**

Brushing aside predictions that they still face near impossible odds at rescinding the Affordable Care Act (ACA), House leaders moved a CR that would fund all non-ACA authorized programs at current levels through mid-December, while defunding all programs authorized under ACA. The measure passed 230-189. Funding for government operations expires on September 30.

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) said House leadership also will push to delay implementation of the major ACA programs as part of the negotiation to raise the debt ceiling limit. The government is expected to reach its statutorily imposed limit on borrowing authority by mid-October, and House Republicans signaled the only way they would support raising the limit is the White House to agree to terms that delay implementation of ACA.
House Cuts Food Aid and Strips Nutrition Programs from Farm Bill

On Thursday, September 19, the House passed a measure that would cut $39 billion from nutrition programs over a decade. The vote was 217-210, with some urban Republicans joining Democrats in opposition. The measure, H.R. 3102, would roll back automatic eligibility programs and restrict state waivers of work requirements for "able-bodied" adults without dependents. The White House threatened to veto the bill, yet the bill has little chance in the Senate. For more on the farm bill and nutrition programs, click here.

New Deadline for EPA Stormwater Rule Still in Question

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation have been unable to reach agreement on a new legally binding deadline for the agency to craft its long-awaited proposed rule regulating stormwater runoff after construction is complete, leaving the agency without a deadline for advancing the measure that is a top priority for environmentalists. The post-construction rule is widely expected to set a first-time retention standard for new construction, and environmentalists have pressured the agency to set a similar standard for existing facilities, through permits or additional regulation. While the post-construction rule is delayed, EPA's draft multi-sector general permit (MSGP) for stormwater, which governs timber, chemicals, mining and other industries, has cleared White House review. The agency can now release the proposed permit, which will provide some indication of how EPA is likely to regulate stormwater runoff in the coming years.

Senate Democrats Introduce Water Resiliency Bill

Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD), Barbara Boxer (D-CA), and Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) introduced the "Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act of 2013," S. 1508, that would establish a $50 million EPA competitive cost-shared grant program for local water systems to conserve water, relocate infrastructure, desalinate and reuse water, and reduce vulnerability of key water infrastructure to flooding from "superstorms" and other extreme weather events. The bill is similar to Rep. Lois Capps' H.R. 765 introduced in the House to assist in improving local communities' water infrastructure systems to deal with extreme weather issues.

Four Museum Grants Announced

The Institute of Museums and Library Sciences released four museum grant Notices of Funding Availability last week. Each grant has a deadline submission date of December 2, 2013. Eligible applicants are State or local government, or a private nonprofit organization. For more on these grants, click here.
Congressional Hearing Schedule

**Tuesday, September 24**
- Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security Subcommittee hearing on "Rebuilding the Nation's Infrastructure: Leveraging Innovative Financing to Supplement Federal Investment."

**Wednesday, September 25**
- Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Full committee hearing on "The Need to Invest in America's Infrastructure and Preserve Federal Transportation Funding.

**Thursday, September 26**
- Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, Full committee hearing on "Outside the Box: Reforming and Renewing the Postal Service, Part II - Promoting a 21st Century Workforce."