

Legislative deadlines loom as August recess comes to an end

August 31, 2017

After Congress returns from the August recess, the Senate will have 17 legislative days and the House will have 12 legislative days remaining before the September 30 deadline to agree upon and pass all discretionary appropriations legislation in order to avoid a government shutdown.

The House considered all 12 appropriations bills at the committee level and passed 4 of the bills on the floor before leaving for the August recess. The Senate, however, only completed 6 bills at the committee level and did not pass any on the floor before the recess. If Congress cannot pass a full appropriations bill by September 30, they may decide to pass a continuing resolution (CR) that would allow federal agencies and programs to continue operations by rolling over funding levels from the current fiscal year for a set period of time.

Additionally, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is set to expire on September 30 and will likely see a fierce debate over its reauthorization. The program, already more than \$24 billion in debt following natural disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, is \$5 billion away from reaching the maximum amount it is currently authorized to borrow. The recent flood damage from Hurricane Harvey further complicates this already-contentious debate, adding hurricane relief funding to Congress' September workload.

Congress must also negotiate an agreement to raise the debt ceiling within a few weeks, determining whether or not the U.S. will default on its loans.

Sources: E&E News, U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Senate
