



International Right of Way Association Weekly Update

Monday, April 24, 2017

Trump Administration

- President Trump signed an Executive Order on Tuesday directing the executive branch to maximize the use of federal buy American and hire American laws, including minimizing the use of waivers. The Executive Order also directed the Secretary of State, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Labor, and the Secretary of Homeland Security to examine ways to reform the H-1B visa program. (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/04/18/presidential-executive-order-buy-american-and-hire-american>)
- Secretary Chao plans to appoint James Ray, a principal at KPMG and former Bush Administration official, to be senior advisor on infrastructure at the U.S. Department of Transportation. (<http://thehill.com/policy/transportation/329287-transportation-department-plans-new-top-level-spots-to-oversee-trumps>)

Congress

- Congress returns from a two week recess with a Friday deadline to reach a deal to continue funding the government. President Trump remains insistent that the deal includes funding for a border wall. (<http://www.npr.org/2017/04/24/525335478/congress-focused-on-averting-government-shutdown-but-trump-wants-more>)
- Speaker Ryan is also working to guide efforts on a new healthcare bill after the failure of the American Health Care Act in March. (<http://www.cnn.com/2017/04/21/politics/health-care-reform-dave-brat-swamp-cnntv/>)

Analysis

- This Saturday will mark President Trump's 100th day in office, which may be one reason he is pushing for funding of the border wall and another healthcare vote. (<https://www.reviewjournal.com/news/politics-and-government/trump-faces-challenging-week-with-budget-health-care-battles/>) Regardless of the reason, however, the fact of the matter is that insisting on funding for the border wall and reviving intra-party and inter-party debate over healthcare will not make the already difficult task of passing and enacting a funding deal by Friday's deadline any easier.
- It is natural that President Trump would want to see progress on achieving his campaign promises, but there is also the long-game to keep in mind. Legislative battles do not

happen in isolation, and the way negotiations progress in one debate will color the politics of the next. With the exception of Justice Gorsuch's confirmation, which required a rules change in the Senate, progress on all of President Trump's priorities have been slow. How the debt limit, fiscal year 2018 funding, tax reform, and infrastructure issues progress will depend in large part on how President Trump and congressional leadership navigate the government shut-down deadline and the new healthcare efforts this week.

- The President continues to take executive action in support of his priorities, such as the Buy American and Hire American Executive Order, but these actions do not carry the force of law and can only guide executive branch implementation of existing law. The President will need to rely on Congress to achieve his ultimate goals.