

Hicks-Ray Associates

Implementing Strategies, Achieving Success



October 9, 2017

TO: WESTCAS Membership

FROM: Hicks-Ray Associates

SUBJECT: D.C. Updates

The House and Senate are in recess this week and will return on October 16. Here are some highlights for the 30 days that have elapsed since Labor Day:

No drama for the beginning of FY18

Earlier in September President Trump reached an agreement with House/Senate Democratic Leaders Pelosi and Schumer to secure a Continuing Resolution running through December 8. This ensured enough votes in both chambers to provide a calm beginning for FY18 on October 1 without the usual threats of a shutdown of the Federal government.

This respite will only be temporary since we are now less than 60 days away from the December 8 end to the current Continuing Resolution. This will very likely result in a series of very short term CR's during the week of December 8-15 which will hopefully lead to a broad agreement on spending and policy, followed by the Congressional Christmas recess. Bets are already being taken with regard to how this will be achieved:

--Congressional omnibus legislation that addresses everything from FY18 spending to any of a number of policy issues?

--Another CR lasting into the New Year.

--A sequestration bill designed to reduce federal spending.

Since it is only early October it's anybody's guess which if any of these three options might be chosen. If there were a "front-runner" at the moment it would be for a Congressional omnibus bill.

Progress on key Trump Administration Nominees

R.D. James—Nominated on October 3 by President Trump to be the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. This is the official who heads the US Army Corps of Engineers. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee has jurisdiction over this nomination. Mr. James is a long-time civilian member of the Mississippi River Commission and is a farmer and manager of cotton and grain elevators. His home is New Madrid, Missouri.

David Ross—Nominated in early September by President Trump to be Assistant Administration for the Office of Water, USEPA. Mr. Ross current serves as Assistant Attorney General for Wisconsin. Before that he served in a similar capacity in the State of Wyoming. His nomination was the subject of an October 4 hearing before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. We have attached his statement before the Committee for your information and review.

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Brenda Burman—Ms. Burman worked for the Salt River Project and the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. She was nominated by President Trump in late June to be Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. Her nomination was the subject of a July 20 hearing before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and awaits a confirmation vote before the full Senate.

It is hoped that the nominations for Mr. James to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, Mr. Ross to be Assistant Administrator for Water, USEPA, and Ms. Burman to be Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation can be considered by the Senate before the end of the year.

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