



International Right of Way Association Weekly Update

Monday, January 28, 2019

Government Shutdown

- On Friday, the White House and Congress reached an agreement to temporarily reopen the government, ending the longest shut down in history. The shuttered agencies will reopen and operate under a continuing resolution until February 15th. This gives the White House and Congress three weeks to negotiate funding for the remainder of fiscal year 2019.
- The President has said that another shutdown is possible, as is the use of emergency authority to divert existing disaster funds to pay for a border wall, if Congress does not agree to provide the \$5.7 billion the President has requested.

<https://www.cnbc.com/2019/01/28/trump-on-government-shutdown-border-wall-funding-deal-wsj.html>

Trump Administration

- Shahira Knight, the White House legislative affairs director, announced her plans to leave the Administration. After DJ Gribbin left the White House last year and Alex Herrgott became Director of the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council, Knight has been the lone individual at the White House discussing infrastructure on Capitol Hill.

Congress

- Both Chambers are in session this week, as Congress continues to negotiate a funding solution for the remainder of fiscal year 2019.
- The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will hold a confirmation hearing for Nicole Nason, nominee for Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration.

<https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2019/1/hearing-on-the-nomination-of-nicole-r-nason-to-be-administrator-of-the-federal-highway-administration>

Analysis

- Despite the temporary deal reached on Friday, the border security and government funding issue does not show any signs of loosening its grip on the attention of Congress and the White House. While Congress is beginning to work on infrastructure legislation, until the border security issue is resolved, it is unlikely that an infrastructure deal will be reached between the White House and House Democrats. And with the White House legislative director leaving, it is unclear who interested Members of Congress should even approach at the White House about infrastructure issues.