

# Hicks-Ray Associates



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TO: WESTCAS Membership  
FROM: Fred B. Hicks and Tom Ray  
SUBJECT: DC Updates

Political junkies had a field day last night with the State of the Union, the various Republican responses, and the endless comments of “talking heads” on TV. Others were most likely grateful for cable TV which allowed you to watch something else.

Although the President’s State of the Union is an important opportunity to lay out the Administration’s priorities for the coming year, we are not going to learn much more until February 14<sup>th</sup>, when the actual proposed FY12 Federal budget is released by the White House. The projection released today by the Congressional Budget Office that the FY11 Federal deficit will grow to at least \$1.5 trillion, will complicate this process.

The release of the proposed FY12 budget and the end of the FY11 Continuing Resolution on March 4<sup>th</sup> remain the two biggest items on the horizon.

After being in session yesterday the House is adjourning in time today to stay ahead of a major winter snowstorm that is supposed to hit starting at 3:00 PM. They won’t be back until Tuesday, February 8<sup>th</sup> before going out of session again on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February and returning on February 28<sup>th</sup>. House Committees are still in the process of organizing and naming of Members.

The Senate is even less advanced in organizing itself because this process can’t happen until the basic rules of the Senate for the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress are agreed to by both Democrats and Republicans. But so far, there has been no agreement on whether 60 votes, or just a simple majority, will be required to move legislation. Until that is decided, the other business of the Senate can’t move forward, including the completion of naming Members to the various Committees.

The Senate has more days in session than the House by using a strategy employed by Joshua in the Old Testament. You will recall that Joshua asked God to make the sun and the moon to stand still in order to give him more time to defeat the Amorites. The Senate has done him one better by decreeing that the day they came into session on January 5<sup>th</sup> lasted until January 25<sup>th</sup>. Joshua would have been impressed.

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