

Continuing Resolution and Zika Negotiations Persist, Vote Could Occur Early This Week

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Legislative Activity

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The Senate is likely to take a procedural cloture vote to move onto debate of the vehicle for the Fiscal Year 2017 Continuing Resolution (CR) as soon as Monday afternoon. Negotiations on the legislation occurred throughout the weekend, and compromise language and funding levels for Zika, emergency aid in Louisiana and Flint, Michigan, and a change in Export-Import Bank policy is expected. The package would also provide full fiscal year funding for the Military Construction and Veterans Administration programs, and is expected to adhere to fiscal 2016 spending levels and run through December 9. Although slated to be in session until the second week of October, many Republicans in the Senate would like to get back to their states as soon as possible ahead of close elections.

One of the most contentious policy issues for Zika negotiations- barring Puerto Rico's Planned Parenthood affiliate from receiving funding focused on contraception in the \$95 million allocation for Social Services Block Grants- is rumored to be "neutral" in order to get enough votes from Democrats. Additionally, the \$750 million in offsets for the funding is expected to be drastically lowered.

However, a change in a quorum requirement that has prevented the Export-Import Bank from approving financial transactions over \$10 million may add complications to the debate. President Obama requested the language, but many House and Senate conservatives are opposed, stating it amounts to "corporate welfare." Another rider would block the administration from relinquishing the Department of Commerce's oversight of the internet. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and some Republicans have expressed disappointment that the legislation is originating in the Senate, but due to factions in the House GOP caucus, moving a CR through the House first would be difficult. House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) remains committed to a series of "minibus" votes in December, which would combine two to three spending bills at a time.

This Week's Hearings:

- On Wednesday, September 21, the House Budget Committee will hold a hearing titled "Restoring the Trust for Families and Working-Age Americans." The witnesses will be:

- Edward Pivio, Resident Fellow/Co-director, International Center on Housing Risk, American Enterprise Institute
- G. Keith Smith, Managing Partner/Co-founder, Surgery Center of Oklahoma
- Thomas Lindsay, Director of Center for Higher Education, Texas Public Policy Foundation
- William Spriggs, Chief Economist, AFL-CI
- On Wednesday, September 21, the Senate Appropriations Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee will hold a hearing titled “Vulnerable Families and Individuals: Is There a Better Way?” The witnesses will be:
 - Richard Gentry, President and CE, San Diego Housing Commission
 - Dr. Edgar Olsen, Ph.D., Professor of Economics and Public Policy, University of Virginia
 - Ms. Erika Poethig, Fellow and Director of Urban Policy Initiative, Urban Institute
- On Wednesday, September 21, the Senate Appropriations Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee will hold a hearing titled “Prioritizing Public Health: The FDA’s Role in the Generic Drug Marketplace.” The witness will be:
 - The Honorable Janet Woodcock, M.D. Director, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, U.S. Food and Drug Administration

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