

Senate to Continue Consideration of CJS Appropriations, Vote on Gun Control Amendments; House to Take Up Controversial Financial Services Appropriations

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Legislative Activity

House and Senate Floor Consideration Continues

This week, the **Senate** will continue consideration of H.R. 2578, the vehicle for the FY 2017 Commerce-Justice-Science (CJS) **Appropriations bill**. After a 15-hour filibuster from Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT) and other Democrats last week, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) agreed to bring gun control amendments to the floor for a vote, likely today. We expect votes on four amendments – two Democratic proposals and two Republican alternatives – addressing whether individuals on the terrorist watch list should be able to purchase guns and to extend background checks to gun shows and online sales. While talks are underway to reach a compromise, it is not expected that any of these amendments will pass. They were brought up in December, following the attack in San Bernardino, and all failed. Additional amendments regarding “sanctuary cities” and LGBT discrimination could also create problems for passage of the bill, which has already received a veto threat from President Obama due to provisions regarding Guantanamo Bay.

Continuing consideration of appropriations bills under a structured rule to prevent amendment dispute, the House is expected to take up H.R. 5485, the FY 2017 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill this week. The measure includes several contentious policy riders targeting the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) and other agencies, which are almost certain to draw Democratic opposition and a veto threat by the President.

By utilizing a structured rule for appropriations legislation, House leaders will likely prevent any controversial gun-related amendments from reaching the floor.

Congress has three working weeks before adjourning for a seven-week break for the national conventions in July and its annual August recess. With only three appropriations bills having gone through the Senate, and three through the House, a stopgap Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund the government beyond September 30, 2016, becomes more and more certain.

Zika Negotiations

The House and Senate conferees met for the first time on Wednesday to begin talks on emergency funding levels in response to the Zika crisis. As previously reported, the House bill, H.R. 5243, contains \$622 million to combat Zika for the remainder of FY 2016, while the Senate passed \$1.1 billion in emergency spending as part of H.R. 2577, which included Military Construction-Veterans Affairs appropriations. Disputes remain over funding levels and whether the funding requires offsets. House and Senate leadership have indicated that they expect to vote on a conference report this week.

This Week's Hearings:

- On Wednesday, June 22, the House Appropriations Committee will hold a markup of the Fiscal Year 2017 Homeland Security Bill. (The markup was scheduled to occur last week, but was postponed following the mass shooting in Orlando).

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