

From:
To:
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The TRP Tip Sheet

December 5, 2025

Featuring a daily Capitol Hill update, news clips from our Washington insiders, and links to our trove of federal policy resources.

QUICK TAKES

- **CONGRESS RETURNS NEXT WEEK.** Negotiations on several legislative fronts remain ongoing as lawmakers wrap up a busy year-end session focused on defense policy, government spending, and health care.
- **THUNE RE-FILES NOMINATIONS PACKAGE.** The Senate Majority Leader re-filed a [resolution](#) with additional nominees after Democrats blocked a previous version.
- **TRP COMBINED HOUSE & SENATE 2026 CALENDAR.** Click [here](#) to view TRP's combined House & Senate 2026 calendar.
- **TRP CONGRESSIONAL RETIREMENT TRACKER.** Click [here](#) to view TRP's retirement tracker.
- **FIREFIGHTING PLAN THAT TRIPPED UP SPENDING PACKAGE BACK ON TRACK.** A dispute over a plan to consolidate firefighting operations may be close to resolution.

CAPITOL HILL UPDATE

Congress will return next week as lawmakers look to make meaningful progress on key must-

pass items. Here's a look at what we're watching heading into next week.

- **NDAA.** House and Senate Armed Services Committee leaders were originally set to unveil the final compromise version of the fiscal year (FY) 2026 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) yesterday, but last minute issues are likely to punt the release of this text to the weekend or early next week. One of the key remaining issues is the inclusion of the Senate Banking Committee's "ROAD to Housing" Act — a package of bipartisan Senate housing bills that unanimously cleared the Senate Banking Committee in July, and then was subsequently tacked on to the Senate's version of NDAA. Of note, the White House is reportedly engaged on this issue and would like to see the Senate's housing package included, but it remains to be seen if there's buy-in from House Financial Services Committee Chair French Hill (R-AR), who has objected to the inclusion of the package in the NDAA. In addition to this issue, lawmakers are haggling over policies related to new restrictions on U.S. investments in China, TRICARE coverage of in-vitro fertilization (IVF), and a proposal to restrict the Federal Reserve's ability to issue a central bank digital currency (CBDC). As of now, Armed Services Committee leadership is aiming to file text of the compromise NDAA sometime this weekend.
- **Health Care.** Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are angling to reauthorize the Affordable Care Act (ACA) enhanced premium tax credits that are set to expire at the end of the year, but bipartisan alignment is not clear. Several proposals to renew the ACA premium tax credits have emerged recently, including: (1) a clean two-year extension of the policy, led by Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA); (2) a one-year extension with some changes to the underlying policy to address fraud and income thresholds, led by Reps. Jennifer Kiggans (R-VA) and Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ); and (3) a clean three-year extension led by Senate Democrats. House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) also noted that he intends to finalize a health care bill early next week and put it on the floor before the end of the year, but key details on what's to be included are unclear at this point.

Pursuant to the deal reached by the Senate to reopen the federal government, Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) intends to give Democrats a vote on some form of ACA premium tax credit extension this month, but whether it can get 60 votes in the Senate is an open question. Lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are expected to continue discussing a path forward on addressing the ACA subsidies prior to the end of the year, and votes could occur as soon as next week.

- **Permitting Reform.** House lawmakers are set to vote on several proposals next week that seek to streamline or otherwise expedite permitting processes. This includes the SPEED Act ([H.R. 4776](#)), a bipartisan bill out of the House Natural Resources Committee sponsored by Chair Bruce Westerman (R-AR) and Rep. Jared Golden (D-ME) that would, among other things: (1) limit National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews to proximately caused effects; (2) clarify federal funding triggers; and (3) impose a 150-day statute of limitation.
- **Capital Formation.** Also on the House floor next week, lawmakers are set to take up a bipartisan package of capital formation bills out of the House Financial Services Committee. The Incentivizing New Ventures and Economic Strength Through Capital Formation Act, otherwise known as the INVEST Act ([text, summary](#)) contains more than 20 bipartisan bills that broadly seek to: (1) promote small business and startup growth; (2) improve investor opportunities and inclusivity; and (3) address public company growth and transparency.
- **Nominations.** Leader Thune re-filed an updated "en bloc" nominations [package](#) with additional nominees, bringing the total to 97 Trump administration appointments the Senate will consider in the December work period. A previous version of the package

failed to clear a procedural floor vote following an objection from Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO) on the grounds that the inclusion of one of the nominees violated Senate rules.

WHAT WE'RE TRACKING

NEW TODAY...

— **WH RELEASES NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY.** The Trump administration published its national security [strategy](#) highlighting defense and foreign policy priorities.

- The strategy centers around efforts to: (1) reaffirm U.S. leadership in the Western Hemisphere; (2) re-calibrate engagement with Europe and NATO, emphasizing "burden-sharing"; (3) strengthen deterrence in the Indo-Pacific; and (4) prioritize domestic homeland security and defense capabilities.

— **NATURAL RESOURCES PANEL HOLDS ENERGY DOMINANCE HEARING.** On Dec. 3, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Oversight discussed proposals to increase the domestic energy supply and mining of critical minerals. Click [here](#) to read TRP's hearing summary.

— **E&C PANEL EXAMINES ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY.** On Dec. 2, the House Energy & Commerce (E&C) Subcommittee on Energy examined cyber and physical security threats to the U.S. energy grid. Click [here](#) to read TRP's hearing summary.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS...

— **HHS RELEASES AI STRATEGY.** The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released its [strategy](#) on incorporating artificial intelligence (AI) into agency operations.

- The pillars underlying the HHS AI Strategy include: (1) Ensure Governance and Risk Management for Public Trust; (2) Design Infrastructure and Platforms for User Needs; (3) Promote Workforce Development and Burden Reduction for Efficiency; (4) Foster Health Research and Reproducibility through Gold-Standard Science; and (5) Enable Care and Public Health Delivery Modernization for Better Outcomes

— **SENATE HELP EXAMINES HEALTH CARE AFFORDABILITY.** On Dec. 3, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) held a hearing to discuss solutions for addressing health care costs. Click [here](#) to read TRP's hearing summary.

— **PRUDENTIAL REGULATORS TESTIFY BEFORE CONGRESS.** On Dec. 2, the House Financial Services Committee held an oversight hearing to receive testimony from the prudential regulators. Click [here](#) to read TRP's hearing summary.

— **E&C SUBCOMMITTEE HOLDS LEGISLATIVE HEARING ON KIDS' ONLINE SAFETY.** On Dec. 2, the House E&C Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade held a hearing on legislative solutions to protect children and teens online. Click [here](#) to read TRP's hearing summary.

— **TREASURY, IRS ISSUE GUIDANCE ON 'TRUMP' ACCOUNTS.** The Treasury Department and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued a [notice](#) containing guidance and a preview of upcoming regulations regarding "Trump Accounts," a new type of individual retirement account (IRA) for eligible children.

- The notice specifically contains: (1) information on how Trump accounts work; (2) initial questions related to Trump accounts that Treasury and IRS plan to address in forthcoming regulations; and (3) a request for feedback on the guidance, forthcoming regulations, and Trump accounts writ large.

— **CMS REPEALS MINIMUM STAFFING STANDARDS FOR LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES.**

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued an [interim final rule](#) repealing provisions of the minimum nursing staffing standards for long-term care (LTC) facilities rule finalized by the Biden administration in May 2024.

— **EDUCATION DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES NEW FOREIGN FUNDING REPORTING**

PORTAL. The Department of Education [announced](#) a new foreign funding reporting portal for postsecondary institutions receiving federal financial assistance.

- Pursuant to Section 117 of the Higher Education Act, covered institutions must disclose foreign source gifts and contracts with a value of \$250,000 or more annually to the Department.
- The portal is set to officially launch on Jan. 2, 2026.

— **TSA ANNOUNCES NEW \$45 FEE OPTION FOR TRAVELERS WITHOUT 'REAL ID.'**

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) [announced](#) that travelers that do not have a REAL ID or similar form of approved identification will have to pay a \$45 fee to establish identity at security checkpoints beginning on Feb. 1, 2026.

— **WH ISSUES RFI ON FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.** The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) issued a request for information ([RFI](#)) on how to modernize the way the federal government supports scientific research, the role of AI in accelerating discoveries, and on translating breakthroughs into practical applications. The comment period is open until Dec. 26, 2025.

WHAT WE'RE READING

Roll Call: Firefighting plan that tripped up spending package back on track

A dispute over a Trump administration plan to consolidate federal firefighting operations may be close to resolution, in a sign of modest progress toward Senate passage of a major fiscal 2026 spending package. Sen. Tim Sheehy, R-Mont., said Thursday he was prepared to release his hold on the Interior-Environment bill, a prime candidate for the “minibus” spending package, after cutting a deal to remove language that threatened to delay, if not derail, the firefighting reorganization. ... The administration announced plans in September to create a U.S. Wildland Fire Service, consolidating operations currently split between the Interior and Agriculture departments. ... The eventual Interior-USDA plan released in September stopped short, for now, of consolidating wildland firefighting operations in one new agency housed within Interior, as Trump’s executive order called for. But it proposes “unification” of firefighting operations at Interior under a new Wildland Fire Service. ... The dispute was just one of several obstacles blocking Senate Majority Leader John Thune’s effort to win unanimous consent for combining as many as five annual spending bills into a package that he had hoped to bring to the floor this week.

E&E News: Conservatives sound alarm about Westerman’s NEPA bill

Members of the House Freedom Caucus are objecting to House Natural Resources Chair Bruce Westerman’s big permitting bill, contributing to a planned floor vote being postponed. House Republican leaders were eyeing a vote next week on the “Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act,” H.R. 4776, from Westerman and Rep. Jared Golden (D-Maine). The bill is now poised to come up the following week. ... One concern for the right is a bipartisan amendment added in committee meant to protect permits. It was in response to the administration’s attack on already-approved renewable energy projects, particularly offshore wind.

NPR: Libraries and museums get federal funding back after Trump cuts

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is reinstating all grants that were previously terminated by the Trump administration. A short statement posted on the agency's website Wednesday reads, "this action supersedes any prior notices which may have been received related to grant termination." ...The IMLS is the independent agency in charge of awarding federal grant funding to libraries and museums across the country. Earlier this year, it was the target of one of President Trump's executive orders, which led to the termination of grants that had been previously awarded. In response to the EO, attorneys general in 21 states filed a lawsuit against the administration, and in November a Rhode Island District Court judge ruled that the Trump administration's actions were unlawful.

Financial Post: US Plans More Stakes in Minerals Companies, Trump Official Says

The US government plans to take more equity stakes in critical minerals companies, a White House official said Thursday, calling the once-rare move necessary to counter China's dominance in the raw materials used in everything from semiconductors to MRI machines. ... Over the past year, the Trump administration has spent over \$1 billion to take stakes in critical minerals and mining companies, often sending the company's stock prices soaring. ... The strategy of investing taxpayer dollars in companies the administration has deemed essential to national security comes as the US' reliance on China for the crucial materials has become a flash point in the trade war.

The Hill: Trump shortens work permit duration for asylum-seekers

The Trump administration shortened the work permit duration for asylum-seekers on Thursday, citing security concerns with immigrant populations. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) updated its policy manual to cut the validity period for employment authorization documents from five years to 18 months. The change is slated to impact job opportunities for admitted refugees, individuals granted asylum, those granted withholding of deportation or removal and those with pending applications for adjustment of their status, according to a document the agency published describing the updates.

E&E News: Florida delegation urges Trump against drilling in eastern Gulf (\$)

Florida's Republican senators are leading a bipartisan push to get the Trump administration to remove their state's waters from its proposed offshore leasing map. Sens. Rick Scott and Ashley Moody led Florida's 28 other members of Congress in a letter to President Donald Trump on Thursday urging the administration to change course, marking the most visible Republican rebuke yet of the Interior Department's proposed 5-year leasing schedule.

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