

Washington Update

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

June 26, 2018

FEDERAL BUDGET

House and Senate leaders are continuing to implement a strategy of packaging together several of the individual appropriations bills into “minibuses” to expedite consideration and maintain the momentum on funding measures. The Senate passed H.R. 5895 on June 25, which includes the Energy-Water, Legislative Branch and Military Construction-VA bills. This will allow the bill to move to conference committee negotiations to be reconciled with the House-passed version of the package.

Floor votes are planned for most of the other appropriations bills this summer. In general, appropriators are rejecting the program eliminations or major reductions proposed by the President in his budget submission to Congress, which has been key to minimizing some of the partisan differences in these debates. However, the process could slow down significantly as conferees sort through numerous policy riders that have been added to the bills. Since the appropriations measures are seen as some of the few “must-pass” bills remaining in the 115th Congress, the end-game negotiations could be extensive.

BUDGET RESCISSIONS

The Senate failed to pass President Trump’s proposed budget rescissions package on June 20, after 50 senators voted against discharging the bill from the Appropriations Committee. Republican leaders unsuccessfully tried numerous approaches to obtain support for the package, including a proposed amendment to remove \$7 billion in proposed cuts of unspent Children’s Health Insurance Program funds from the \$14.7 billion House-passed version, H.R. 3. Although the Senate Appropriations Committee could still report H.R. 3 to the full Senate for consideration, it is unlikely that the Senate will take up the bill before the end of the year.

CAMP 4

The Senate Indian Affairs Committee approved Congressman LaMalfa’s (R-CA) H.R. 1491, the *Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Land Affirmation Act*, on June 13. We worked in coordination with Senator Feinstein’s Legislative Counsel and the Tribe’s lobbyists to reiterate the County’s support for the legislation in advance of the markup and also coordinated with other stakeholders interested in the fee-to-trust process, including CSAC. The Committee approved H.R. 1491 by voice vote without amending the House-passed version of the legislation, making it an excellent candidate for consideration by the full Senate later this year.

FARM BILL/NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The House voted 213-211 to pass H.R. 2, the *Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018*, which is a five-year reauthorization of USDA agriculture, conservation and nutrition programs. The bill was previously voted down by the House on May 18, when 30 Republicans voted against the bill, in part to pressure House leaders to schedule a vote on an immigration package.

The Senate Agriculture Committee approved its version of the Farm Bill, S. 3042, the *Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018*, on June 13. The bill received bipartisan support and leaves the core of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program largely unchanged, unlike the House version, which includes new work and job training requirements.

OPIOID CRISIS

The House passed H.R. 6, the *Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment for Patients and Communities Act (SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act)* on June 22. This bill is the legislative vehicle for dozens of bills previously

passed by the House to respond to the opioid crisis in order to proceed to negotiations with the Senate once it passes its opioids legislative package later in the summer. The legislation would strengthen prevention and public health efforts, address coverage and payment issues in Medicare and Medicaid, and make numerous modifications to programs to improve effectiveness or provide direction/authorities to Federal agencies.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION

A bipartisan Senate coalition led by Senator Cantwell (D-WA) and Senator Burr (R-NC) recently announced a renewed effort to enact legislation to permanently reauthorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The LWCF is currently authorized through the end of the current fiscal year. Although the program has been constrained in recent years, LWCF provides support for habitat conservation, land acquisition and outdoor recreation facilities.

So far, the Republican majority in Congress has been unwilling to permanently reauthorize the LWCF. A shorter-term reauthorization is being discussed with members of the House Natural Resources Committee and Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and this could also include discussion of substantive changes to LWCF, including changing ratios for state and federal programs, emphasizing urban recreational access, and limiting funds for federal land acquisition.

IMMIGRATION REFORM - DACA

The House voted down House Judiciary Committee Chairman Goodlatte's (R-VA) H.R. 4760, the *Securing America's Future Act*, by a 193-231 vote. The measure was designed to obtain the support of President Trump, who is insisting that border security/wall funding, legal immigration reductions and the end of the diversity visa lottery accompany any DACA fix. However, this latest attempt at immigration legislation continued the pattern of being opposed by Democrats and failing to attract the unified Republican support needed to pass the House.

We have contacted the House and Senate committees of jurisdiction and the local Congressional delegation regarding your Board's support for the DACA Program, citing the estimated 12,000 individuals affected in the County and the potential local impacts if the program is discontinued. Speaker Ryan (R-WI) continues to lead discussions within the Republican Conference to negotiate a compromise, but so far has been unable to bridge the gaps. In addition, discussions are underway in both the House and the Senate over possible legislation addressing the family separation policy.