

May 27

House to Take up Paycheck Protection Program Extension Bill This Week

With the House in session this week and the Senate out of session following Memorial Day, the House is scheduled to consider two bills related to coronavirus aid. First, the House is set to consider a standalone bill that would provide an extension to loan forgiveness under the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). Specifically, the bill would give businesses more time and flexibility to make qualifying expenditures for loan forgiveness under the PPP and allow businesses with forgiven loans to defer payroll taxes.

A second measure (H.R. 6782) would require the Small Business Administration to issue a report on entities that received more than \$2 million in small business aid under the CARES Act and the measure that replenished the PPP.

Congressional leadership has indicated optimism in getting a deal done this week.

May 12

House Unveils COVID-19 Legislation

House Democrats introduced their version of the next COVID-19 stimulus package entitled the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act, or the HEROES Act. The legislation would provide \$3 trillion to a myriad of programs to provide support amid the COVID-19 pandemic and is viewed as a starting place in House negotiations with the Senate and White House. The bill could be considered in the House as soon as Friday, May 15.

- [The text of the HEROES Act, H.R. 6800](#)
- [A one-pager on the legislation](#)
- [Section-by-section summary](#)

Specifically, the bill includes hazard pay for frontline healthcare workers and essential workers.

Additionally, it would provide a new stimulus check for \$1,200 to individuals and up to \$6,000 for families.

The HEROES Act would also provide funding for COVID-19 testing, an extension of the \$600 weekly

unemployment expansion, highway funding, operating assistance grants for transit agencies, additional funding for small businesses, and provisions for election safety.

Furthermore, the legislation contains direct funding for state and local governments of all sizes through the newly proposed [State and Local Coronavirus Relief Fund](#). The fund would help first responders, frontline health workers, transit employees, teachers, and other workers providing vital services.

May 11

House Consideration of Next COVID-19 Bill

House leadership continues to work to finalize the next COVID-19 bill before bringing the chamber into session. As of Monday evening, House leadership was still undecided on if the House would return to Washington late this week or next week. Upon return, the House could consider issues such as proxy voting and the next COVID-19 bill, popularly identified as CARES 2.0 or Phase 4.

May 6

Hoyer Says Timetable for Return Uncertain

Yesterday, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) told Democrats that there is no timetable for them to return to Washington for votes on the next coronavirus bill or other legislation. Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) has said that the legislation could come up for a vote next week. Republicans continue to advocate for the pause button. Senate Majority Leader McConnell (R-KY) is saying “if” there is another bill versus “when.” House Minority Leader McCarthy (R-CA) told reporters, “I’m not saying there’s not going to be another bill. ... You just passed \$3 trillion. You want to make sure that’s implemented and implemented correctly.”

NAPA continues to advocate for emergency [relief funding advanced by AASHTO](#), including flexibility and 100 percent payable federal share, a multi-year reauthorization bill, and a significant increase in highway investments. As an industry leader, we’re asking you to do the same. [Click here to contact your senators and representatives today!](#)

Lowey Outlines House Plans for Local Government Funding

Last night, House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowey (D-NY) [sent a letter](#) to House members describing her plans for local governmental aid in Phase 4. She proposes a county fund and a city fund, each equal in size. The county fund would be awarded directly to counties based on population, with all counties receiving an award. The municipality fund would be awarded to cities using a modified Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) formula. Seventy percent would be awarded directly to cities with a population of 50,000 or more using the CDBG formula. The remaining 30 percent would be awarded to municipalities with populations less than 50,000.

May 4

Senate Returns, Stimulus Package Content in Flux

The Senate returned to session today after a nearly six week absence. Members will be advised to meet with constituents and lobbyists remotely rather than in person for the next year.

The House is eying a quick (one day) return next week to vote on resolutions to allow for proxy voting, virtual committee meetings, and their CARES 2.0 package. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) have indicated what could be included in the next coronavirus stimulus package. Pelosi and other Democrats have suggested \$1 trillion in aid to states, cities and localities, along with economic aid to businesses hardest hit. McConnell, who has expressed doubts about the need for another COVID-19 relief bill, has insisted that businesses be protected from lawsuits by employees or patrons who may be exposed to the virus. Infrastructure is another potential avenue; however, McConnell has come out against including infrastructure in the next big stimulus.

NAPA continues to advocate for emergency relief [funding advanced by AASHTO](#), including flexibility and 100 percent payable federal share, a multi-year reauthorization bill, and a significant increase in investments that will improve the conditions and performance of the National Highway System. As an

industry leader, we're asking you to do the same. [Click here to contact your senators and representatives today!](#)

April 30

Discussions Heat Up Over "Work-Related" Coronavirus

Over the past month, state and federal agencies and legislatures have started to address whether COVID-19 can or should be considered "work-related" in essential workers and whether the illness is compensable under a state Workers' Compensation program. While federal OSHA still requires the employer to determine whether a COVID-19 illness is "work-related," some state Workers' Comp boards are specifying otherwise. For the most up-to-date information, including a state-by-state analysis, [click here](#).

In addition, questions have been raised about whether the government should shield employers from potential liability associated with business-related COVID-19 illnesses in employees or clientele (e.g., customers and subcontractors). Liability protections may be one of the central fights in Phase 4 coronavirus legislation. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has indicated he will insist that any future COVID-19 legislation include provisions legally protecting hospitals, health providers and other businesses against potential lawsuits regarding infections. Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) responded that she would not support legal immunity that weakens the rights of workers and patients.

Congressmen Closer to a Deal on Phase 4 COVID-19 Legislation

Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) announced that the U.S. House of Representatives will return on May 12 instead of May 4 with the Senate. Once in session, they are expected to take votes on the Democratic CARES 2.0 coronavirus stimulus package. Funding for state and local governments has emerged as a key point of contention between Republicans and Democrats. Speaker Pelosi has said House Democrats are looking to include at least \$500 billion in funding for states, plus additional money for county and municipal governments. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), who indicated last week that he

had no plans to provide additional funding to states and local governments, has changed course and signaled this week he is open to a deal. In return for funding, McConnell wants a provision included in any package that limits the liabilities of health care workers, business owners and employees from lawsuits as they reopen in the coming weeks and months.

April 28

House Won't Reconvene Next Week

House leaders reversed their decision to re-convene on May 4, citing concerns from lawmakers' attending physician, who cited a sustained risk of coronavirus in the Washington area. "The House physician's view was that there was a risk to members that he would not recommend taking," said House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD). "The physician said infection numbers in the Washington area were on the rise and that the area had 'hot spots.'" [Read More: CNN](#)

White House Releases Blueprint for Coronavirus Testing, Reopening

In a [press release](#), President Trump unveiled new documents prioritizing COVID-19 testing. "[Opening Up America Again: Testing Overview](#)" and "[Testing Blueprint](#)" outline steps the U.S. will need to take to safely reopen. The documents note that states will have to monitor for potential outbreaks "throughout the summer and beyond" and alerts that coronavirus outbreaks could coincide with flu season in the fall. The plan gives deference to states, empowering them to "develop testing plans and rapid response programs" and "maximize the use of all available testing platforms and venues." The federal government should act as the "supplier of last resort."

States are instructed to "identify and overcome barriers to efficient testing" as well as develop their own contact tracing programs to identify and isolate people who may have been exposed to the virus. The federal government will provide "technical assistance" through the CDC. To facilitate expanded COVID-19 testing, retailers announced they would begin opening up testing at locations across the U.S. CVS, Walgreens and Walmart are among those offering testing capabilities.

Second Round of Paycheck Protection Program Processed Nearly \$50 Billion

According to the *Daily Caller*, the second round of the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Payment Protection Program (PPP) processed in 24 hours nearly twice the total dollar amount of loans the SBA processes in an average year. The SBA granted roughly 450,000 loans from 5,100 lenders for a total sum of \$48.5 billion. Monday was the first day since April 16 that PPP loans were authorized by SBA following the exhaustion of the first allocated by Congress in Phase 2.

The Phase 3.5 deal reached the previous week blocked off \$60 billion for loans from small and medium sized banks. Officials noted that of the \$48.5 billion in loans approved on Monday, \$28 billion were processed by institutions with less than \$10 billion in total assets. The figures also suggest the second round fixed the oversight that allowed companies with sufficient liquidity to take money from the first round of PPP lending.

Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin previewed on CNBC yet an additional layer of oversight aimed at making sure small businesses benefit from PPP. Moving forward, he explained, all loan applications worth more than \$2 million will be audited by the Treasury. His announcement comes after SBA published new PPP guidelines, stating that company executives who are found to violate the "good faith" application process will face up to 30 years in prison and million-dollar fines.

April 27

House, Senate To Return May 4

This morning, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) said the Senate will reconvene on May 4 and focus on the response to the coronavirus fallout. He said, "We will modify routines in ways that are smart and safe, but we will honor our constitutional duty to the American people and conduct critical business in person. If it is essential for doctors, nurses, healthcare workers, truck drivers, grocery-store workers, and many other brave Americans to keep carefully manning their own duty stations, then it is essential for Senators to carefully man ours and support them."

Following McConnell's announcement, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) said the House will also be returning to Washington on May 4 and will use large hearing rooms to stagger committee meetings. Hoyer also told his caucus there will be a vote on remote voting and the next supplemental package will be considered next week or the following.

NAPA is keeping the pressure on Congress to stabilize and grow our surface transportation system. [Click here to participate in our grassroots efforts by sending a letter to your Congressman today.](#)

April 21

[Act Now to Secure, Grow America's Highway Funding](#)

In just a few clicks, you can tell the Trump Administration and Congress to include immediate financial relief for state DOTs in future COVID-19 relief legislation. This will allow state DOTs and the transportation infrastructure industries to continue essential work to maintain and improve our critical surface transportation network. [Click here](#) to learn more about NAPA's grassroots efforts on this issue and to send your letter to Congress today.

April 15

Bipartisan Talks on Next Legislation Continue

Following the failure to pass either the Republican or Democratic "Phase 3.2" COVID-19 relief bill, both parties have had low-key negotiations. This morning, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) told reporters that his negotiations with Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin had resumed and were making progress, and now include Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA). Details of the negotiations are not known at this time, and it is unclear if Schumer's original commitment to include \$100 billion in additional funding for healthcare workers has changed. One skeptical Republican senator said Mnuchin does not represent Senate Republicans in these talks, and the Secretary would have to sell the deal to hard-to-win-over senators. With the Senate on recess until at least May 4, the interim package under discussion would have to pass by unanimous consent.

Senate Democrats Seek \$30 Billion To Expand Virus Testing

On April 15, Senate Democrats laid out a plan to spend \$30 billion on Coronavirus testing. Specifically, Democrats argue the administration should use the Defense Production Act and centralize procurement to boost the supply of testing materials. In addition, funding would go toward labs, contact tracing efforts, and the development of rapid, at-home Coronavirus tests, and labs.

Payment Protection Program Funds to Run Out Today

According to Bloomberg News, the relief fund for small businesses is expected to run out of money this afternoon. As of early April 15, the U.S. Small Business Administration reported there had been almost 1.4 million applications approved, totaling about \$301 billion of the \$349 billion set aside. That's the value of loans the agency has approved for lenders to disburse, not money that has reached borrowers. Republicans sought to approve an additional \$250 billion for the program last week, but the effort stalled with Democrats also wanting changes to the program. Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin talked Wednesday, and a meeting has been set with staff in the first public sign of a possible break in the stalemate. Republican Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, said more funding is critical. "Loans will STOP if funds for guarantees are exhausted no matter how much/little has been disbursed," Rubio said in an April 13 tweet.