

Becker's Washington Weekly: Week of January 6, 2020

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THE HOUSE

The House formally returns to session on Tuesday evening this week. With tensions in the Middle East rising following the Trump Administration's decision to authorize drone strikes in Iraq that killed Iranian General Qasem Soleimani, the House is expected to introduce and take up a measure limiting the President's power to authorize potential military actions regarding Iran without Congressional approval. While bill text of the resolution is not yet available, it is expected to be introduced by Rep. Elissa Slotkin (D-MI) and be substantially similar to Sen. Tim Kaine's (D-VA) resolution (S.J. Res 63) in the Senate.

The House is also expected to take up legislation to regulate and help combat the harmful effects of polyfluoroalkyl substances, toxic chemicals known as PFAS. The bill, HR 535, requires the Environmental Protection Agency to create national protective measures against PFAS that have caused cancer and other serious health problems.

Additionally, early this week the House is likely to take up a number of bills under suspension of the rules regarding the expansion of 5G telecommunications systems across the U.S. including:

- H.Res 575, expressing the sense of the House that all stakeholders in the deployment of 5G communications infrastructure should carefully consider and adhere to the recommendations of "The Prague Proposals"
- HR 2881 - Secure 5G and Beyond Act
- HR 4500 - Promoting United States Wireless Leadership Act
- HR 3763 - Promoting United States International Leadership in 5G Act

THE SENATE

The Senate returns to session on Monday. While Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) spoke on the Senate floor last week regarding a potential rules package to govern the impending impeachment trial in the Senate, they have not formally scheduled any meetings

to reach a deal as they wait to receive the House-passed Articles of Impeachment against President Trump.

Following Sen. Johnny Isakson's (R-GA) retirement at the end of 2019, his replacement, business executive Kelly Loeffler, is expected to be formally sworn-in on the Senate floor Monday evening. The Senate is also expected to hold a cloture vote on Jovita Carranza's nomination to serve as the next administrator of the Small Business Administration.

The Senate Finance Committee is scheduled to markup the House-passed USMCA trade deal that the Trump Administration negotiated with Canada and Mexico.

THE ADMINISTRATION

President Trump will take part in a credentialing ceremony for newly appointed ambassadors in the Oval Office. President Trump and First Lady Melania Trump will host Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis and his wife at the White House. Then, the President is expected to head to Toledo, Ohio for a campaign rally.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper is likely headed to Capitol Hill this week to brief Congress on the Administration's decision to authorize drone strikes in Iraq. On Thursday, NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstein will speak at the Center for Strategic and International Studies to discuss his agency's role in U.S. foreign policy.

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