



International Right of Way Association Weekly Update

Monday, May 27, 2019

Trump Administration

- The President met with congressional Democrats last week for their follow-up discussion on infrastructure legislation. The meeting only lasted a few minutes as the President referenced accusatory comments that Speaker Pelosi had made earlier that day before adjourning the meeting. The President stated that he will not work with congressional Democrats on infrastructure until they stop investigating his Administration.
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2019/05/22/trump-wants-mexico-canada-trade-deal-approved-before-infrastructure/3744090002/>

Congress

- Both Chambers are in recess this week.
- A \$19 billion disaster aid package that the Senate passed and the White House blessed nearly cleared the House on Friday. One Member objected to Speaker Pelosi's plans to pass the bill without a recorded vote, so consideration of the bill will occur next week when the House is back in session. <https://www.cnn.com/2019/05/24/politics/disaster-relief-bill-house-chip-roy/index.html>

Analysis

- As we had noted previously, even if both sides did not agree to \$2 trillion in specific "pay-fors" for infrastructure legislation, the meeting last week would have been a success if both sides stayed at the negotiating table and came out of the meeting with a positive, unified message. That did not happen, unfortunately, and both sides have dug in on political messaging.
- Speaker Pelosi accused the President of engaging in a "cover up" minutes before the infrastructure meeting was scheduled to begin last week, inciting the President's comments that he will not work on a bi-partisan infrastructure deal while the House is investigating his Administration. After the meeting, Speaker Pelosi stated that she prays for the President and for the Nation.
https://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2019/05/22/pelosi_after_trump_walked_out_of_infrastructure_meeting_i_pray_for_the_president_and_the_country.html
- Unless there is a radical change in the dynamic between the White House and the House of Representatives, it is unlikely that any significant bi-partisan deals will emerge

this year. Spending legislation may be the only potential exception. However, it is difficult to see a path forward even on spending bills given the political stakes of the border security funding issue.