

Hicks-Ray Associates

Implementing Strategies, Achieving Success



November 27, 2018

TO: WESTCAS Membership

FROM: Hicks-Ray Associates

SUBJECT: They're Back: Congress Enters the Final Stretch Before Adjournment

The Senate returned to session yesterday and the House of Representatives will join them at 6:30 PM today. The target adjournment date of the 115th Congress is Friday, December 14th. That means that there are just 14 legislative days to reach agreement on a number of contentious topics.

Looming right in the middle of this 14-day period is the expiration of the FY19 Continuing Resolution that has been keeping a number of Federal agencies open since late September. Several of the FY19 spending bills, including those that fund the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation, were passed and signed into law by President Trump before the Congress recessed in late September, so any government shutdown next week would affect only those agencies whose spending bills have yet to be passed. Another wild card in the process is President Trump's suggestion that he is willing to accept a shutdown if the Congress does not fully fund a border wall.

Amidst all of this confusion, the Congress is going about the process of preparing both to adjourn the 115th Congress and to also convene the 116th Congress early in January. Newly elected Members are in DC this week for orientation including tasks such as going about the process of being assigned an office for January. Committee assignments will also be made by both parties and should become known in the coming days.

These activities will likely be wrapped up into an omnibus/Continuing Resolution that will punt into the New Year unpassed spending bills and other issues that will be taken up by the 116th Congress including its House Democratic majority and its Senate Republican majority. At present there are more questions than answers as to how this all turns out. But we suspect that some clarity will begin to emerge over the next 14 days. Hope everybody had a great Thanksgiving.

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