



AMI February Monthly Report

Last Updated: March 15, 2023

Washington Update

February marked the true beginning of the 118th Congress now that all Committees are fully formed and organized. This also brought the first substantial hearings of the year which laid the groundwork of the Committee work and priorities this Congress. Lobbyit monitored all pertinent committee activities with an eye towards appropriations season.

State of the Union

On February 7th, President Joe Biden exhorted Congress to work with him to “finish the job” of rebuilding the economy and uniting the nation as he delivered a State of the Union address aimed at reassuring a country beset by pessimism and making the subtle argument ahead of an expected Spring re-election announcement.

In his 73-minute speech, Biden sought to illustrate substantial improvements compared to the state of the country two years ago: from a reeling economy to one prosperous with new jobs; from a crippled, pandemic-weary nation to one that has now reopened, and an overwhelming bipartisan infrastructure package that rivals President Eisenhower’s investment.

Members of both parties coalesced around their messaging in favor of or criticizing President Biden’s address to the nation.

Debt Ceiling

The debt limit—commonly called the debt ceiling—is the maximum amount of debt that the Department of the Treasury can issue to the public or to other federal agencies. The amount is set by law and has been increased or suspended over the years to allow for the additional borrowing needed to finance the government’s operations. On December 16, 2021, lawmakers raised the debt limit by \$2.5 trillion to a total of \$31.4 trillion. On January 19, 2023, that limit was reached, and the Treasury announced a “debt issuance suspension period” during which, under current law, it can take well-established “extraordinary measures” to borrow additional funds without breaching the debt ceiling.

The Congressional Budget Office projects that, if the debt limit remains unchanged, the government’s ability to borrow using extraordinary measures will be exhausted between July and September 2023—that is, in the fourth quarter of the current fiscal year. The projected exhaustion date is uncertain because the timing and amount of revenue collections and outlays over the intervening months could differ from CBO’s projections. Income tax receipts in April could be more or less than CBO estimates. If those receipts fell short of estimated amounts—for example, if capital gains realizations in 2022 were smaller or if U.S. income growth slowed by more in early calendar year 2023 than CBO projected—the extraordinary measures could be exhausted sooner, and the Treasury could run out of funds before July.

If the debt limit is not raised or suspended before the extraordinary measures are exhausted, the government would be unable to pay its obligations fully. As a result, the government would have to delay making payments for some activities, default on its debt obligations, or both.

Presidential Budget Set for March Publication

The Biden Administration has signaled that its budget proposal will publish on March 9th. President Biden’s budget proposal must navigate a divided Congress where House Republicans will seek to reduce spending and limit additional spending that could add to ongoing inflationary pressures. President Joe Biden has also pledged to raise taxes on the “ultra wealthy” while toeing the line of avoiding tax increases on Americans making less than \$400,000 a year.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has examined baseline projections of what the federal budget and economy would look like if current tax policy remain unchanged. CBO projects a federal budget deficit of \$1.4 trillion for 2023. In the agency’s projections, deficits generally increase over the coming years; the shortfall in 2033 is \$2.7 trillion. The deficit amounts to 5.3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2023, swells to 6.1 percent of GDP in 2024 and 2025, and then declines in the two years that follow. After 2027, deficits increase again, reaching 6.9 percent of GDP in 2033—a level exceeded only five times since 1946.

Although the CBO is a nonpartisan agency, expect both parties to spin data to their favor as Congress parses spending details to avoid a year-end shutdown if government funding expires.

Outreach for February

AMI and Lobbyit touched base in February to discuss goals for the upcoming legislative session. We are working to insert AMI as a subject matter expert on the Clean Vessel Act and make inroads with the Congressional Boating Caucus.

EPA Issues Clean Water Act Protections in Alaska

The Environmental Protection Agency announced federal protections for Alaska's Bristol Bay watershed under the Clean Water Act, in a major victory for environmentalists and Indigenous groups, which have fought against the development of Pebble Mine for over two decades. The move will bar a proposed gold and copper mine that would have destroyed the world's largest sockeye salmon fishery. Alannah Hurley, executive director of the United Tribes of Bristol Bay, said, "The EPA has not only restored its commitment to science and law but truly listened to the original stewards and first peoples' of this land."

Meanwhile, the Biden administration is expected to greenlight a scaled-down oil and gas development project in northern Alaska led by ConocoPhillips known as the Willow project. Environmental and Indigenous groups have long warned it would disrupt fragile wildlife and contribute to the climate crisis.

Lawsuit Orders EPA to Update Ship Ballast Water Dumping Rules

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency missed deadlines to update pollution standards for ballast discharges from ships, according to a lawsuit filed by environmental groups claiming the government's inaction is threatening American waters.

Friends of the Earth and the Center for Biological Diversity said in a lawsuit filed in federal court in San Francisco on Monday that the EPA was more than two years late in developing new standards for ship pollution as mandated by Congress. A 2018 amendment to the Clean Water Act required the agency by 2020's end to develop new standards that could incorporate new technologies to protect against invasive species and human pathogens being dumped into U.S. waterways, the lawsuit said.

Those discharges cause an estimated \$9 billion in annual damages to U.S. industry, coastlands and aquatic resources, according to the complaint.

Bills by Issue

Association of Marina Industries (9)

State	Bill Number	Last Action	Status	Position	Priority	FN Outlook
US	HR 186	Referred To The Subcommittee On Water Wildlife And Fisheries 2023 02 21	In House	None	None	9.9% 73.1%
Title Water Supply Permitting Coordination Act			Introduction Date: 2023-01-09			
Primary Sponsors Tom McClintock						

State	Bill Number	Last Action	Status	Position	Priority	FN Outlook
US	HR 215	Referred To The Subcommittee On Water Wildlife And Fisheries 2023 02 21	In House	Monitor	Medium	12.4% 69.6%

Title
WATER for California Act

Primary Sponsors
David Valadao

Bill Summary: Last edited by Jacob Kohn at Feb 24, 2023, 2:24 PM
This bill focuses on streamlining operations, expanding water storage infrastructure, and increasing accountability. The extreme storms, rainfall, and flooding impacting California right now highlight the importance of increasing water storage to capture this rainfall. The WATER for California Act expands water storage infrastructure so that we are better prepared for future storms and can make use of this water during dry years. Among other provisions, the WATER for California Act: - Requires the Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP) be operated consistent with the 2019 regulations, which were independently peer-reviewed and informed by the most accurate, best available science, but allows modification under certain circumstances. - Helps to ensure CVP and SWP water stakeholders receive the water they contract and pay for. - Provides eligibility for funding for the Shasta Enlargement Project. - Reauthorizes the successful surface water storage project program and coordinated operations of the CVP and SWP established by the WIIN Act.

Introduction Date: 2023-01-09

State	Bill Number	Last Action	Status	Position	Priority	FN Outlook
US	HR 289	Referred To The Subcommittee On Water Wildlife And Fisheries 2023 02 21	In House	Monitor	Medium	9.0% 66.2%

Title
Protect Our Water Rights Act

Primary Sponsors
Doug LaMalfa

Bill Summary: Last edited by Jacob Kohn at Feb 24, 2023, 2:25 PM
- Mandates 100% contract water deliveries to water districts by Reclamation in normal or above normal precipitation years and guarantees additional water in dry years. - Require in-person field briefings and outreach, in each county where a Central Valley Project (CVP) water contractor is located, after Reclamation's initial allocation announcements and before the allocation announcement for April is made. - Reduces or eliminates the operation and maintenance (O&M) payments required to be paid by CVP water contractors, based on reductions in water allocations. - Requires the Bureau of Reclamation to assess and report on what debt is still owed by the irrigators of the Klamath Project. - Prohibits the Bureau of Reclamation from releasing stored water created by the Klamath Project in Upper Klamath Lake, except for agricultural and refuge purposes associated with State-adjudicated water rights, and to otherwise maximize total storage volume in Upper Klamath Lake.

Introduction Date: 2023-01-11

State	Bill Number	Last Action	Status	Position	Priority	FN Outlook
US	HR 873	Referred To The Committee On Transportation And Infrastructure And In Addition To The Committees On Energy And Commerce And Science Space And Technology For A Period To Be Subsequently Determined By The Speaker In Each Case For Consideration Of Such Provisions As Fall Within The Jurisdiction Of The Committee Concerned 2023 02 08	In House	None	None	8.1% 74.4%

Title Introduction Date: 2023-02-08
Water Quality and Environmental Innovation Act

Primary Sponsors
Byron Donalds

State	Bill Number	Last Action	Status	Position	Priority	FN Outlook
US	HR 1152	Ordered To Be Reported By Voice Vote 2023 02 28	In House	Monitor	Low	29.8% 71.7%

Title Introduction Date: 2023-02-24
Water Quality Certification and Energy Project Improvement Act of 2023

Primary Sponsors
David Rouzer

State	Bill Number	Last Action	Status	Position	Priority	FN Outlook
US	HR 1181	Referred To The Subcommittee On Water Resources And Environment 2023 02 27	In House	None	None	4.3% 80.9%

Title Introduction Date: 2023-02-24
To amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act with respect to permitting terms, and for other purposes.

Primary Sponsors
John Garamendi

State	Bill Number	Last Action	Status	Position	Priority	FN Outlook
US	S 64	Read Twice And Referred To The Committee On Energy And Natural Resources 2023 01 25	In Senate	None	None	21.2% 72.9%

Title Introduction Date: 2023-01-25
Water Rights Protection Act of 2023

Description

Water Rights Protection Act of 2023 This bill prohibits the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture from * conditioning the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of any permit or other land use or occupancy agreement (permit) on the transfer of any water right to the United States or on any impairment of title granted or otherwise recognized under state law by federal or state action; * requiring any water user (including a federally recognized Indian tribe) to apply for or acquire a water right in the name of the United States under state law as a condition of the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of such a permit; or * conditioning or withholding the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of such a permit on limiting the date, time, quantity, location of diversion or pumping, or place of use of a state water right beyond any limitations under state water law, or on the modification of the terms and conditions of groundwater withdrawal, guidance and reporting procedures, or conservation and source protection measures established by a state. In developing any rule or similar federal action relating to the issuance, renewal, amendment, or extension of any permit, such departments (1) shall recognize the longstanding water use authority of the states and coordinate with the states to ensure that any federal action is consistent with applicable state water law, and (2) shall not adversely affect the authority of a state in permitting the beneficial use of water or adjudicating water rights.

Primary Sponsors

John Barrasso

State	Bill Number	Last Action	Status	Position	Priority	FN Outlook
US	S 115	Read Twice And Referred To The Committee On Environment And Public Works 2023 01 26	In Senate	None	None	38.0% 75.3%

Title Introduction Date: 2023-01-26
Clean Water Allotment Modernization Act of 2023

Primary Sponsors

Marco Rubio

State	Bill Number	Last Action	Status	Position	Priority	FN Outlook
US	S 161	Read Twice And Referred To The Committee On Health Education Labor And Pensions 2023 01 31	In Senate	Monitor	Medium	26.2% 77.2%

Title
JOBS Act of 2023

Primary Sponsors
Tim Kaine

Bill Summary: Last edited by Jacob Kohn at Feb 15, 2023, 3:38 PM
Specifically, the JOBS Act would amend the Higher Education Act by:
Expanding Pell Grant eligibility to students enrolled in rigorous and high-quality, short-term skills and job training programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials and certificates and ultimately employment in high-wage, high-skill industry sectors or careers Ensuring students who receive Pell Grants are earning high-quality postsecondary credentials by requiring that the credentials: - Meet the standards under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), such as meaningful career counseling and aligning programs to in-demand career pathways or registered apprenticeship programs - Are recognized by employers, industry, or sector partnerships - Align with the skill needs of industries in the state or local economy - Are approved by the state workforce board in addition to the U.S. Department of Education Defining eligible job training programs as those providing career and technical education instruction at an institution of higher education, such as a community or technical college that provides: - At least 150 clock hours of instruction time over a period of at least 8 weeks - Training that meets the needs of the local or regional workforce and industry partnerships - Streamlined ability to transfer credits so students can continue to pursue further education in their careers - Students with licenses, certifications, or credentials that meet the hiring requirements of multiple employers in the field for which the job training is offered

Introduction Date: 2023-01-31