

# *David Jurch and Associates*

## WASHINGTON UPDATE

June 7, 2024

### **CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACTIVITY**

The House Appropriations Committee continues to move their spending bills. The House passed the Military Construction-VA appropriations bill on Wednesday by a party line vote of 209-197. This is traditionally one of the easiest bills to pass although it had several “riders.” (Riders are legislative language prohibiting specific functions and are typically contentious.) Two Republicans voted against the bill and four Democrats voted in favor.

The House Appropriations Committee has approved at the subcommittee level by voice votes (which is normal at that level) the following bills: Defense, Financial Services, Homeland Security and State-Foreign Operations. Last week the Legislative Branch bill was adopted at the subcommittee level.

The House Appropriations Committee is expected to consider the following bills at the full committee level: State-Foreign Operations and Homeland Security on June 12; Defense, Financial Services and Legislative Branch on June 13; Commerce-Justice-Science, the Interior-Environment and the Energy-Water bills on July 9; Labor-HHS-Education, Transportation-HUD, and Agriculture bills on July 10.

The Senate is still working on subcommittee allocations and has not scheduled mark ups. The Senate traditionally is about one month behind the House in moving the appropriation bills.

### **RADIATION EXPOSURE COMPENSATION FUND REAUTHORIZATION**

The House left town Wednesday without extending the compensation fund under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act before a Friday deadline. Money will continue to be paid out of the fund, but no new claims can be filed. This pits lawmakers who want to greatly expand its coverage against those who want a simple extension. Oddly, conservative Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO) and progressive Representative Cori Bush (D-MO) both support an effort to expand the eligibility for workers that produced enriched uranium in Missouri. Speaker Johnson (R-LA) had scheduled a simple two-year extension of the fund but pulled the bill after opposition to the simple extension.

### **OTHER NOTABLE ACTION THIS WEEK**

A 5-4 decision handed down by the Supreme Court on Thursday means House and Senate appropriators could be on the hook for somewhere between \$800 million and \$2 billion a year for tribal health care programs that are self-administered. This will put great pressure on Congress in a tight financial cycle in which the non-defense spending is slated for a cut. Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and conservative Justice Neil M. Gorsuch agreed with the court's three liberal justices, providing the critical margin the tribes needed. Justice Kavanaugh wrote in dissension that this will aid the larger and wealthier tribes and leave the poor tribes in no better condition.

### **12TH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Concern has arisen about former President Trump’s selection of a Vice-President candidate. If he selects Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) or Representative Byron Donalds (R-FL) that may create issues with the 12<sup>th</sup> Amendment which limits electoral college votes for two persons from the same

state running for President and Vice-President. That means Florida's 30 Electoral College members cannot vote for both a President and Vice-President who are from Florida. If Trump were to win the 270 electoral votes to claim the presidency, but his running mate could not claim enough such votes, the US Senate would be forced to select the next Vice-President.

### **QUOTABLE QUOTE(S)**

Congresswoman Majorie Taylor Green (R-GA) has threatened to force a vote on impeaching President Joe Biden. Speak Johnson responded by stating "In general, the impeachment power is one that we wield very carefully here, as I've said so many times. Next to declaration of war, it's the heaviest power that Congress has. And it needs to be very methodical."

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## WASHINGTON UPDATE

June 14, 2024

### **CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACTIVITY**

The House continues to press forward on its twelve appropriations bills. This week the House Appropriations Committee approved five bills. It approved the Defense bill on June 13 by a vote of 34 to 25. The Homeland Security bill was marked up by a vote of 33 to 26 on June 12. And the State-Foreign Operations bill was adopted on June 12 by a vote of 31 to 26.

The Legislative Branch and the Financial Services bill were approved by the full Committee on June 13. Both were adopted by a vote of 33-24. The Legislative Branch bill did not include a cost-of-living adjustment for Members of Congress, this provision has been adopted every year for the past decade. The Financial Services bill did not include a provision that would have allowed state-legalized cannabis companies access to banking services. On June 11, the Agriculture spending measure was forwarded by the subcommittee to the full committee on a voice vote.

The most difficult bills to pass have not yet been marked up. These bills likely will face steep cuts to spending and many difficult political legislative rider amendments.

The House Appropriations Committee is scheduled to consider the following bills at the full committee level: Commerce-Justice-Science, the Interior-Environment, and the Energy-Water bills on July 9; Labor-HHS-Education, Transportation-HUD, and Agriculture bills on July 10. This schedule could change very quickly.

The Senate is still working on subcommittee allocations and has not scheduled mark ups. The Senate traditionally is about one month behind the House in moving the appropriation bills. Senate Appropriators are hoping to start their markups the week of July 8, when the Senate returns from its two-week July 4 recess. The Agriculture, Military Construction-VA and Legislative Branch measures are expected to be first in line, though the bill order is subject to change.

### **TRUMP ON THE HILL**

Former President Donald Trump came to Capitol Hill on June 13. He met with House Republicans in the morning and at noon met with Senate Republicans. Both meetings were held at Republican facilities and were called so Republicans could work together. Trump discussed the possibility of not taxing tip income, reinstating tariffs, and abortion. Trump stated the need for abortion exceptions pitting him against some of the more conservative members.

### **CONGRESSIONAL BASEBALL GAME**

The Republicans defeated the Democrats 31 to 11 on Thursday. The game raised \$2 million for local charities. The game was first started in 1909.

### **QUOTABLE QUOTE(S)**

Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) disagrees with some of Trump positions, including tariff increases. Johnson said that Trump made the tariff remark “with a smile.” Johnson added, “I’m not suggesting this is the plan.”

# *David Jurch and Associates*

## WASHINGTON UPDATE

June 24, 2024

### CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACTIVITY

The Senate is in recess until July 8. The House will come back on June 25 after taking a break last week. Both the House and Senate will be off the week of July 1 for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July break.

And the House continues to press forward on approving its twelve appropriations bills. The House has passed its Military Construction-VA bill. The House Appropriations Committee has approved six bills: Defense, Financial Services, Homeland Security, Legislative Branch, Military Construction-VA, and State-Foreign Operations.

The House has scheduled consideration of the following bills on the floor this week: Defense, Homeland Security and State-Foreign Operations. We will see if the House Republicans can stick together and adopt the rules governing debate and final passage of these bills due to their slim majority.

The most difficult bills to pass have not yet been marked up. These bills likely will face steep cuts to spending and many difficult political legislative rider amendments.

The House Appropriations Committee is still scheduled to consider the following bills at the full committee level: Commerce-Justice-Science, the Interior-Environment, and the Energy-Water bills on July 9; Labor-HHS-Education, Transportation-HUD, and Agriculture bills on July 10. This schedule could change very quickly.

The Senate is still working on subcommittee allocations and has no scheduled mark ups. The Senate traditionally is about one month behind the House in moving the appropriation bills. The Agriculture, Military Construction-VA and Legislative Branch measures have been given spending allocations and should be ready to move forward when the Senate comes back after the July 4<sup>th</sup> break.

### NOTEABLE ACTIONS

Former President Trump's proposal to end taxation of tipped income continues to gain steam. Even some Democrats support the idea. Fiscal conservatives question its effect on the budget deficit.

Discussions have begun in the House and Senate on the expiration of the 2017 tax package under Trump. Both Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate are gearing up for the reauthorization of the tax cuts and how to pay for it.

The House Ethics Committee has issued 25 subpoenas related to Congressman Matt Gaetz (R-FL). The Republican lead Committee is investigating the allegations of sexual misconduct and attempts by Gaetz to impede or obstruct the investigation.

### QUOTABLE QUOTE(S)

Congressman Matt Gaetz said via social media the "new frivolous investigations" by the House Ethic Committee were based on "lies."

Congressman Bob Good (R-VA), head of the Freedom Caucus is in a tight race for the Republican primary. Trump has supported his challenger because Good supported DeSantis in the Presidential Primary. The were three fire alarms at local precincts. Good said "We're going to have a full recount. We're going to have a full investigation," and we have "a tremendous number of lawyers at our disposal."

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WASHINGTON UPDATE  
June 28, 2024

## **CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACTIVITY**

The Senate is in recess until July 8. The House came back on June 25 after taking a break last week. Both the House and Senate will be off the week of July 1 for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July break.

The House continues to press forward on approving its twelve appropriations bills. The House has passed its Military Construction-VA bill. The House Appropriations Committee has approved six bills: Defense, Financial Services, Homeland Security, Legislative Branch, Military Construction-VA, and State-Foreign Operations.

The Defense, Homeland Security, and the State-Foreign Operations bills are scheduled for final votes on passage by the House today, June 28. The Republicans have stuck together and voted for the rules for consideration of the bills. The House Appropriations subcommittees adopted the following bills this week: Commerce-Justice-Science, Labor-HHS-Education, and the Transportation-HUD. That means 10 of the 12 spending bills have been approved by the House Appropriations subcommittees. The last two bills, Interior-Environment and Energy and Water Development, will be marked up today at the subcommittee level.

The House Appropriations Committee is still scheduled to consider the following bills at the full committee level: Commerce-Justice-Science, the Interior-Environment, and the Energy-Water bills on July 9: Labor-HHS-Education, Transportation-HUD, and Agriculture bills on July 10. This schedule could change very quickly.

The Agriculture, Military Construction-VA and Legislative Branch measures have been given spending allocations by the Senate Appropriations Committee and should be ready to move forward when the Senate comes back on July 8. Senate Appropriations Committee chair Patty Murray (D-WA) has given tentative allocations to the other 9 subcommittees allowing them to begin to draft their bills. There still is no bipartisan agreement on spending levels in the Senate.

## **NOTEABLE ACTIONS**

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved its Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) reauthorization this week. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved its bill on May 22. Both the House and Senate must still pass their bills on the floors of the respective bodies.

The House prepares for a possible vote soon on directing the sergeant-at-arms to take Attorney General Merrick Garland into custody, as Congresswoman Anna Paulina Luna (R-FL) says she will force a vote on holding him in “inherent contempt” of Congress. The promise from Luna is yet another headache for House Republican leaders, who are planning to file a lawsuit in Washington DC courts next week to enforce their previous subpoena of Garland.

## **QUOTABLE QUOTE(S)**

House Oversight Committee Chair James Comer (R-KY) said that while he will vote for the measure to order the sergeant-at-arms to detain Garland, he does not think it’s necessary. “I don’t think anyone understands how it’s going to work. The last time it was used, members of Congress rode horses to this building where I am right now,” Comer said.

On the House passing the Farm bill, “I’m always hopeful,” House Agriculture Committee Chair Glenn Thompson (R-PA) said. “We got good, decent bipartisan support. We even got folks in committee that voted against it, they called me the next day, just talking about how good the bill was.”

House Majority Whip Tom Emmer (R-MN) said when asked if the Farm bill would get a vote before the election: “We’re told that’s the plan, but we haven’t seen it.”