

# Hicks-Ray Associates

*Implementing Strategies, Achieving Success*



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TO: WESTCAS Membership

FROM: Hicks-Ray Associates

SUBJECT: DC Updates

You might think that the end of the year is still almost a month away. But the Congress appears to be on the verge of getting a jump on the New Year by recessing for the final time this Thursday. Please take a look at the attachment that is the House Majority Leader's schedule for this week. Lots of bills will reach the House floor "under suspension" meaning that they will be given 10 minutes of debate and passed by a voice vote.

There are still major items on the Congressional plate including completion of the FY17 National Defense Authorization Act authorizing funding for military programs, the FY17 Continuing Resolution that will now run well into the New Year, and the Water Resources Development Act. It has been common knowledge that the House and Senate Committees of jurisdiction over WRDA pretty much concluded their negotiations the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. But as of this morning no final version of the bill has been released. It is, however, encouraging to see WRDA on the schedule of bills to be considered before final adjournment.

How can bills like the nearly \$600 billion National Defense Authorization Act, the multi-hundred billion FY17 CR, and the \$5 billion+ WRDA bill move through Congressional consideration so quickly? In the House, the Rules Committee writes a Rule limiting debate to one hour with no "intervening motions" and "waiving all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration." The House used such a Rule this past Thursday to debate and pass the National Defense Authorization bill in just one hour and thirty-seven minutes. No doubt similar strategies will be used with the FY17 CR and WRDA.

The Senate holds procedural votes to test support for legislation. For example, two test votes were held in the Senate this past week to instruct the Defense Authorization conferees. Both failed 84 to 12 and 85 to 12 indicating overwhelming support for the bill and likely final passage this week.

The hope is that the 94 to 3 and the 399 to 25 votes in the House and Senate for their versions of WRDA back in September will create momentum for a final bill to be passed this week. If this is achieved then the Congress will have made a huge step forward in returning to passing WRDA on a two-year cycle.

Hicks-Ray is standing by to review the final WRDA bill when it is released. We will send out a detailed update once we have read the bill.

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