



# Government Relations & Public Affairs Committee

Meeting Date: December 10, 2018

Agenda Item No.: 2018-December-**12**

Federal Advocacy Update

## Information

Prepared by: Christina Lokke

Approved by: Erik Johnson

Attachments: No

### 1. Issue:

Federal Advocacy Update

### 2. Recommendation:

None, this item is for information only.

### 3. Background/Analysis:

As Washington prepares for a new Congress in 2019, the current Congress has a number of outstanding issues it must still address.

### 4. Discussion/Analysis:

The November 2018, election resulted in a change of party leadership for the House of Representatives, with the Democrats winning enough seats to take over leadership. In the Senate, Republicans maintained control. The 116th Congress will be sworn in on January 3, 2019. Since Election Day, both House and Senate Republicans have voted for their leaders, along with the Senate Democrats. House Republicans voted for California Representative Kevin McCarthy as their new leader to replace retiring Speaker Paul Ryan. In the Senate, leadership remains consistent with Republicans reelecting Senator Mitch McConnell as majority leader and Senate Democrats reelecting Senator Charles Schumer as minority leader. House Democrats are expected to vote on their leadership in December.

With the elections over, Congress has several major issues to focus on before the end of the year. The House and Senate continue budget discussions for the Fiscal Year 2019 budget. The current fiscal year started in October 2018, without a full budget agreement and with a number of appropriation bills remaining, including the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) appropriation bill. This bill includes funding levels for all discretionary transportation programs, including the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) program and Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grants. The President previously signed a continuing resolution to extend government funding in the new fiscal year through December 7, 2018, for the federal agencies awaiting appropriations. Congressional action is expected before December 7, to prevent a government shutdown.

Congress has yet to reach an agreement on a new farm bill to replace the now expired 2014

farm bill and negotiations appear stalled. Congress must also address the soon to be expired National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which expires on November 30, 2018.

**5. Fiscal Impact/Grant Information:**

This item has no direct fiscal impact.

**6. This staff report aligns with the following SACOG Work Plan Goals:**

9 - Better Connect & Communicate with Members & Regional Electeds