

Gray & Oscar LLC

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DT: 6/18/18
RE: CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE

This Week in Congress: The House's legislative wheels are kicking into high gear this week with enough major legislation coming out of its committees to fill the floor schedule for the next two to three months. Their legislative agenda will include a farm bill, a bill to overhaul the Department of Veterans Affairs entitled the Veterans Choice Program, the National Defense Authorization Act, the Administration's \$15 billion rescissions request, the FY19 appropriation bills, along with the reauthorization of the water infrastructure bill. Meanwhile, the Senate continued debate on several judicial nominations.

APPRENTICESHIP WEEK: This Infrastructure Week, North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU) called on Congress to act in a bi-partisan way and put America first with an infrastructure package that would achieve at least \$1 trillion in investment and create millions of jobs. NABTU will continue to push for action to solve America's critical infrastructure needs.

HEARINGS:

- The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies considered the FY2019 Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill on Wednesday.
- The Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee held a hearing on Wednesday on Heidi King's nomination to be Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
- The House Ways and Means Committee held a hearing on Wednesday on "Tax Reform: Growing our Economy and Creating Jobs."
- The United States Trade Representative (USTR) held a public hearing on Tuesday through Thursday on the Section 301 proposed tariffs on imports from China.

SPORTS GAMBLING: The Supreme Court ruled Monday that Congress took the wrong path when it effectively banned sports gambling. In a 6-3 opinion, the justices struck down key provisions of a 1992 federal law, known as the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PL 102-559), finding that it violates the 10th Amendment's delegation of regulatory power to the states. In doing so, the majority opinion written by Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. said that Congress can directly act to regulate sports gambling, but it can't do it by telling states what laws they can and cannot pass.

SCOTUS: This week, the Supreme Court issued opinions on several big employment and immigration cases.

- *NLRB v. Murphy Oil*, about whether employers may use arbitration agreements to block employees from engaging in class-action lawsuits.
- *Janus v. AFSCME*, about whether mandatory "fair share" fees that public-employee unions charge union non-members to cover their portion of collective bargaining costs constitute compelled speech. The justices are expected to rule against the fees, dealing a serious financial blow to public-employee unions.
- *Trump v. Hawaii*, about the constitutionality of the latest iteration of President Trump's travel ban policy. The justices appeared split on the policy during oral arguments in late April.

TRADE: A letter signed by 39 members of Congress addressed to Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross raising concerns that the product exclusion process for the Section 232 aluminum and steel tariffs is moving too slowly, creating a backlog of requests that places an undue burden on manufacturers. The letter urges the Secretary to make changes that would allow the process to move more quickly.

PRIMARY ELECTIONS: On Tuesday, May 15, 2018, voters in Pennsylvania, Nebraska, Idaho, and Oregon headed to the polls.

NORTH AMERICAN SHALE GAS EXPLORATION:

- ***President Trump to Announce RFS Program Changes:*** The Trump administration is preparing to formally announce changes to the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), which would include reducing the number of waivers granted to small refineries, redistributing waived obligations to other refineries and counting biofuels exports toward annual quotas.