

National Legislative Division Weekly

CONGRESS

The Republican leadership has been slowly naming Members to committees this week. It appears that the majority-to-minority ratios on the committees will remain roughly the same, although some committees may gain a few members and some may shrink a bit. However, at this point, no committee has announced hearings in the near future.

In the meantime, new Speaker McCarthy (R-CA) already faces his first legislative crisis. As of Thursday afternoon, the US Treasury is officially using extreme measures to service the national debt. Republicans want Democrats and the Administration to negotiate for savings from mandatory programs (such as Social Security and Medicare) before they will raise the debt limit. It is important to remember that the debt limit addresses money the US government has already spent. Creating savings in future spending does not prevent the country from defaulting on its current debt. The Treasury should be able to service the debt using those extreme measures for several months. According to a letter from Treasury Secretary Yellen to Congress, the government will continue to pay federal workers, Medicare providers, investors who hold US debt, and other recipients of federal dollars (such as Social Security payments and VA payments) at least until early June.

The White House has accused House Republicans of engaging in “economic vandalism” due to their demands. Congressional Democrats have made clear they have no intention (at this point) to negotiate for a debt limit increase.

Sen. Manchin (D-WV) says he has spoken with McCarthy about creating “rescue committees” for each government trust fund facing solvency issues, including for Social Security and Medicare. The top two Republican and Democrat congressional leaders would each name three members to each committee, resulting in 12-member bipartisan panels. In the last Congress, Manchin and Sen. Romney (R-UT) introduced legislation to do this as a nonbinding amendment to the FY21 budget resolution. At that time, 21 Democratic Senators joined all 50 Republicans in voting for the measure. Notably, Senate Majority Leader Schumer (D-NY) voted against it. The measure has not yet been formally introduced in the 118th Congress. The House version of this resolution also had a bipartisan slate of cosponsors.

One of the first changes House Republicans made this month was eliminating proxy voting. With a majority of only nine Members, McCarthy must either convince his entire Caucus to agree with key votes or woo over some Democrats. This will undoubtedly make it harder for him to make any compromises on the debt limit process. McCarthy agreed to a provision that would allow a single member of the Republican Caucus to challenge his continuing in the role. Previously, a petition from multiple Members was required to force a vote to vacate the position.

2023 WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

The American Legion's Washington Conference will be back in person in 2023. This event allows our organization's leadership to meet with elected officials to discuss legislative initiatives and priorities important to Legion members and their families. It also provides a forum that allows Legionnaires to hear

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from senators, representatives, and officials from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as they address our members at the conference.

To learn more information, please click [here](#).

LEGIONNAIRE OF THE WEEK

In an effort to recognize the weekly accomplishments of our Legionnaires, we will spotlight an individual every week. These individuals demonstrate exceptional grassroots activism by meeting with/contacting their Congressional Representative/Senator to advocate for veterans. Efforts like these truly make a difference and give veterans a voice in Congress.

Whitney McIntosh, Iowa

This week, we are excited to recognize Whitney McIntosh from the Department of Iowa for meeting with Rep. Nunn (R-IA) and his staff at an open house for his office in Des Moines, Iowa. Ms. McIntosh later set up a one-on-one meeting with the Congressman and learned that he has a position available in his office for an 80% disabled veteran to aid in veterans services.

Thank you, Ms. McIntosh!

If you have made a grassroots effort and would like to be considered for next week's "Legionnaire of the Week," please fill out the Congressional Contact Report Form [here](#). You can also email me at kisaacson@legion.org.

UPCOMING HEARINGS

There will be no hearings next week.