

Hicks-Ray Associates

Implementing Strategies, Achieving Success



December 15, 2015

TO: WESTCAS Membership

FROM: Hicks-Ray Associates

SUBJECT: Latest Updates on the FY16 Omnibus/Tax Extenders Bill

It just seemed too easy to think that the Congress would be able to debate and pass the FY16 Omnibus/Tax Extenders bill by tomorrow and before the latest Continuing Resolution expires at midnight tomorrow night. To put it mildly, there are lots of bells and whistles attached to a \$1.1 billion spending bill that is pared with tax legislation that may prove to be worth \$800 billion. Senator Everett McKinley Dirksen (d: 1969) famously stated with regard to Federal funding, “a billion here and a billion there adds up to real money.” What would he think of a nearly \$2 trillion year end spending and tax bill?

By all accounts, details of the bill have been almost completely agreed to. Word is that House Speaker Paul Ryan will brief the Republican caucus on what has been agreed to this evening. House Republican Rules require that a bill be made public at least three days before it is debated on the House floor. If the bill isn’t made public until tonight.....and the Continuing Resolution expires tomorrow night at midnight.....and if the Republicans live by their own self-imposed “three day” rule, what’s going to happen next.

The best bet is that the Congress will pass another short-term CR that keeps the Federal government open until midnight Friday. This should provide time enough for both the “three day” rule to be observed and for the Congress to complete work by Friday if not earlier. Nobody seems to be sure whether the “three day rule” means “72 hours” or just three days. If the latter, then the Omnibus/tax extenders legislation could be voted on as early as Thursday.

The Omnibus/tax extenders bill will provide funding for key infrastructure programs that are vital to the Arid West. It might also contain policy riders of great interest to WESTCAS including the WOTUS issue. We’ll just have to wait until we see the document, probably later tonight.

Finally, careful readers of our “DC Updates” may have noticed that over the last few days, our reports have been accompanied by a curious greenish tinge to the document. Many of Vincent van Gogh’s paintings feature a similar greenish color. But unlike Vincent van Gogh, the principals of Hicks-Ray have neither been drinking vast quantities of absinthe or digitalis and we haven’t suddenly morphed into world-renowned artists. We’re working on resolving the issue via a tweak of our software.

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