



PAACC FEDERAL UPDATE*

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Major Washington News

H.R. 1 Passes House

On March 8, the House passed H.R. 1 by a vote of 234 – 193. It was subsequently sent to the Senate. This bill addresses voter access, election integrity, election security, political spending, and ethics for the three branches of government.

Specifically, the bill expands voter registration and voting access, makes Election Day a federal holiday, and limits removing voters from voter rolls.

The bill provides for states to establish independent, nonpartisan redistricting commissions. It also sets forth provisions related to election security, including sharing intelligence information with state election officials, protecting the security of the voter rolls, supporting states in securing their election systems, developing a national strategy to protect the security and integrity of U.S. democratic institutions, establishing in the legislative branch the National Commission to Protect United States Democratic Institutions, and other provisions to improve the cybersecurity of election systems.

This bill addresses campaign spending, including by expanding the ban on foreign nationals contributing to or spending on elections; expanding disclosure rules pertaining to organizations spending money during elections, campaign advertisements, and online platforms; and revising disclaimer requirements for political advertising. It also establishes an alternative campaign funding system for certain federal offices. The system involves federal matching of small contributions for qualified candidates.

H.R. 1 sets forth provisions related to ethics in all three branches of government. Specifically, the bill requires a code of ethics for federal judges and justices, prohibits Members of the House from serving on the board of a for-profit entity, expands enforcement of regulations governing foreign agents, and establishes additional conflict-of-interest and ethics provisions for federal employees and the White House.

*Bill information is derived from Congress.gov summaries and Members of Congress press releases.

The bill also requires candidates for President and Vice President to submit 10 years of tax returns.

Business & Industry

New Market Tax Credit Extension

On March 12, U.S. Reps. Terri Sewell (D-AL) and Tom Reed (R-NY) introduced H.R. 1680 to spur private investment in low-income rural communities and urban neighborhoods by providing tax credits for private investments made in underserved communities.

The New Markets Tax Credit Extension Act of 2019 (H.R. 1680) would provide private investors with a 39 percent credit against federal income taxes for investments made in some of the most distressed communities in the nation. To be eligible for New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) financing, businesses being financed must, at a minimum, be located in designated low-income communities, defined by U.S. Census data as census tracts with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent, or with median family incomes that do not exceed 80 percent of area median income.

Currently, the NMTC is set to expire on December 31, 2019. The New Market Tax Credit Expansion Act would reauthorize and make permanent the NMTC.

The bill was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Support for Veterans in Effective Apprenticeships Act

U.S. Senators Gary Peters (D-MI) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) introduced bipartisan legislation on March 12 to expand opportunities for veterans to register for apprenticeships. The Support for Veterans in Effective Apprenticeships Act (S. 760) would require that veterans are included in Department of Labor (DOL) standards for registered apprenticeship programs. It would also improve the coordination between the Department of Labor and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to ensure that veterans across the country know they can use their GI Bill benefits to support their apprenticeships in a variety of in-demand fields. This bipartisan bill aims to address the significant discrepancy between the number of apprenticeships registered by the Department of Labor and the amount of programs veterans can apply their GI Bill benefits toward.

The Support for Veterans in Effective Apprenticeships Act would increase access for veterans to registered apprenticeship programs in which they learn skills through paid on-the-job experiences that result in a nationally recognized credential upon completion. The bill will specifically direct the Department of Labor to include the following requirements in its regulations for registered apprenticeship programs:

- Apprenticeship programs will need to commit to following through with the expedited process for gaining VA approval after registering, which is required in

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order for veterans to use their GI Bill benefits for housing and other basic expenses as an apprentice.

- The Department of Labor will need to provide a copy of the certificate of registration to the VA for newly registered apprenticeship programs. This would enable the VA to be proactive in contacting apprenticeship sponsors to complete the approval processes.
- Apprenticeships will agree to provide advanced standing or credit in the program—along with a commensurate wage increase—to account for participants' demonstrated skill sets and prior experiences, including those acquired during military service.

The legislation was referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Raise the Wage Act

On March 6, the Committee on Education and Labor approved the Raise the Wage Act (H.R. 582), a proposal to gradually increase the minimum wage to \$15 by 2024. The Raise the Wage Act was approved out of Committee on a party line vote (28-20). The Raise the Wage Act of 2019 would:

- Gradually raise the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 over the next six years;
- Index future increases in the federal minimum wage to median wage growth;
- Guarantee tipped workers are paid at least the full federal minimum wage by repealing the subminimum wage for tipped workers;
- Guarantee teen workers are paid at least the full federal minimum wage by repealing the rarely used subminimum wage for youth workers; and
- End subminimum wage certificates for individuals with disabilities to provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities to be competitively employed, taxpaying citizens and participate more fully in their communities.

Mobile Workforce State Income Tax Simplification Act

Senator John Thune and Sherrod Brown introduced the Mobile Workforce State Income Tax Simplification Act on February 28. The legislation simplifies and standardizes state income tax collection for employees who travel outside of their home state for temporary work assignments. The bill would also help employers who must comply with withholding and reporting requirements. Under current law, individuals and employers face different state income tax reporting requirements in almost every state that vary based on length of stay, income earned, or both.

While some states require state income tax filing for as little as one day of work in the state, this legislation would establish a common-sense 30-day threshold to help ensure that an equitable tax is paid to the state and local jurisdiction where the work is being performed while alleviating burdensome tax requirements on employees and employers. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Finance.

Supporting Veterans in STEM Careers Act

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On February 25, legislation to help veterans build STEM careers passed the House of Representatives. H.R. 425, the Supporting Veterans in STEM Careers Act, instructs the National Science Foundation (NSF) to develop a veterans' outreach plan to connect them with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) job and educational opportunities. The NSF is required to include data on veterans' involvement in these fields in its annual "Indicators" report, and to amend its Noyce Teacher Scholarship program, fellowship program, and cyber grant programs to include outreach to veterans. The legislation also charges the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy with assessing how to increase veteran participation in STEM career fields. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) has introduced companion legislation in the Senate.

Reserve Component Employer Incentive, Compensation, and Relief Act

Introduced by Rep. Tim Ryan on January 25, this bill allows a tax credit for certain employers of reservists (i.e., members of the National Guard or a reserve component of the Armed Forces). The tax credit is equal to \$1,000 for each reservist employed during the year, plus an additional amount that ranges from \$3,000 to \$10,000, depending on the number of days the reservist serves in the uniformed services during the year. Specifically, the Reserve Component Employer Incentive, Compensation, and Relief Act of 2019 accomplishes the following:

- Amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a reservist employment credit. An employer can elect to have the tax credit not apply.
- The credit amount is equal to the sum of the credit for each reservist employed by an eligible employer during the taxable year.
- The reservist credit amount is equal to \$1,000 plus an additional amount dependent on the days of service in uniform during such year.
 - 30 to 89 days of service equates to \$3,000
 - 90 to 179 days of service equates to \$5,000
 - 180 plus days of service equates to \$10,000

A key difference between the Reserve Component Employer Incentive, Compensation, and Relief Act and similar past efforts is that this tax credit applies to all employers that hire and employ actively serving members of the Reserve Component. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Investing in American Workers Act

Introduced on February 25, S. 538 allows a business-related tax credit for employers who increase worker training expenditures.

The credit is equal to 20% of the excess of (1) the qualified training expenditures for the year, over (2) the average of the adjusted qualified training expenditures for the three previous years. If the employer had no qualified training expenditures in any one of the three previous years, the credit is equal to 10% of the adjusted qualified training expenditures for the year.

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The credit applies to expenditures for the training of non-highly compensated employees (annual compensation does not exceed \$82,000). The training must result in the attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential and be provided through

- an apprenticeship program;
- a program of training services that is included on a list of eligible training providers that states are required to maintain under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act;
- a program that is conducted by an area career and technical education school, a community college, or a labor organization; or
- a program that is sponsored and administered by an employer, industry trade association, industry or sector partnership, or labor organization.

Certain small businesses and tax-exempt organizations may apply the credit against payroll taxes, subject to specified limits and requirements. Eligible small businesses may also apply the credit against the alternative minimum tax. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Finance.

Infrastructure

Save the Internet Act

Congressman Mike Doyle introduced H.R. 1644 on March 8 to restore the open internet order of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The *Save the Internet Act* would prohibit internet service providers from blocking, throttling, or engaging in paid prioritization; close loopholes by empowering the FCC to stop unjust, unreasonable, and discriminatory practices; foster innovation and competition by ensuring fair and equal access to broadband for start-ups, small businesses, and entrepreneurs; and promote deployment and access to broadband for consumers and businesses in rural, suburban, and urban areas across America. This bill would empower the FCC to assist consumers with complaints against their internet service provider – and enforce and fine internet service providers for violations; expand its authority to promote access and adoption of broadband across the country through universal service funding; facilitate broadband deployment by ensuring fair access to utility poles, ducts, conduits, and rights-of-way; protect the privacy of internet service provider customers' account data; and ensure access to service for people with disabilities. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, which held a hearing on March 12. Senator Edward Markey introduced companion legislation (S. 682) in the Senate on March 6, which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

State Flood Mitigation Revolving Fund Act

Rep. Charlie Crist and Rep. Roger Williams introduced H.R. 1610 on March 7. The legislation designed to drive down flood insurance premiums by creating a low-interest loan program to help property owners better flood-proof their homes and businesses, protecting property and ultimately reducing post-disaster claims and recovery costs. The legislation has the support of Pew Charitable Trusts, Natural Resources Defense

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Council, Association of State Floodplain Managers, Property Casualty Insurance Association of America, Consumer Mortgage Coalition, The Nature Conservancy, and Union of Concerned Scientists. The State Flood Mitigation Revolving Fund Act would establish a state revolving loan program to help fund flood mitigation projects for homeowners, businesses, nonprofits, and communities. The program would allow states to offer low-interest loans to NFIP participants for flood mitigation projects to better protect their properties, reducing post-disaster claims. For those participating in the program, FEMA would offer NFIP premium reductions in line with mitigation efforts taken. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Financial Services.

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Congressional Schedule

March

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Senate in Session	2
3	4 Senate in Session	5 House & Senate in Session	6 House & Senate in Session	7 House & Senate in Session	8 House & Senate in Session	9
10	11 House & Senate in Session	12 House & Senate in Session	13 House & Senate in Session	14 House & Senate in Session	15 Senate in Session	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 House & Senate in Session	26 House & Senate in Session	27 House & Senate in Session	28 House & Senate in Session	29 Senate in Session	30

April

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 House & Senate in Session	2 House & Senate in Session	3 House & Senate in Session	4 House & Senate in Session	5 Senate in Session	6
7	8 Senate in Session	9 House & Senate in Session	10 House & Senate in Session	11 Senate in Session	12 Senate in Session	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 Good Friday Passover Begins	20
21 Easter	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29 House & Senate in Session	30 House & Senate in Session				

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