

Hicks-Ray Associates

Implementing Strategies, Achieving Success



August 4, 2017

TO: WESTCAS Membership

FROM: Hicks-Ray Associates

SUBJECT: The Senate Recesses

Just as everybody was wondering how long it would remain in August session, the Senate yesterday gathered itself for a final push that included passing a number of bills and clearing 70 nominations. At the end of business yesterday, the Senate joined the House of Representatives in going on summer recess until September 5.

The 70 confirmations of yesterday included Federal judgeships, ambassadors, and appointments to various Federal commissions in addition to appointments to Federal agencies, so the Senate still faces a considerable backlog of Executive agency nominations when it returns in September.

Yesterday the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources approved and sent to the Senate floor the nominations of Brenda Burman of the Salt River Authority to be Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation and Susan Combs to be Assistant Secretary of Policy for the Department of Interior. Hopefully the full Senate will approve both of these nominees in September and allow them to begin their duties.

WESTCAS expressed its support for Ms. Burman in a recent letter to the Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee.

Finally, before adjourning, the Senate determined that it would hold pro forma sessions on August 4, 8, 11, 15, 18, 22, 25, 29 and September 1 before reconvening on Tuesday, September 5. Pro forma sessions are when the Senate convenes for only a minute or so which legislatively is the same as if they were in session the entire day. The intent of this action is to prevent President Trump from making any recess appointments while the Senate is on break.

With FY18 Appropriations and raising the debt ceiling looming in September maybe a month's vacation is a good idea and allow the political nation to "cool off" a bit after a contentious few weeks.

Fred Hicks - 703.866.4290
P.O. Box 2115
Springfield, VA 22152-0115
fred@hicks-ray.com

Tom Ray - 254.855.0880
P.O. Box 955
Waco, TX 76703-0955
tom@hicks-ray.com