



FEBRUARY FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Legislative Overview

February was marked by more brinkmanship as the two chambers postured over major funding issues within the comprehensive spending package.

Both the U.S. House and Senate passed a bipartisan Continuing Resolution to extend current federal appropriations, preventing a partial government shutdown and granting lawmakers more time to finalize Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 appropriations. This marks the fourth stopgap measure enacted since the beginning of FY 2024. The Continuing Resolution structured with two separate expiration dates for different groups of annual spending bills, extends funding through March 8, 2024, for certain bills and through March 22, 2024, for others. Negotiations regarding foreign aid and border funding continue, with Congress aiming to pass the twelve FY 2024 spending bills in two "minibus" packages in the coming weeks. However, lawmakers must also adhere to spending limits imposed by the bipartisan Fiscal Responsibility Act, with potential sequestration cuts looming if these limits are breached. Counties, as key intergovernmental partners, commend Congress for bipartisan action and urge swift passage of FY 2024 appropriations to avoid disruptions to federal programs relied upon by counties.

The House approved the Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act, a \$79 billion tax cut package aimed at improving the child tax credit for lower-income families and enhancing three tax breaks for businesses. This legislation involves trading \$33 billion in child tax credit enhancements for significant business provisions, including reinstating expenses for domestic research and experimentation costs and maintaining a 15-year amortization period for foreign R&E. The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration, with ongoing updates expected regarding its impact on research and development under Sec. 174 of the IRS Code.

The U.S. House voted to impeach Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas citing concerns over border security in a move that has sparked controversy. Republicans argued that

Mayorkas' alleged failure to enforce immigration laws has led to a surge in border crossings, while Democrats rebuke the impeachment efforts as unfounded.

House Speaker Mike Johnson has been rallying support for the vote, acknowledging its significance as a rare and extreme measure, with implications not seen since 1876 when a Cabinet Secretary faced impeachment charges. This marks the first time a sitting Secretary has been impeached in U.S. history.

Republican U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio introduced bipartisan legislation in the U.S. Senate aimed at improving access to healthcare. The At HOME Services Act of 2024 seeks to expand hospital-at-home programs through a pilot initiative that includes patients requiring observation. Rubio emphasized the need for innovative solutions to address healthcare challenges, citing the success of hospital-at-home programs in lowering costs and improving patient outcomes. Health systems like Tampa General Hospital have already implemented similar programs, such as TGH at Home, which integrates technology and in-person care to enhance patient experience and outcomes. CEO John Couris highlighted the program's success in providing comprehensive care while allowing patients to receive treatment in the comfort of their own homes.

PLG Actions

PLG and Attorney Sean Pittman met with several Congressional members and staff on behalf of the County throughout the month. Within the Florida delegation, Pittman met with Congressman Aaron Bean, Congressman Gus Bilarakis, Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick, Congressman Neal Dunn, Congressman Jared Moskowitz, Congresswoman Fredrica Wilson, and the offices of Senators Marco Rubio and Rick Scott. Since we have not yet been assigned any legislative or appropriation tasks, our firm spoke with the members and their teams about our role advocating on behalf of the County, as well as articulating that we would be following up soon to discuss priorities and issues which are relevant to Miami-Dade once they are formally approved by the County.