

Washington Insight



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Legislation to Renew Fast-Track Consideration for Trade Agreements Introduced

Thomas J. Spulak, Bonnie B. Byers

A much awaited trade promotion authority ("TPA") bill was introduced in the House and Senate on January 9 by Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp (R-MI) and Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT). The legislation (H.R. 3830/S. 1900) would provide for fast-track congressional consideration of trade agreements negotiated by the Administration, including the ongoing Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations with countries such as Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, and Japan and the nascent Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) negotiations between the United States and EU countries. [More »](#)

Congress Passes FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations Bill

George C. Crawford

House and Senate negotiators wrapped up the \$1.1 Trillion FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations with House and Senate passage occurring at the end of last week. Appropriators sought a short-term extension of the current Continuing Resolution to allow themselves enough time to tidy up the nearly 1600 page bill. The White House has indicated that the President will sign the bill. [More »](#)

An Insider's View: Obama's Mid-Term Blues

Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich

The always expected, and always unpleasant, mid-term blues has settled over the Obama Administration. It's not simply one issue generating crosswinds: The Affordable Care Act's sloppy debut, mass disruption within the individual insurance market, a bipartisan Congressional threat to a delicate Iranian nuclear deal, a resurgent Al Qaeda in Iraq, and still tepid job numbers makes for restless nights at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. [More »](#)

What's in Store For Tax Legislation in 2014

Michael A. Andrews

In the best of times, reforming the nation's tax code is an enormous challenge, and in the mid-term election year of 2014, the chance of passing comprehensive tax reform has evaporated. The tax legislation that will pass the Congress and be signed into law will most likely be a much less

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ambitious but very important tax extenders bill. [More »](#)

Dodd-Frank: The Volcker Vortex

J.C. Boggs

In its simplest form, the Dodd-Frank Act's Volcker Rule prohibits U.S. bank holding companies and their affiliates from engaging in "proprietary trading" and from sponsoring hedge funds and private equity funds. While the original idea was straightforward – to prevent speculative, excessively risky activity by insured depository institutions – drawing a clear line between proprietary trading and permissible market-making activity has proven much more difficult than many had anticipated. [More »](#)

Healthcare Update: But How Will They Pay For It?

David Farber

The end of 2013 proved a remarkable, albeit brief, period of bipartisanship as the Committees of jurisdiction worked together to adopt legislative solutions to several pressing national health care concerns. While the last few months of the year were peppered by continued hearings into the troubled kickoff of the federal Health Insurance Exchanges, and the even more troubled kickoff of their state counterparts, there were at least two major bipartisan healthcare achievements of note: passage of the Drug Quality and Safety Act (DQSA), and each Committee's adoption of a permanent solution to the "Sustainable Growth Rate" (or "SGR") Medicare physician payment issue. [More »](#)

Congress Taking Action to Address Data Security

J.C. Boggs, Lauren M. Donoghue

In the wake of major customer data breaches at Target and Neiman Marcus, lawmakers on Capitol Hill have quickly swung into action, scheduling a slew of hearings and introducing legislation designed to address the issue of data security to better protect Americans' personal information and ensure their privacy. [More »](#)

Members Seek Update to Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act

J.C. Boggs

On January 9, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 2279, the Reducing Excessive Deadline Obligations Act. The package, composed of three separate bills, seeks to modernize existing federal law and increase the role of the states in environmental cleanups under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA). [More »](#)

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