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Winning Strategies Washington

Winning Strategies Washington Report: May 15, 2020

House to Pass \$3 trillion HEROES Act. While states begin to determine economic reopening timelines and strategies, later today, the House is expected to pass the largest ever federal relief package, the \$3 Trillion [HEROES Act](#). This proposed package includes historic levels of aid to state and local governments, more direct aid to individuals, families and front-line workers, more resources for hospitals and for COVID-19 test and tracing, more aid to businesses and employees, more aid for K-12 and higher education, more aid for housing, transportation systems, and other Democratic priorities. See WSW's reports on how the HEROES Act would affect [health care](#), [higher education](#), [municipalities and public entities](#), [nonprofits](#), and [small businesses](#).

While we expect a largely partisan vote in the House today, Republican Rep. Peter King (NY) has indicated he will support the measure and may be joined by one or more Republican Members from areas particularly hard hit by COVID-19. Speaker Pelosi may also lose a few Democrat votes from both the progressive and moderate wings of her party, but as of press time, the loss of these votes is not expected to imperil passage.

Remember the House vote is just a first step: this package is a long way from becoming law.

Senate Outlook. While Senate Majority Leader McConnell downplayed the need for additional federal aid, the Chair of the Federal Reserve Powell [publicly encouraged](#) more direct aid and a variety of bipartisan coalitions have begun to emerge in the Senate around key provisions, including state and local aid, testing and contact tracing, and additional direct aid to employers and employees, as well as for specific regions and sectors such as securing the food chain supply, as well as making significant changes to existing programs such as the Paycheck Protection Program to increase its effectiveness for businesses and their employees. Key Senate Republican priorities include:

- Liability protection/litigation shield for businesses that reopen while the pandemic is ongoing
- Reform of the unemployment benefits that are making it difficult for employers to entice workers to come back on the payroll

Notably, while President Trump declared the HEROES Act "dead on arrival," he [indicated](#) a willingness this week to act on state and local aid as well as other

funding, tax and policy provisions that will specifically aid the reopening of state and local economies.

House Set to Approve Temporary Proxy Voting and Virtual Committee Proceedings. The other big change in Washington this week is temporary, but significant. Despite [significant opposition](#) from Republicans, the House is also set to approve proxy voting and virtual Committee proceedings for the next 45 days. This means that a Member who is present on the House floor may also cast "proxy" votes for up to 10 of their House colleagues who are not present but who have filed their specific voting instructions with the Clerk of the House. Similarly, Committees will be able to proceed with virtual hearings, meetings, and markups using technology platforms to be approved by the House. We expect these activities to commence almost immediately, as there is significant delayed action on key legislation such as the annual National Defense Authorization Act and the FY21 Appropriations bills.

The Congressional Emergency Remote Proceedings Work Plan can be found [here](#).

Your WSW team will be guiding you on navigating these altered proceedings to ensure that you and your organization continue to directly inform the work of key Members and Committees.

Additional notable developments in Washington this week include:

Operation Warp Speed: Accelerate Vaccine Research. President Trump [named](#) GlaxoSmithKline vaccine chief Moncef Slaoui and Army Materiel Command Gen. Gustave Perna to lead the search for a coronavirus vaccine.

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Hearing on COVID-19: Safely Getting Back to Work and School. Witnesses included: Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, Dr. Robert Redfield, Director of the Center for Disease Control, ADM Brett Giroir, MD, Assistant Secretary for Health and Human Services and Dr. Stephen Hahn, Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration. Read the WSW Hearing Report [here](#).

The Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing on Business Liability during the pandemic. The hearing focused on whether to shield businesses from litigation arising from opening for business while the coronavirus pandemic is ongoing. Read the WSW Hearing Report [here](#).

House Energy and Commerce Committee Held Hearing with Former BARDA Director Rick Bright who has filed a whistleblower complaint about the Trump Administration's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic grabbed significant [media](#) and political attention this week. Read the WSW Hearing Report [here](#).

Senate Banking Committee Approves Trump Administration Nominee, Brian Miller to Congressional Oversight Commission Created in the CARES

Act. Brian Miller, a White House Lawyer, will serve as a special inspector general overseeing the almost \$3 trillion already approved by Congress to respond to the coronavirus pandemic. The vote to approve his confirmation was along party lines. Miller's nomination will go to the full Senate for a vote.

WSW Coronavirus Information Library

Below are links to our updated Special Reports, which captures all of this last week's key developments in each area

[Counties and Municipalities](#)

[Health Care](#)

[Higher Education](#)

[Non-Profit](#)

[Small Businesses](#)