

# Hicks-Ray Associates

*Implementing Strategies, Achieving Success*



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December 6, 2017

TO: WESTCAS Membership

FROM: Hicks-Ray Associates

SUBJECT: Putting Together the DC Christmas Jigsaw Puzzle

Everybody knows about Jigsaw puzzles. You take a box full of odd shaped pieces and try to fit them together in such a way that you produce the picture that is on the front of the box. Some people are very good at this. Others aren't. Many just give up before completing the puzzle and put it away in a closet or perhaps re-gift it to someone else.

But neither of these options would meet the challenge that lies before the Congress and the Administration over the next two weeks including keeping the Federal government open past midnight on Friday, fashioning a longer-term spending fix beyond December 8, conferencing a tax bill and getting it to the President's desk before Christmas, raising the ceiling on the national debt, and passing a third huge disaster relief bill to fund efforts from California to Puerto Rico. And this is only a partial list.

If Christmas is a season of miracles, then perhaps one is needed for Congress and the President given all they have to accomplish and the short time remaining in December.

We will know more after the President meets with Congressional Leaders of both parties tomorrow morning. But at the moment it appears that there will be two Continuing Resolutions [CR's] passed this month. The first will be considered before Friday and will run for two weeks from December 8 until December 22. At that point another CR will be adopted perhaps extending into late January. Details on issues such as spending caps and the items included in the December 22 CR package are still very much up in the air. What we write in this Wednesday afternoon update may be stood on its head by developments over the next 24 hours.

So please stay tuned and expect further updates from Hicks-Ray. Or perhaps some of you may want to tackle a Jigsaw puzzle that might prove less challenging than trying to understand policy-making during the Holiday season.

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Fred Hicks - 703.866.4290  
P.O. Box 2115  
Springfield, VA 22152-0115  
[fred@hicks-ray.com](mailto:fred@hicks-ray.com)

Tom Ray - 254.855.0880  
P.O. Box 955  
Waco, TX 76703-0955  
[tom@hicks-ray.com](mailto:tom@hicks-ray.com)