



### Greetings!

During the month of July, Lobbyit met with Senate Commerce committee staff to discuss legislation areas that may impact AMI, as well as Senator Kaine's office to discuss the BUILDS Act.



### Stakeholder Activity

#### Meeting with Senate Commerce Committee

This month, Lobbyit focused its efforts on the Senate side in order to develop ways to elevate AMI's presence. First, Lobbyit sat down with Emily Patroliia on the Senate

Commerce committee, who is also a Sea Grant fellow. Ms. Patroliia is very knowledgeable about maritime policy, and she was able to provide some insight into areas in which AMI may be interested in pursuing legislatively. For example, various portions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act are often up for amendment. Most recently, Congressman Graves and Senator Cassidy introduced companion bills that would provide for the management of red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico. While there may not be any active legislation that impacts AMI at the moment, LobbyIt was sure to communicate AMI's presence and will continue to work with Ms. Patroliia to elevate AMI's policy interests going forward.

### **Meeting with Senator Kaine's Office**

Earlier this month, Senators Kaine (D-VA) and Portman (R-OH) introduced a bipartisan piece of legislation known as the BUILDS Act. This piece of legislation would require the Secretary of Labor to award grants that would promote industry and sector partnerships in order to encourage industry growth and improve worker training, retention, and advancement. Among other things, the BUILDS Act would help businesses by:

- - Providing assistance in navigating the registration process for registered apprenticeships;
  - Connecting businesses and education providers for development of classroom curriculum to complement on-the-job learning;
  - Serving as employers of record for participants in work-based learning programs for a transitional period;
  - Training managers and front-line workers to serve as mentors to work-based learning participants; and
  - Recruiting individuals for work-based learning, particularly individuals being served in the workforce system or by other human service agencies.

During our discussion with Senator Kaine's office, LobbyIt made note of the fact that the "targeted infrastructure industry" the bill seeks to provide grants to enhance did not include the maritime industry. Given the fact that the state of Virginia has a very active marina economy, LobbyIt suggested that AMI and LobbyIt work with Senator Kaine's office to develop an amendment to the bill. At the outset, the amendment would include language to allow the maritime industry to qualify as a targeted infrastructure industry, thereby making such facilities eligible for grant dollars. **The Senator's staff agreed this would be an ideal approach, and has agreed to accept language from LobbyIt on behalf of AMI.** Moving forward, LobbyIt will circle back with AMI leadership with draft language we can present to the Senator's office in the upcoming weeks.

## Legislative/Regulatory Activity

### **H.R. 419 - Promote Workforce Development for the Advancement of Manufacturers Act of 2017**

Representative Brenda L. Lawrence (D-MI) introduced the Promote Workforce Development for the Advancement of Manufacturers Act of 2017 on January 10, 2017. On January 10, 2017, the bill was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means. The bill does not yet have any cosponsors.

This bill amends the Internal Revenue Code to allow manufacturing employers located in the United States to receive a business-related tax credit for the manufacturing training expenses of their employees. The definition of "manufacturing training expenses" includes related course work, certification testing, and essential skill acquisition.

### **S.85 - Restoring Access to Medication Act of 2017**

Senator Pat Roberts (R-KS) introduced the Restoring Access to Medication Act of 2017 on January 10, 2017. On January 10, 2017, the bill was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance. Senators Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) and Johnny Isakson (R-GA) are currently cosponsors to the bill.

This bill repeals provisions of the Internal Revenue code that were added by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that limit payments for medications from health and medical savings accounts and health flexible spending arrangements to only prescription drugs or insulin. This allows distributions from such accounts for over-the-counter drugs.

*Related Bills: H.R.394 - Restoring Access to Medication Act of 2017*

### **H.R. 25 - Fair Tax Act of 2017**

Representative Bob Woodall (R-GA) introduced the Fair Tax Act of 2017 on January 3, 2017. On January 3, 2017, the bill was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means. The bill currently has 35 cosponsors.

This bill proposes a national sales tax on the use or consumption in the United States of taxable property or services in lieu of the current income and corporate income tax, employment and self-employment taxes, and estate and gift taxes. The rate of the sales tax will be 23% in 2019 with adjustments to the rate in subsequent years. There are exemptions from the tax for used and intangible property or services purchased for business, export, or investment purposes, and for state government functions.

Under the bill, family members who are lawful U.S. residents receive a monthly sales tax rebate (Family Consumption Allowance) based upon criteria related to family size and poverty guidelines.

The states have the responsibility of administering, collecting, and remitting the sales tax to the treasury.

Tax revenues are to be allocated among:

- (1) the general revenue;
- (2) the old-age and survivors insurance trust fund;
- (3) the disability and insurance trust fund;
- (4) the hospital insurance trust fund; and
- (5) the federal supplementary medical insurance trust fund.

No funding is authorized for the Internal Revenue Service after FY2021.

The bill terminates the national sales tax if the Sixteenth Amendment (authorizing income tax) is not repealed within 7 years after the enactment of this bill.

*Related Bills: S.18 - Fair Tax Act of 2017*

### **S.18 - Fair Tax Act of 2017**

Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) introduced the Fair Tax Act of 2017 on January 3, 2017. On January 3, 2017, the bill was read twice and referred to the Senate Committee on Finance. The bill currently has four cosponsors.

This bill proposes a national sales tax on the use or consumption in the United States of taxable property or services in lieu of the current income and corporate income tax, employment and self-employment taxes, and estate and gift taxes. The rate of the sales tax will be 23% in 2019 with adjustments to the rate in subsequent years. There are exemptions from the tax for used and intangible property or services purchased for business, export, or investment purposes, and for state government functions.

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### **H.R.933 - Employee Empowerment Act**

Representative Keith Ellison (D-MN) introduced the Employee Empowerment Act on February 7th, 2017. On February 7th, 2017 it was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce and the Committee on the Judiciary. On March 9th, 2017 it was referred to the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice. Representative John Lewis (D-GA) cosponsors the bill.

This bill strengthens the current protections available under the National Labor Relations Act by providing a private right of action for certain violations of such Act. It allows employees to bring civil action in a district court for the unfair labor practices.

### **H.R.958 - Wasteful EPA Protections Elimination Act**

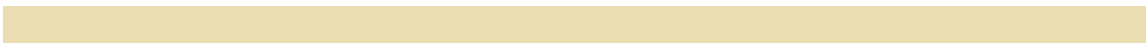
Representative Sam Johnson (R-TX) introduced the Wasteful EPA Protections Elimination Act on February 7th, 2017. On February 7th, 2017 the bill was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the Committee on Agriculture, and the Committee on Science, Space and Technology. On February 8th, 2017 the bill was referred to the Subcommittee on Water, Resources and Environment. The bill currently has no cosponsors.

This bill terminates all existing grant programs of the EPA, its National Clean Diesel Campaign, and its environmental justice programs. The EPA may not establish new grant programs. Federal funds may not be used by the EPA:

- (1) to implement any ozone standard after this bill's enactment;
- (2) to regulate greenhouse gas emissions from mobile sources, or from fossil fuel-fired electric utility generating units;
- (3) for the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program, Climate Resilience Fund, Climate Resilience Evaluation Awareness Tool, Green Infrastructure Program, Climate Ready Water Utilities Initiative; or
- (4) for climate research at the EPA's office of Research or Development.

The EPA must:

- (1) discontinue operation and maintenance of its field offices and activities carried out through those offices; and
- (2) dispose of or lease any underutilized property.



**Until next month,**

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