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## COVID-19 Legislative Update

*August 20, 2020*

Please see below for updates on legislation related to COVID-19. Updates are published every Monday and Thursday evening. For past updates, click [here](#). For updates before May 8, click [here](#). If you believe you have been accidentally unsubscribed, you can re-subscribe [here](#).

### **8.20.2020. COVID-19 Legislative Update**

#### **Legislation**

##### ***Supplemental IV***

Timeline: While formal negotiations have yet to restart, there has been movement on both sides this week. **Leader McConnell and Senate Republicans released a “skinny bill” on Tuesday, outlining a position that might garner more Republican votes** than the HEALS Act would have. After reports of delays in mail and other issues, Speaker Pelosi called the House back to vote on an emergency U.S. Postal Service bill. The House Rules Committee will vote on the rule tomorrow with floor votes starting Saturday morning.

This week’s posturing and discussions of potential deals, while showing no concrete progress, is better than silence. It is hard to know whether to put hope into the statements being made now, however, as **the conventions will likely prevent bipartisan talks from restarting until September**. With the end of the fiscal year looming, it seems that leaders will need to either 1) come to an agreement in early September on the next COVID-19 bill and then later in the month pass a continuing resolution (CR) before fiscal year 2020 funding runs out on September 30, or 2) combine the CR and COVID-19 bill into one large package and pass it later in September. **If they do not pass a CR by September 30, the government will shut down.**

Process/Politics: The release of a skinny bill by Senate Republicans is likely an indicator that Leader McConnell is trying to improve Republicans’ negotiating stance by attempting to find a bill that could pass the Senate. Right now, Speaker Pelosi has the leverage of the

the bill introduced earlier this week.

**Democrats have remained insistent on not passing the next COVID relief package in a piecemeal fashion**, but Republicans have said the attempt at passing a single bill focused on the Postal Service undercuts that argument. Leader McConnell has insisted the Senate will not pass a bill that only focuses on the Postal Service.

While Democrats have remained considerably unified behind Speaker Pelosi, **there's been increased pressure from moderate and vulnerable members to pass additional COVID relief while members are back in D.C. for votes on Saturday**. There's been discussions about adding Rep. Beyer's [bill](#) that would tie unemployment insurance to economic indicators. The New Democrat Coalition led a [letter](#), signed by 117 Democrats, [calling](#) for a vote on the bill while members are back this weekend. Rep. Axne sent a [letter](#) to Speaker Pelosi asking her to bring a "simplified, straightforward" package to the floor on Saturday.

Policy: Senate Republicans [released](#) a pared down COVID recovery bill on Tuesday, which would include funding for unemployment insurance through the end of the year, funding for the Paycheck Protection Program, liability protections, and health and education funding. It does not include individual stimulus payments, the non-Labor HHS appropriations included in HEALS, and tax incentives. Notably, **there is no inclusion of Democratic priorities like funding for state/local/tribal governments and childcare** (among other things). Text of the Delivering Immediate Relief to America's Families, Schools and Small Businesses Act [here](#). Highlights include:

- Provides **liability protections** to businesses and healthcare providers;
- Provides \$300 per week in enhanced **unemployment insurance** through the end of the year;
- Allows small businesses to take out a **second Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan** if they have revenue loss of 35 percent or more (HEALS set the threshold at 50 percent or more);
- Provides \$257.7 billion for PPP, which includes \$100 billion in unused funds;
- \$105 billion for **Education Stabilization Fund** (66 percent for K-12 and 29 percent for higher education and 5 percent to governors to use for either higher education or K-12);
- \$29 billion for **vaccine and treatment** development and distribution;
- \$16 billion for **testing/contact tracing**; and,
- \$10 billion for the **U.S. Postal Service** – the bill would convert a \$10 billion loan to the USPS into a grant if the USPS falls below \$8 billion in cash on hand.

On Saturday, the House will be voting on the Delivering for America Act (H.R. 8015) and some additional policies to the bill. Text [here](#). Highlights include:

- Prohibition of the closing of Post Offices, other facilities, and “Blue Boxes”.
- Disallow the prohibition of overtime.
- Mandate that all elections mail is treated as First Class.
- \$25 billion for emergency funding to ensure the above provisions are executed.

The House could also end up voting on Rep. Beyer’s unemployment insurance bill on Saturday as well. Text of the Worker Relief and Security Act [here](#). Summary [here](#). Press Release [here](#).

**HEALS:** Senate Republicans released the eight-bill package the Health, Economic Assistance, Liability Protection, and Schools (HEALS) Act on July 27. See the following for the individual bills. *American Workers, Families, and Employers Assistance Act* (Senate Finance Committee provisions) text [here](#), section by section [here](#). *Continuing Small Business Recovery and Paycheck Protection Program Act* (Small Business provisions) press release [here](#), text [here](#), section by section [here](#), one pager [here](#). *Coronavirus Response Additional Supplemental Appropriations Act* (Appropriations provisions) text [here](#), summary [here](#). *Restoring Critical Supply Chains and Intellectual Property Act* (Supply Chain and Research provisions) text [here](#), section by section [here](#). *SAFE TO WORK Act* (Liability Relief) text [here](#), section by section [here](#). *Safely Back to School and Back to Work Act* (Health, Education, and Labor Provisions) text [here](#), section by section [here](#). *Supporting America’s Restaurant Workers Act* text [here](#). *TRUST Act* text [here](#), section by section [here](#), one pager [here](#).

The House passed the Democrats’ opening bid for the next bill, the Heroes Act, on May 15. While it’s been over two months since House passage of the bill and the contours of the debate and which issues are most pressing have shifted slightly, it can still serve as a marker of what Senate Republicans will be responding to in their bill. Heroes Act text (as of 5/12/2020) [here](#). Section by section [here](#). One pager [here](#). State and Local one pager [here](#). NCAI’s summary on tribal provisions [here](#). Manager’s amendment [here](#). House Rules Committee report [here](#).

### **Passed Legislation**

Moving forward, this section will only include new information and guidance. For past information and guidance and passed legislation, please refer to the [archives](#). For a summary of all supplementals, please see [here](#).

### ***New Implementation Information and Guidance***

- 8/14 – The Health and Human Services Administration and Health Resources and Services Administration [announced](#) they would be distributing an additional \$1.4 billion in targeted funding to almost 80 free-standing children’s hospitals nationwide. The announcement noted that children’s hospitals have seen decreasing patient visits and increased costs during the COVID-19 pandemic. This distribution will help to ensure children’s hospitals receive relief proportional to other hospitals across the nation and providers caring for children are able to continue operating safely in

**Members of Congress in Quarantine or Treatment** (new additions in bold)

Tested Positive (1): **Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA)**

Currently Self-Quarantined (1):

Recovered (12): Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY), Rep. Joe Cunningham (D-SC), Rep. Ben McAdams (D-UT), Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL), Rep. Mike Kelly (R-PA), Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-NY), Rep. Neal Dunn (R-FL), Rep. Tom Rice (R-SC), Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-VA), Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-TX), Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ), Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL)

Completed Quarantine (45): Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX), Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC)\*, Sen. Lindsay Graham (R-SC), Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA), Rep. Sharice Davids (D-KS), Rep. Doug Collins (R-GA), Rep. Paul Gosar (R-AZ), Sen. Cory Gardner (R-CO), Sen. Rick Scott (R-FL), Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL), Rep. Jason Crow (D-CO), Rep. Julia Brownley (D-CA), Rep. Ben Ray Luján (D-NM), Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI), Rep. Stephanie Murphy (D-FL), Rep. John Yarmuth (D-KY), Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA), Rep. Vincente Gonzalez (D-TX), Rep. Drew Ferguson (R-GA), Rep. David Schweikert (R-AZ), Rep. Anthony Brindisi (D-NY), Rep. David Price (D-NC), Rep. Ann Wagner (R-MO), Rep. Kathleen Rice (D-NY), Rep. Matt Cartwright (D-PA), Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK), Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA), Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-FL), Rep. Andy Kim (D-NJ), Rep. Kendra Horn (D-OK), Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT), Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT), Rep. Katie Porter (D-CA), Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA), Rep. Lizzie Fletcher (D-TX), Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ), Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), Rep. Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ), Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Rep. Randy Weber (R-TX), Rep. Kay Granger (R-TX), Rep. Mike Johnson (R-LA), Rep. Jody Hice (R-GA), **Rep. Guy**

**Reschenthaler (R-PA)**

\*Mark Meadows quarantined March 9 – 12 after coming in contact with a CPAC attendee who tested positive. On March 20, he resigned from his position in the House to become the White House Chief of Staff.



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