



## International Right of Way Association Weekly Update

Monday, December 23, 2019

### The White House

- The President signed a government-funding bill prior to last week's deadline that would provide appropriations for the remainder of fiscal year 2020. The law \$48.5 billion for federal highway programs, \$1 billion for the BUILD grant program, and funds most other federal transportation programs at or above last year's enacted levels.

### Congress

- Both Chambers are in recess this week.
- The House approved two articles of impeachment against the President last week, but Speaker Pelosi has not yet transmitted those articles to the Senate where the impeachment trial will occur.
- The House also passed the USMCA trade agreement before recessing. The Senate will consider the trade deal next year. <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/12/19/house-passes-trumps-usmca-trade-agreement.html>

### Analysis

- The House's actions this past week tell an interesting story. First and foremost, the House voted to impeach the President. However, the House also approved a bipartisan government funding deal as well as the President's signature trade agreement. The message the House majority wants to push is that they can get things done even though they have been focused on impeachment. The reality is not quite so clear cut. Neither party would look good shutting down the government less than a week before Christmas, so there was a large incentive to negotiate that deal. And the USMCA trade agreement will likely have a positive impact on many of the swing districts Democrats will need to maintain the House majority. It is also true, of course, that an infrastructure bill would benefit swing district voters. However, it remains to be seen whether the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will be able to negotiate a bipartisan infrastructure bill next year after the partisan pipeline safety bill and the letter the Republican leaders of the Committee sent to Speaker Pelosi complaining about it.