Legislative Group COVID-19 Update

March 21, 2020 | 4:39 p.m.

Congressional and Legislative Updates

Senators continued their negotiations on the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act or "Phase Three") last night and into today. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has set a soft 5 p.m. deadline to wrap up negotiations in order to give legislative counsel enough time to draft and have the bill ready for a vote tomorrow (Sunday). At this point we anticipate that the vote to end debate on the CARES Act will happen tomorrow at 3 p.m.

Certain pieces of the legislation already have bipartisan support, such as the small business provisions, though they continue to be refined. Some parts of the legislation have been the source of more robust negotiations, such as paid leave, direct assistance to states, unemployment insurance (UI), and the exchange stabilization fund. Regarding the latter, negotiations on the fund have been centered on whether the amount provided to Treasury is large enough and who can access it.

As we reported yesterday, today is the intervening day on the cloture petition filed on the motion to proceed to H.R. 748, the intended vehicle for Phase Three. The cloture vote will occur on Sunday at 3pm, one hour after the Senate reconvenes, which we expect at 2pm.

White House Press Conference Notes

President Trump

- Team is going to the Hill this afternoon to discuss further legislation with Republicans and Democrats.

- Have been in communication with countries all around the world, 148 of which have cases of the virus.

- Approved major disaster declaration for the state of New York.

  ◦ Used Stafford Act, working closely with Governor Newsom and considering similar action for California.

- Call yesterday with 12,000+ small business owners and ensured them that the administration is doing all it can to help.

Vice President Pence

- Testing is expanding rapidly.

- Administration's team is on the Hill as we speak.

- Pence staffer tested positive; Pence and his wife are being tested this afternoon.

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