06/13/22 Weekly Washington Update

Headlines to Know

- **Senators Reach Bipartisan Deal on Gun Safety:** A group of 20 senators – 10 Republicans and 10 Democrats – reached a deal on a “framework” for a gun-control package. The bill includes funding to help states set up their own “red flag” laws, funding for school safety and mental health clinics, school-based mental health services, barriers on “straw purchases”, domestic violence related provisions, enhanced background checks, and new restrictions on gun sellers. The bipartisan group led by Sens. Chris Murphy (D-CT) and John Cornyn (R-TX) wants to pass this bill before the July 4 recess. To begin the process, the group must first release the full legislative text which is said to happen in the coming days. If all 20 senators say they are supportive of that document, more importantly the 10 Republicans, supporters will be able to overcome any GOP filibuster.

- **FY23 Appropriations Moving Forward:** The House Appropriations Committee will begin a two-week sprint on Wednesday to mark up all 12 annual spending bills before Congress leaves for the July 4th recess. House Democrats deemed a $1.6 trillion budget resolution could be passed on a party line vote. This is roughly nine percent higher than last year. Appropriations Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) has promised to have all 12 bills through her committee by June 30, and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) says he will bring as many to the floor as he can in July. If Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) keep talking about a reconciliation deal (“Build Back Better”), there is little incentive for Senate Republicans to do any deal on government spending. There are already predictions of problems with Pentagon funding versus domestic spending, Homeland Security (border and immigration issues), Commerce, and Justice and Science funding.

Other News to Know

- **Federal Open Market Committee:** The Federal Open Market Committee is holding a two-day meeting beginning Tuesday. Even before last week’s inflation news, Federal Reserve Chair Jay Powell has signaled that the Fed is ready to raise interest rates by 50 basis points this month and next. Some believe that the Fed may even go higher to 75 basis points. If not this month, then soon.

- **Jan. 6 Select Committee Hearings:** Over the next week, the Jan. 6 Select Committee is hosting three more high-profile hearings. The select committee will try to show that President Trump, his top aides, and political allies knew the election was lost, but still pushed their narrative to justify the attempt to overturn the election and hold onto power. Witnesses include Bill Stepien, the former...
campaign manager for Trump’s reelection campaign; Chris Stirewalt, a former Fox News political editor; Ben Ginsberg, a top Republican election lawyer; Byung J. Pak, a former U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia; and Al Schmidt, a former city commissioner in Philadelphia.

- **Biden Administration pursuing economic initiatives without properly consulting Congress:** Bipartisan resentment is building among lawmakers who say they are being cut out of President Biden’s trade agenda. The White House is pursuing a new and unconventional approach to global economic engagement that eschews traditional free trade agreements – and the congressional approval they require. Members of both parties complain they are receiving last-minute briefings with few details about the administration’s boldest initiatives.

- **New Rail Safety Regulations:** A new rule published in the Federal Register on Monday, June 13th, requires certain railroads to implement fatigue risk management programs that must be approved by the Federal Railroad Administration. Greg Regan, president of the AFL-CIO’s Transportation Trades Department, said his coalition’s unions “welcome” the new rule that will help address “scheduling, drug and alcohol testing and hours of service concerns.” Additionally, Regan states that the rule “provides a solid framework for continued engagement between labor unions and the FRA to ensure that employers are providing working conditions that keep workers and the public safe.”

**This Week on Capitol Hill**

**Hearings of Interest:** *(all times EST)*

- **Tuesday, June 14th | 10:15 AM,** House Education and Labor Hearing: Examining the Policies and Priorities of the U.S. Department of Labor.
- **Tuesday, June 14th | 10:30 AM,** House Budget Hearing: How the American Rescue Plan Saved Lives and the U.S. Economy.
- **Tuesday, June 14th | 2:30 PM,** Senate Judiciary Meeting: Hearings to examine strengthening our workforce and economy through higher education and immigration.
- **Wednesday, June 15th | 9:30 AM,** Senate Appropriations Meeting: Hearings to examine proposed budget estimates and justification for fiscal year 2023 for the Department of Labor.
- **Wednesday, June 15th | 10:00 AM,** House Ways and Means Hearing: The Burnout Epidemic and What Working Women Need for a Stronger Economy.
- **Wednesday, June 15th | 10:00 AM** Senate Judiciary Meeting: Hearings to examine protecting America’s children from gun violence.
- **Wednesday, June 15th | 11:30 AM,** House Rules Hearing: Tools to Combat Gun Trafficking and Reduce Gun Violence in Our Communities
- **Thursday, June 16th | 9:30 AM,** Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Meeting: Hearings to examine an update on the ongoing Federal response to COVID-19, focusing on current status and future planning.

**Schedule of Floor Activity:**

- Both the House and Senate are in session this week.