

# Hicks-Ray Associates

*Implementing Strategies, Achieving Success*



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October 2, 2018

TO: WESTCAS Membership

FROM: Hicks-Ray Associates

SUBJECT: Half Gone as Opposed to All Gone

On Friday, September 28, the House of Representatives adjourned, likely until the week after the November 6 Congressional mid-term elections. The Senate is still in session pending some resolution of the nomination of Federal District Judge Kavanaugh to the US Supreme Court.

Before adjourning, the House of Representatives passed by a vote of 361 to 61 a two-bill “minibus” consisting of the FY19 Defense and also the Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bills. The previous week the Senate had passed the same bill by a 92 to 7 margin. Included in the package is a Continuing Resolution that keeps the Federal government open through December 7. That means a great deal of work will have to be accomplished during the lame duck session of Congress that begins on November 13 and is scheduled to end on December 14 with the final adjournment of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Despite the need for another Continuing Resolution, the Congress made real progress this year in moving FY19 Appropriations bills. Along with another 3-bill “minibus” passed earlier in September the Congress has now passed and the President signed into law Appropriations bills containing over 75% of domestic discretionary spending. That is a big accomplishment compared to previous years when no bills were passed by the start of the new fiscal year. It has been 22 years since the Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill was signed into law before October 1 and 10 years for the Defense Appropriations bill to do the same

So, despite all the terrible headlines with regard to the Congress at least the FY19 Appropriations cycle is moving ahead with overwhelming votes in both the House and the Senate and with President Trump signing the bills into law.

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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)

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The Congress is set to return to session the week after the November 6 mid-term elections for the lame duck session of the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. Among the WESTCAS priority action items still to be addressed is the final Senate passage of the America's Water Infrastructure Act [WRDA], FY19 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill funding USEPA and the most Department of Interior programs, and reauthorization of the Title XVI water reuse program.

We hope you are planning to be in Phoenix for the WESTCAS Fall Conference October 23-24 where these issues and the post-election prospects for the lame duck session and the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress will be thoroughly discussed.

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

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P.O. Box 955  
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