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3/1/21 Weekly Washington Update

Headlines to Know

- Budget Reconciliation is ongoing, with the House passing the legislation on Friday evening, but the \$1.9T Relief Package will likely face significant cutbacks in the Senate. The **biggest cut so far is the \$15 minimum wage provision** because it is not permitted under budget reconciliation rules.
- Senate Leadership has said they will vote on the stimulus package this week which would get the bill to the President's desk next week.
- Last Monday, Senate Democrats introduced President Biden's immigration overhaul, which provides 11 million undocumented people an eight-year track to citizenship. The pathway is being offered to Dreamers and those under Temporary Protected Status and Deferred Enforced Departure.
- Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's office has claimed that the United States will be revealing its new emissions target before Joe Biden's upcoming climate summit with other global leaders on April 22. This is a requirement for the United States' reentry into the Paris Climate Agreement, which went into effect last week. Both the United States and Canada have stated their commitment to reaching net-zero emissions by 2050.
- Xavier Becerra was trapped last week in two days of Senate confirmation hearings that position him well to be the next Health and Human Services Secretary. Notably, Becerra confirmed that improvements would be made to the Affordable Care Act, but not in the direction of "Medicare for All," a system he adhered to strongly in the past. This shift appealed to more than one Senate Republican over the course of the hearings.

Other News to Know

- The Biden Administration launched an airstrike against Iran-backed militia groups in Syria last Thursday. The strikes prompted strong pushback from members of Biden's own party and fueled a discussion surrounding the president's access to war powers.
- Last week Thursday, the House passed the Equality Act with a vote of 224-206. The act, also passed by the House in 2019, bans discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in the workplace, housing, public education and other areas.

This Week on Capitol Hill

Hearings of Interest:

- Monday, Mar. 1 | 1 p.m. House Rules Committee meets to formulate a rule on H.R. 1 (117), the "For the People Act of 2021"; and H.R. 1280 (117), the "George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021."
- Tuesday, Mar. 2 | 10 a.m. House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on "Health and Safety Protections for Meatpacking, Poultry, and Agricultural Workers."
- Tuesday, Mar. 2 | 10:30 a.m. House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee holds a hearing on "The Future of Telehealth: How COVID-19 is Changing the Delivery of Virtual Care."
- Thursday, Mar. 4 | 10 a.m. House Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee hearing on "Reauthorizing Trade Adjustment Assistance: Opportunities for Equitable Access and Modernization."
- Thursday, Mar. 4 | 10:15 a.m. Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee hearing on "Wall Street vs. Workers: How the Financial System Hurts Workers and Widens the Racial Wealth Gap."

Markups (votes) of Interest:

- Monday, Mar. 1 | 1 p.m. Senate Judiciary Committee holds a meeting to organize for the 117th Congress and to vote on the nomination of Merrick Brian Garland to be Attorney General. 216 Hart.

Schedule of Floor Activity

- The Senate is in session this week.
- The House has a planned committee work week.