



### Greetings!

During the month of July, LobbyIt continued its discussion with Senator Kaine's office about the BUILDS Act, as well as met with Congressman GT Thompson's office.



### Stakeholder Activity

#### Meeting with Senator Kaine's Office

While August is undoubtedly the slowest time in Washington, LobbyIt spent its time staying busy and strategizing the next moves for AMI. In our previous monthly newsletter, LobbyIt reported that Senator Kaine's office had agreed to working with LobbyIt staff and AMI and incorporate amendment language into the BUILDS Act that benefit the maritime industry. During the month-long recess, LobbyIt worked with AMI to discuss legislative language that

would be could be incorporated into the BUILDS Act. The BUILDS Act, as currently drafted, would authorize the Secretary of Labor to support certified apprenticeship programs through various federal agencies that have a specific focus on infrastructure. The language crafted by LobbyIt and AMI made sure to not only include maritime projects as those covered under the Act, but also included language incorporating additional federal agencies that collaborate with the maritime industry, such as the Coast Guard. Going forward, LobbyIt will remain in close contact with Senator Kaine's office to ensure that our suggested amendments are hopefully incorporated as-is.

### **Meeting with Congressman GT Thompson's Office**

In the meantime, LobbyIt met with Congressman GT Thompson's office and Legislative Director to also discuss a skilled-trades briefing with the CTE caucus. In LobbyIt's previous discussions with AMI leadership, we communicated that the Senate's CTE Caucus will be setting its formal agenda for 2018 starting in October/November. Our goal of the meeting with Congressman Thompson's office was to begin discussions about the possibility of coordinating the House and Senate CTE caucuses to host the skilled-trades briefing. In addition to being the co-chair of the House CTE caucus, Congressman Thompson represents Pennsylvania's 5<sup>th</sup> district, which has a heavy focus on the timber industry. That being said, he has been an avid supporter of various types of apprenticeship and workforce legislation. Going forward, once the Senate has a better idea of its schedule for 2018, LobbyIt will work with Congressman Thompson's office to either host a joint or individual skilled-trades briefing hopefully during the earlier part of the new year.

## **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 in the United States to received 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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*Related Bills: H.R. 25 - FairTax Act of 2017*

### **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.

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**Until next month,**

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