

Beltway Buzz, February 28, 2025

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The *Beltway Buzz*[™] is a weekly update summarizing labor and employment news from inside the Beltway and clarifying how what's happening in Washington, D.C., could impact your business.

House Budget Resolution: No Tax on Tips? Nope. This week, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a budget resolution, a critical step in Republican lawmakers' plan to use the budgetary reconciliation process to score legislative wins on taxes, the border, defense spending, and energy production. But this is just a first step in what is expected to be an arduous legislative process: both the U.S. Senate and House must agree on the same budget resolution before the individual legislative committees in each chamber can begin drafting legislation as instructed by such a resolution. Accordingly, despite some internet rumors to the contrary, the House-passed budget resolution does not—by itself—eliminate taxes on overtime pay or tipped wages.

Regulatory EO Asserts More Control Over Independent Agencies. On February 18, 2025, President Trump issued an executive order (EO), entitled, "[Ensuring Accountability for all Agencies.](#)" The EO strengthens President Trump's authority over the executive branch—particularly over independent agencies such as the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and Federal Trade Commission—by ordering the following:

- Independent agencies will be required to submit proposed and final rules to the White House's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) for review. (Some agencies, such as the EEOC, already submit their rules for review by OIRA.)
- The director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will set "performance standards and management objectives for independent agency heads" and the director will also be required to "report periodically to the President on their performance and efficiency in attaining such standards and objectives."
- The OMB director is required to consult with agency chairs about their spending to prohibit them "from expending appropriations on particular activities, functions, projects, or objects, so long as such restrictions are consistent with law."
- The heads of agencies must "regularly consult with and coordinate policies and priorities" with the White House and submit strategic plans to OMB for approval.
- A White House Liaison will be established within each independent agency.
- Executive branch agencies—including independent agencies—are prohibited from advancing any policy "that contravenes the President or the Attorney General's opinion on a matter of law."

Along with the terminations of EEOC and NLRB members, the EO is an effort to align the policy objectives of independent agencies with those of the White House.

DOL Nominee News. This week, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) voted to approve Lori Chavez-DeRemer's nomination to be secretary of labor by a vote of 14–9. Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) voted “no,” while Democratic Senators Maggie Hassan (NH), John Hickenlooper (CO), and Tim Kaine (VA) voted in favor of the nomination. Chavez-DeRemer's nomination is now teed up for a vote on the Senate floor. The bipartisan nature of the committee vote indicates that Chavez-DeRemer has a good chance of being confirmed.

Additionally, the HELP Committee held a hearing to examine the nomination of Keith Sonderling to be deputy secretary of labor. The committee will vote on Sonderling's nomination on March 6, 2025.

FTC to Begin “Labor Markets Task Force.” According to media reports, Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Chair Andrew Ferguson announced at a recent event that the FTC will initiate a “labor markets task force.” The task force will reportedly focus on noncompete agreements, as well as no-hire and no-poach contracts. In June 2024, Ferguson voted against the FTC's non-compete rule while writing, “Whatever the Final Rule's wisdom as a matter of public policy, it is unlawful. Congress has not authorized us to issue it. The Constitution forbids it. And it violates the basic requirements of the Administrative Procedure Act.” The *Buzz* will be monitoring this situation as it develops.

DHS to Require Registration, Fingerprinting. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) [announced](#) that it is resuscitating a provision of the Immigration Nationality Act that will require all individuals “14 years of age or older who were not fingerprinted or registered when applying for a U.S. visa and who remain in the United States for 30 days or longer” to apply for registration and fingerprinting. After doing so, proof of this registration must be carried at all times by such individuals who are over the age of eighteen. The requirement dates back to World War II, but an eventual lack of an operable implementation procedure resulted in the abandonment of the policy. Individuals who will *not* have to register under this policy include, but are not limited to, lawful permanent residents, individuals with work permits, and visa holders with an arrival/departure record (Form I-94). Individuals who will have to register include the undocumented, previously registered children who turn fourteen, those present in the United States pursuant to programs such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals or Temporary Protected Status who do not have work permits, and Canadians who arrive via land ports of entry. According to the announcement, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) “will soon announce a form and process for aliens to complete the registration requirement.”

Capital Murder? Previously, we've discussed the caning of [Charles Sumner](#), as well as the 1798 brawl between representatives from [Vermont and Connecticut](#) over an accusation of stolen valor. And then there was the [deadly duel](#) in 1838 between Representatives William Graves of Kentucky and Jonathan Cilley of Maine that stemmed from criticism of President Martin Van Buren. Well, today marks the anniversary of another unfortunate instance of violence perpetrated within the halls of the U.S. Congress.

William Preston Taulbee was a Democratic representative from Kentucky who served in Congress from 1885 to 1889. During his time in Congress, Taulbee had a difficult relationship with a Kentucky journalist named Charles Kincaid, who wrote frequently—and critically—about Taulbee's political service. The breaking point came in late 1887, when Kincaid wrote a story about Taulbee engaging in an extramarital affair. This story sank Taulbee's political career, as he did not seek another term.

However, Taulbee became a lobbyist and, therefore, remained a frequent visitor in Congress. On February 28, 1890, a meeting between the two men became physical, causing Kincaid to retrieve his pistol, which he used later that day to shoot Taulbee when he confronted him on a staircase in the Capitol Building. Taulbee died eleven days later. The slight Kincaid—described as “a little pint-of-cider fellow”—later claimed self-defense and was acquitted of Taulbee’s murder. Amazingly, Kincaid’s attorney was sitting U.S. Senator Daniel W. Voorhees of Indiana, who, like Taulbee, was a Democrat.

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