



**COMMUNITY AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
INLAND EMPIRE UTILITIES AGENCY***

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2021
9:00 A.M.**

**INLAND EMPIRE UTILITIES AGENCY*
VIEW THE MEETING LIVE ONLINE AT IEUA.ORG
TELEPHONE ACCESS: (415) 856-9169 / Conf Code: 635 663 326#**

PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF EXECUTIVE ORDER N-25-20 ISSUED BY GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM ON MARCH 12, 2020, AND EXECUTIVE ORDER N-29-20 ISSUED BY GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM ON MARCH 17, 2020 AND IN AN EFFORT TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH AND PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19, THERE WILL BE NO PUBLIC LOCATION FOR ATTENDING IN PERSON.

The public may participate and provide public comment during the meeting by dialing into the number provided above. Alternatively, public comments may be emailed to the Board Secretary/Office Manager Denise Garzaro at dgarzaro@ieua.org no later than 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time. Comments will be read into the record during the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public may address the Board on any item that is within the jurisdiction of the Board; however, no action may be taken on any item not appearing on the agenda unless the action is otherwise authorized by Subdivision (b) of Section 54954.2 of the Government Code. Those persons wishing to address the Board on any matter, whether or not it appears on the agenda, are requested to email the Board Secretary/Office Manager no later than 24 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time or address the Board during the public comments section of the meeting. Comments will be limited to three minutes per speaker. Thank you.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

In accordance with Section 54954.2 of the Government Code (Brown Act), additions to the agenda require two-thirds vote of the legislative body, or, if less than two-thirds of the members are present, a unanimous vote of those members present, that there is a need to take immediate action and that the need for action came to the attention of the local agency subsequent to the agenda being posted.

PRESENTATION

- **2021 FEDERAL OUTLOOK BY INNOVATIVE FEDERAL STRATEGIES**

1. **ACTION ITEM**

A. **MINUTES**

Approve Minutes of the January 13, 2021 Community and Legislative Affairs Committee meeting.

2. **INFORMATION ITEMS**

A. **PUBLIC OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION (WRITTEN)**

B. **STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT – WEST COAST ADVISORS (WRITTEN)**

C. **FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT AND MATRIX – INNOVATIVE
FEDERAL STRATEGIES (WRITTEN)**

D. **CALIFORNIA STRATEGIES MONTHLY REPORT (WRITTEN)**

3. **GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

4. **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

5. **COMMITTEE MEMBER REQUESTED FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

6. **ADJOURN**

*A Municipal Water District

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Board Secretary/Office Manager (909-993-1736), 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting so that the Agency can make reasonable arrangements.

DECLARATION OF POSTING

I, Denise Garzaro, Board Secretary/Office Manager of the Inland Empire Utilities Agency, A Municipal Water District, hereby certify that a copy of this agenda has been posted by 5:30 p.m. to the IEUA Website at www.ieua.org and outside the Agency's main office, 6075 Kimball Avenue, Building A, Chino on Thursday, February 4, 2021.



Denise Garzaro, CMC

ACTION
ITEM
1A



**MINUTES
COMMUNITY AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE MEETING
INLAND EMPIRE UTILITIES AGENCY*
AGENCY HEADQUARTERS, CHINO, CA**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2021

9:00 A.M.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT via Video/Teleconference

Jasmin A. Hall, Chair
Steven J. Elie

STAFF PRESENT

Shivaji Deshmukh, General Manager
Christina Valencia, Executive Manager of Finance & Administration/AGM
Denise Garzaro, Board Secretary/Office Manager
Daniel Solorzano, Technology Specialist I

STAFF PRESENT via Video/Teleconference

Christiana Daisy, Deputy General Manager
Kathy Besser, Executive Manager of External & Government Affairs/AGM
Randy Lee, Executive Manager of Operations/AGM
Jerry Burke, Manager of Engineering
Andrea Carruthers, Manager of External Affairs
Javier Chagoyen-Lazaro, Manager of Finance & Accounting
Robert Delgado, Manager of Operations & Maintenance
Don Hamlett, Acting Deputy Manager of Integrated System Services
Jennifer Hy-Luk, Administrative Assistant II
Sylvie Lee, Manager of Strategic Planning & Resources
Cathleen Pieroni, Manager of Inter-Agency Relations
Jesse Pompa, Manager of Grants
Sushmitha Reddy, Manager of Laboratories
Jeanina Romero, Executive Assistant
Wilson To, Technology Specialist II
Teresa Velarde, Manager of Internal Audit

OTHERS PRESENT via Video/Teleconference

Michael Boccadoro, West Coast Advisors
Beth Olhasso, West Coast Advisors

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Jasmin A. Hall called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. She gave the public the opportunity to comment and provided instructions for unmuting the conference line.

There were no public comments received or additions to the agenda.

1A – 1B. ACTION ITEMS

The Committee:

- ◆ Approved Minutes of the December 9, 2020 Community and Legislative Affairs Committee meeting.
- ◆ Recommended that the Board adopt Resolution No. 2021-1-5, authorizing the Agency-wide organizational memberships and affiliations for Fiscal Year 2021/22; and authorizing the General Manager to approve all Agency-wide Membership fees that are \$5,000 or less; as an Action Item on the January 20, 2021 Board meeting agenda.

2A – 2D. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following information items were presented or received and filed by the Committee:

- ◆ Public Outreach and Communication
- ◆ State Legislative Report – West Coast Advisors
- ◆ Federal Legislative Report and Matrix – Innovative Federal Strategies
- ◆ California Strategies Monthly Report

3. GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

There were no General Manager comments.

4. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no Committee member comments.

5. COMMITTEE MEMBER REQUESTED FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no Committee member requests for future agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, Committee Chair Hall adjourned the meeting at 9:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Garzaro
Board Secretary/Office Manager

*A Municipal Water District

APPROVED: FEBRUARY 10, 2021

INFORMATION
ITEM
2A

Date: February 17, 2021

To: The Honorable Board of Directors

From: Shivaji Deshmukh, General Manager

Committee: Community & Legislative Affairs

02/10/21

Executive Contact: Kathy Besser, Executive Manager of Government & Ext. Affairs/AGM

Subject: Public Outreach and Communication

Executive Summary:

- February 2, World Wetlands Day
- February 21-27, Engineers Week

The California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) awarded IEUA with the 2020 Public Outreach & Education – Large Agency Award for the Agency’s newest education program, “Owl’s Virtual Adventures.” The award was announced at CASA’s virtual Winter Conference on January 28.

The Agency continues to publish content on LinkedIn and has gained 20 followers since December 2020 with 494 page views in the last 30 days. According to January’s Employer Influencer Platform on LinkedIn, IEUA was listed in the top 50 (#46) for North America’s most active utility companies on LinkedIn.

Staff continues to publish reels on the @IEUAWater social media profiles. This month, the reels highlighted the Agency’s community outreach initiatives, benefits of water recycling and IEUA’s history. The recycled water reel (part 1) received close to 600 views.

Staff’s Recommendation:

This is an informational item for the Board of Directors to receive and file.

Budget Impact Budgeted (Y/N): Y Amendment (Y/N): N Amount for Requested Approval:

Account/Project Name:

Fiscal Impact (explain if not budgeted):

Prior Board Action:

N/A

Environmental Determination:

Not Applicable

Business Goal:

IEUA is committed to providing a reliable and cost-effective water supply and promoting sustainable water use throughout the region.

IEUA is committed to enhancing and promoting environmental sustainability and the preservation of the region's heritage.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Background

Background

Subject: Public Outreach and Communication

February

- February 2, World Wetlands Day
- February 21-27, Engineers Week
- February 26, National Skip the Straw Day

Media and Outreach

- The California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) awarded IEUA with the *2020 Public Outreach & Education – Large Agency Award* for the Agency's newest education program, "Owlie's Virtual Adventures." The award was announced at CASA's virtual Winter Conference on January 28.
- Staff continues to publish reels on the @IEUAWater social media profiles. This month, the reels highlighted the Agency's community outreach initiatives, benefits of water recycling and IEUA's history. The recycled water reel (part 1) received close to 600 views. Each reel is part of the Agency's Water Smart Series and focuses on the multiple ways IEUA brings value to the region.
- The Agency continues to remind the public of what can and cannot be flushed through the *No Wipes in the Pipes* campaign. External Affairs staff is working with the Collections team to develop additional messaging and campaign images for outreach purposes.
- The Agency continues to publish content on LinkedIn and has gained 20 followers since December 2020 with 494 page views in the last 30 days. According to January's Employer Influencer Platform on LinkedIn, IEUA was listed in the top 50 (#46) for North America's most active utility companies on LinkedIn.
- The Agency continues to educate the public on water terminology with the Water Word Wednesday campaign.
- On January 24, staff celebrated International Day of Education with a video on the educational resources offered through "Owlie's Virtual Adventures." Staff posted educational features throughout the week recognizing the importance of education, the Agency's free programs, and other educational information. An article was also featured on the Agency's education blog platform.
- January: 14 posts were published to the IEUA Facebook page, 18 posts were published to IEUA's Instagram grid, 18 tweets were sent on the @IEUAWater Twitter handle, and eight posts were published to the IEUA LinkedIn page.
 - The top three Facebook posts, based on reach and engagement, in the month of January were:
 - 1/26 At-Home Activity Video Promotion
 - 1/19 Recruitment: Accountant II, Intern (Finance and Accounting), Manager of Information Technology, Safety Analyst, and Deputy Manager of Human Resources Hiring
 - 1/11 Suitcase Found in RP-4 Influent Screens (What Cannot Be Flushed)

- The top three Twitter tweets, based on reach and engagement, in the month of January were:
 - 1/7 Community Outreach Reel
 - 1/6 Water Word Wednesday
 - 1/11 Suitcase Found in RP-4 Influent Screens (What Cannot Be Flushed)
- The top three Instagram posts, based on reach and engagement, in the month of January were:
 - 1/18 Recycled Water Reel
 - 1/11 Suitcase Found in RP-4 Influent Screens (What Cannot Be Flushed)
 - 1/21 IEUA History Reel
- The top three LinkedIn posts, based on impressions and reactions, in the month of January were:
 - 1/19 Recruitment: Accountant II, Intern (Finance and Accounting), Manager of Information Technology, Safety Analyst, and Deputy Manager of Human Resources Hiring
 - 1/12 Recruitment: Facilities Program Supervisor, Laboratory Scientist II and Intern (Groundwater Recharge) Hiring
 - 1/14 IEUA Participating in National Wastewater Surveillance System Sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the US Department of Health and Human Services
- An education ad ran in the *Chino Valley Champion's Chino Connection Magazine* section on January 30.
- IEUA was featured in a Sustainable Living publication in the *Los Angeles Times* on January 6.
- A Nextdoor ad ran on January 29 featuring a poll focused on virtual education needs. This ad highlighted the free educational resources available from the Agency to the community.

For the month of January, there were 11,345 searches for a park in IEUA's service area on Yelp, where Chino Creek Wetlands and Educational Park was viewed 978 times on a mobile device.

Education and Outreach Updates

- Staff finalized a new At-Home Water Discovery video focused on the Edible Aquifer activity.
- Staff finalized a digital sign-up form in January for educators who are interested in scheduling a virtual field trip.
- Staff will be promoting the Agency's 2021 "Water is Life" Student Art Poster Contest. Staff is developing an efficient digital submission process. The deadline to submit posters for the 2021 contest is March 11.
- The Garden in Every School® program is moving forward with the installation of a water-wise garden at St. Joseph School (Upland). CBWCD and St. Joseph agreed upon multiple safety measures that will be implemented while CBWCD is onsite. Construction is scheduled to begin early February. St. Joseph will incorporate the garden into their curriculum and the lead teacher will be onsite livestreaming with students. Randall Pepper Elementary School (Fontana) and Loving Savior of the Hills (Chino Hills) remain on hold.

- Solar Cup 2021 is again being held as a virtual competition, made up of 20 teams, with approximately 300 students over four counties. Challenges begin February 5 and conclude in late April/early May. Competitions include robotics, 3D modeling, CADD, video game creation, electronics, public service announcements, and solar vehicles. Chino Hills High School, the winner of last year's competition, will be participating in this school year's program.

Agency-Wide Membership Updates

- Randy Lee, Executive Manager of Operations/AGM, attended the Fall ACWA Conference December 2-3.
- Randy Lee, Executive Manager of Operations/AGM, attended the SCAP Board Meeting December 7.
- Randy Lee, Executive Manager of Operations/AGM, attended the NWRI Board of Directors Meeting on December 8.
- Jeff Ziegenbein, Manager of Regional Compost Operations, attended the California Association of Sanitation Agencies Meeting on December 11.
- Randy Lee, Executive Manager of Operations/AGM, attended the SCAP Special Board Meeting on December 16.
- Richard Lao, Senior Environmental Resources Planner, attended the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) Water Regulatory Working Group Committee Meeting on December 16.
- Richard Lao, Senior Environmental Resources Planner, attended the California Association of Sanitation Agencies (CASA) Air Quality, Climate Change, and Energy Workgroup Meeting on December 17.

INFORMATION
ITEM
2B



January 29, 2021

To: Inland Empire Utilities Agency

From: Michael Boccadoro
Beth Olhasso

RE: January Report

Overview:

Dismal precipitation during the late fall and early winter has left water managers concerned about water supplies for 2021. Spirits are rising however after significant precipitation late in the week of January 25. Six to eight feet of snow fell in the sierras in the span of three days, increasing the sierra snowpack by 20 percent!! While the storms gave the snowpack a much needed boost, snowpack and reservoir storage levels are still below normal for this time of the year.

Californians have accumulated \$1 billion in unpaid water bills since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, and about 1.6 million California households are behind on their water bills, according [to a new survey](#) from the State Water Resources Control Board.

For the third year in a row, the Department of Fish and Wildlife found zero Delta Smelt in its Fall Midwater Trawl Survey throughout the Delta. Not only did the survey find zero Delta Smelt, once the most abundant species in the estuary, it also found zero Sacramento Splittail, a native minnow that was removed from the Endangered Species list by the Bush Administration.

On January 8, Governor Newsom released his proposed 2021-2022 state budget. With revenues much stronger than earlier predicted, the \$227 billion proposed budget is the largest ever proposed for the state. While there was no Climate Resilience Bond introduced, as there was last year, there is significant investment in wildlife and habitat restoration in the Delta which is a critical component of the Voluntary Agreements.

The Legislature is back in Sacramento introducing bills ahead of the February 19 deadline. Introductions have been slow in the first few weeks of January, but are expected to pick up as the bill introduction deadline nears. With significant limitations for committees to hold hearings because of COVID precautions, it is likely members will have to again prioritize their most important bills. With leadership and the Governor trying to focus members on a few key issues; homelessness and affordable housing, wildfire and climate, and economic recovery and pandemic response, it remains to be seen which water bills will ultimately be introduced and rise to the top.

Inland Empire Utilities Agency

Status Report – January 2021

Water Supply Conditions

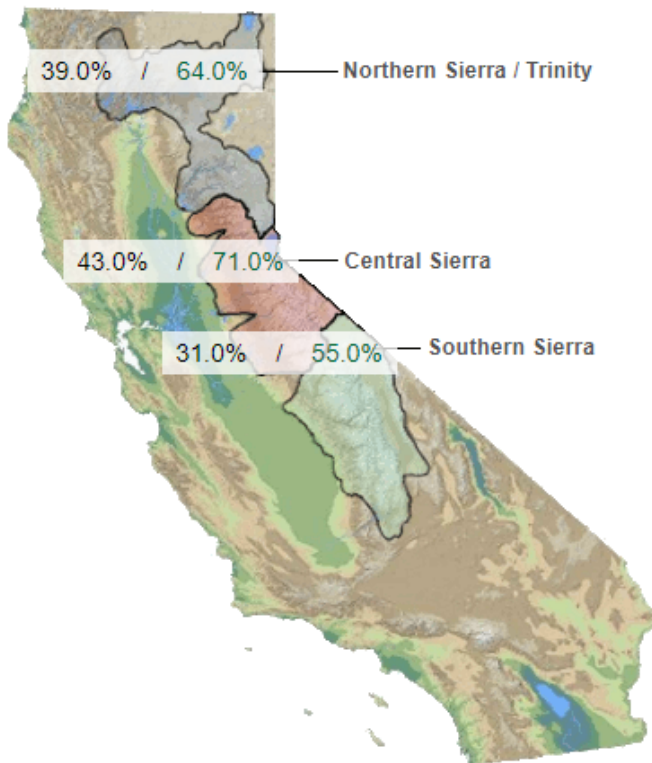
Dismal precipitation during the late fall and early winter has left water managers concerned about water supplies for 2021. With San Luis Reservoir, the main south-of-Delta storage facility for the State Water Project, at 65 percent of average for this time of the year and 50 percent capacity and Oroville at 54 percent of average and 34 percent capacity, there is cause to worry. Further worry has been associated with the snowpack numbers. On Tuesday, January 26 the statewide snowpack was at 23 percent of April 1 average and 41 percent of normal. By Friday the 29th, the statewide snowpack was at 39 percent of April 1 average and 66 percent of normal. While 66 percent of normal isn't a very promising number, the massive storm that left eight feet of snow was very helpful at helping the snowpack inch towards normal.

➔ Snow Water Equivalents (inches)

Provided by the California Cooperative Snow Surveys

Data For: 29-Jan-2021

% Apr 1 Avg. / % Normal for this Date



Change Date :



29-Jan-2021

NORTH

Data For: 29-Jan-2021

Number of Stations Reporting	32
Average snow water equivalent	11.2"
Percent of April 1 Average	39%
Percent of normal for this date	64%

CENTRAL

Data For: 29-Jan-2021

Number of Stations Reporting	44
Average snow water equivalent	13.0"
Percent of April 1 Average	43%
Percent of normal for this date	71%

SOUTH

Data For: 29-Jan-2021

Number of Stations Reporting	25
Average snow water equivalent	7.7"
Percent of April 1 Average	31%
Percent of normal for this date	55%

STATEWIDE SUMMARY

Data For: 29-Jan-2021

Number of Stations Reporting	101
Average snow water equivalent	11.1"
Percent of April 1 Average	39%
Percent of normal for this date	66%

SWRCB Estimates \$1 Billion in Unpaid Water Bills Since March

Californians have accumulated \$1 billion in unpaid water bills since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, and about 1.6 million California households are behind on their water bills, according [to a new survey](#) from the State Water Resources Control Board.

In April, the Governor issued a statewide water shutoff moratorium.

The survey found that 12 percent of all households in the state have accrued some amount of water debt. Most owe less than \$200, but over 155,000 households owe more than \$1,000.

Until this report, California had no idea how bad its water debt crisis was, while other states have been keeping track of water debt for months. Nationwide, estimates suggest that water utilities could face a financial impact of \$13.9 billion by the end of 2020.

The SWRCB decided to study California's water debt crisis last fall at the urging of advocates and community members who were concerned about how the state would respond to the crisis without a clear understanding of the extent of the problem. In November, the board began a survey of over 500 water systems across the state of California.

Congress included \$638 million for water debt relief nationwide in the December stimulus bill. California can expect to receive between \$60 and \$70 million of that, which is nowhere near enough to provide relief to households and water systems alike.

Senator Bill Dodd (D-Napa) introduced [two bills](#) to address the crisis. SB 222 establishes a water assistance fund for low-income rate payers experiencing economic hardship. SB 223 expands protections and protocols for customers who are faced with having their water shutoff because of an inability to pay their bills. Both measures are being evaluated by the water community and stakeholders will begin to raise issues with the author soon.

Zero Delta Smelt Found in "Fall Midwater Trawl" Survey

For the third year in a row, the Department of Fish and Wildlife found zero Delta Smelt in its Fall Midwater Trawl Survey throughout the Delta. Not only did the survey find zero Delta Smelt, once the most abundant species in the estuary, it also found zero Sacramento Splittail, a native minnow that was removed from the Endangered Species list by the Bush Administration.

The fish are surveyed every year with trawl gear in an array of locations in the Delta. The survey uses an "index," a relative measure of abundance, to assess the populations. The 2 to 3 inch long Delta Smelt, found only in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, is utilized as an indicator species that reveals the overall health of the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary.

While the Fall Midwater Trawl (FMWT) survey did not catch any Delta Smelt, it does not mean there were no smelt present, but the numbers are very low and believed to be below the effective detection threshold by most sampling methods.

This is not the only survey that found low numbers of Delta Smelt in 2020. The Enhanced Delta Smelt Monitoring (EDSM) survey of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) found just two Delta Smelt during 14 sample weeks conducted between September 8- December 11, 2020.

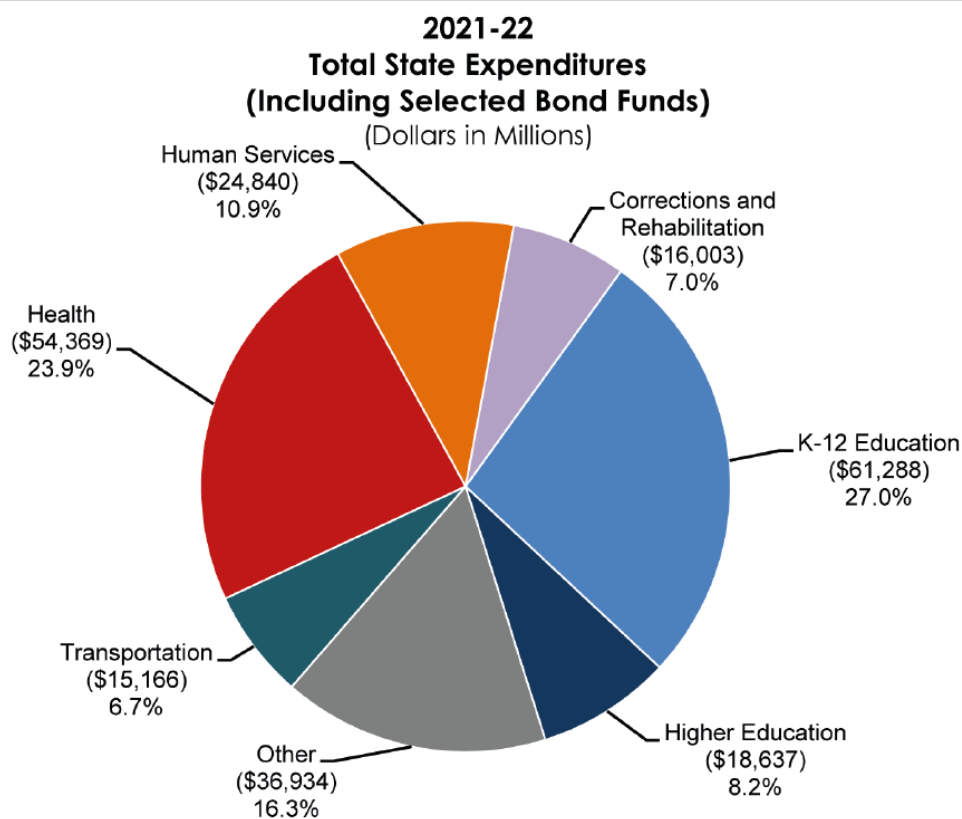
In addition, the Fish Culture and Conservation Laboratory run by UC Davis, which aims to capture wild broodstock every year to maintain their hatchery-reared Delta Smelt population as a hedge against

extinction in the wild, couldn't find any fish for broodstock this fall. They caught zero Delta Smelt in the 151 tows since November 17.

Governor Proposes 2021-2022 State Budget

On January 8, Governor Newsom released his proposed 2021-2022 state budget. With revenues much stronger than earlier predicted, the \$227 billion proposed budget is the largest ever proposed for the state.

As expected, the proposed budget is heavily focused on economic recovery, COVID vaccinations, wildfire preparedness, and getting schools reopened. There is a set of “early action” measures proposed as part of his economic recovery package, including \$1.5 billion for electric vehicle charging infrastructure.



Notably, the budget includes \$125 million in Prop 68 funds to fund projects which aim to protect and restore natural or aquatic wildlife, species or wetlands in the Delta. This funding is critical to the success of the Voluntary Agreements that are still being negotiated.

Budget Subcommittees will discuss the individual provisions of the budget proposal ahead of the June 15 statutory deadline to pass the budget.

Legislative Update

The Legislature is back in Sacramento working on 2021 legislative packages. The session remains constrained by COVID-19 precautions with very limited staff and public allowed in the Capitol and members urged to keep bill packages small again this year. Members have been encouraged to focus on legislation to address homeless and housing, wildfire and climate, and economic recovery and pandemic response.

Few bills have been introduced to date, however the bulk is expected right ahead of the February 19 bill introduction deadline. In addition to the two bills by Senator Dodd mentioned above and SB 45 (Portantino), the reintroduction of the Climate Resilience Bond from last year (as discussed in last month's report), there are only a couple of water bills that have been introduced thus far.

SB 230 (Portantino): MWD and California Municipal Utilities Agency reintroduction from last year regarding constituents of emerging concern (CEC). The bill would establish a science advisory panel to make recommendations on CECs to the SWRCB. The proponents of the measure want to create a more predictable process for establishing which chemicals are considered for MCLs, NLs, RLs, etc. The bill is nearly identical to the version IEUA supported last year. The bill was tabled because of the abbreviated legislation, not for any policy or political reasons.

INFORMATION
ITEM
2C

INNOVATIVE FEDERAL STRATEGIES, LLC

Comprehensive Government Relations

MEMORANDUM

To: IEUA Community and Legislative Affairs Committee

From: Letitia White, Jean Denton, Drew Tatum, and Sarah Persichetti

Date: January 29, 2021

Re: January Monthly Legislative Update

Biden Inaugurated, Agenda Faces Senate Hurdles

On Wednesday, January 20, Joseph R. Biden, Jr. was inaugurated as the 46th President of the United States on the West Front of the United States Capitol. Biden, 78, is the oldest person ever inaugurated to serve as President. Vice President Kamala Harris made history as the first woman, first African American, and first person of Indian descent to serve in the second highest elected office in the United States.

President Biden will face big headaches on getting his priorities off the ground on Capitol Hill. Democrats are vowing to use their first unified government in more than a decade to enact a “bold” agenda.

But they are facing significant hurdles to getting anything done fast. There’s a looming second impeachment trial for former President Trump and, in the meantime, a chaotic Senate that is stuck in limbo since a power sharing agreement between Republicans and Democrats has not yet been finalized to govern the chamber that is evenly divided on a daily basis.

“Things are on hold. I’ve got a lot of things I want to do,” Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) said of the impact of not having a power-sharing deal on President Biden’s agenda.

President Biden’s problems are twofold: His Cabinet nominees appear poised to move at a sluggish pace and two of his legislative priorities — coronavirus relief and immigration reform — are already being panned by top Republicans.

In a potential sign of the hurdles to come, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) sent a warning shot during one of his first-floor speeches back in the minority. Republicans, he warned, were willing to work with Biden but also wouldn’t be shy about blocking bills they do not support. Because of the 60-vote legislative filibuster, Democrats will need at least 10 GOP senators to pass most things unless they invoke the “nuclear option” to nix the legislative filibuster. At least two Democratic Senators—Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Krysten Sinema (D-AZ)—have indicated they would not be willing to vote to get rid of the filibuster.

Once an impeachment trial starts, it’s expected to sideline much of the Senate’s regular legislative work.

Democrats and President Biden have floated the idea that the Senate could vote on nominations and legislation in the morning and then conduct Trump's historic second trial in the afternoon.

In accordance with an agreement reached between Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Republican Leader McConnell, the main parts of the trial are not expected to begin until the week of February 8, though Senate received the single Article of Impeachment on Monday, January 25 and Senators took the trial oath the following day.

By the end of Inauguration Day, the Senate had only confirmed one member of Biden's cabinet – Avril Haines to be President Biden's director of national intelligence (DNI). By comparison, President Trump had two nominees confirmed on his first day in office—for Defense Secretary and Homeland Security Secretary.

Moving nominations has been complicated by the fact that Leaders Schumer and McConnell haven't yet reached an agreement on how to share power in the 50-50 Senate. It's set up an unusual dynamic in which Democrats have the majority, but Republicans still control many of the Senate committees.

Another complication emerged when McConnell asked that the organizing deal include language protecting the 60-vote legislative filibuster, which progressives and a growing number of Democratic senators support nixing.

Supporters warn that the filibuster stands in the way of passing many of Biden and Democrats priorities and that McConnell is making a request that he would never agree to if Republicans were still in the majority.

President Joe Biden Signs Flurry of Executive Actions in First Hours of Presidency

President Joe Biden was sworn in as the 46th president of the United States on January 20. In his inaugural address, Biden made an appeal for unity and sought to turn the page on the divisions of the Trump era.

"To overcome these challenges, to restore the soul and secure the future of America requires so much more than words. It requires the most elusive of all things in a democracy: unity," President Biden said.

President Biden spoke with optimism about the country's future. But the difficulties the new president will face were on full display at his swearing in.

Former President Trump, who refused to concede that he lost fairly, did not attend the inauguration. The Capitol complex was surrounded by fencing erected after pro-Trump rioters on January 6 sought to halt the certification of results by Congress affirming Biden as president. And attendance was scaled back for the inaugural festivities as the Biden team urged Americans to avoid traveling to Washington, amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Innovative Federal Strategies LLC

President Biden signed his first executive actions just hours after being sworn in as the 46th commander in chief.

Biden, wearing a mask while seated at the Resolute Desk in the Oval Office, signed executive actions mandating mask use in federal building, federal lands, and by government contractors to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, rejoining the Paris climate agreement and extending support for underserved communities.

"I thought there's no time to wait. Get to work immediately," President Biden told reporters. "There's no time to start like today."

The executive actions were among 15 items that Biden signed on his first day in office.

The actions represent an effort by Biden to turn a page on the administration of his predecessor, former President Trump, by reversing some of his more controversial policy moves, including the exit from the Paris climate accord. For several months, the U.S. was the only country in the world that wasn't a party to the accord.

"A cry of survival comes from the planet itself, a cry that can't be any more desperate or any more clear," Biden said in his inaugural address, listing "a climate in crisis" as one of the many challenges facing the U.S. Special envoy John Kerry will be leading much of the administration's climate efforts, and has said reestablishing American leadership on climate change will be one of his top priorities.

Some Republican lawmakers, however, blasted the decision and plan to introduce a resolution seeking Senate review.

"The Paris Agreement is a poorly negotiated, fatally flawed treaty that represents a bad deal for American families everywhere," Senator Steve Daines (R-MT) said in a statement joined by five other lawmakers.

Biden also signed an order reversing Trump's effort to withdraw from the World Health Organization, and sought to deliver relief to those impacted by the coronavirus pandemic by extending a pause on student loan payments and moratoriums on evictions and foreclosures.

Administration, Lawmakers Expected to Move Quickly on COVID Relief

Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) said on Thursday, January 21 that House Democrats will move immediately on a massive coronavirus relief package, setting the stage for an early showdown in the newly flipped Senate over the chief legislative priority of the nascent Biden administration.

Speaker Pelosi's remarks came one week after President Biden unveiled a \$1.9 trillion emergency relief package, which features many of the wish-list items contained in earlier proposals from Pelosi and House Democrats.

House Democrats have rearranged their schedule over the next two weeks, scrapping votes during the week of January 25 to allow the relevant committees to organize for the 117th Congress and begin considering the various provisions of their emerging COVID-19 relief package. Speaker Pelosi suggested that package could hit the House floor as early as the week of February 1.

In his inaugural address, Biden called on lawmakers of both parties to come together behind another round of emergency aid, warning of a dark winter without it.

"We're entering what may be the toughest and deadliest period of the virus," he said. "We must set aside politics and finally face this pandemic as one nation."

But another enormous coronavirus bill faces a tough road in the Senate, where Republicans are already signaling their opposition to President Biden's proposal.

"I suspect the whole package is a non-starter," Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO) said. He quickly added that there are elements of the proposal that Republicans can support, encouraging Democrats to come to the table on a smaller compromise.

Additionally, on Friday, January 22, President Biden signed several executive orders related to the coronavirus pandemic. As part of the orders, President Biden directed his administration to boost food assistance for needy Americans and leverage federal contracts to improve pay for low-wage workers.

Brian Deese, director of Biden's National Economic Council, said that "these actions are not a substitute for comprehensive legislative relief, but they will provide a critical lifeline to millions of families." As part of his unilateral push in the interim, the president is asking:

- The Labor Department to issue guidance clarifying that workers can refuse employment that jeopardizes their health and still receive unemployment benefits;
- The Agriculture Department to issue new guidance that would allow as many as 12 million additional Americans to have access to food-stamp benefits that were enhanced during the pandemic;
- The Treasury Department to create new online tools to help Americans who have not yet received the coronavirus stimulus checks to which they're entitled; and
- The Veterans Affairs Department to halt collections on overpayments and debts, in a move the administration says could help as many as 2 million veterans.

White House officials described the efforts as a down payment on broader economic efforts they're pursuing as part of the \$1.9 trillion stimulus package. Deese spoke to a group of lawmakers Sunday, January 24 to discuss the proposal.

If lawmakers don't make headway in a bipartisan fashion, the House and Senate Democrats have indicated they will look to the budget reconciliation process, which allows for a simple majority vote in the Senate on certain legislation, to pass at least portions of President Biden's coronavirus relief package.

Portions of the proposal would likely be ineligible for passage in the Senate under reconciliation instructions, as the Senate's "Byrd rule" requires that legislation passed through the process have a budgetary impact. For example, House Budget Committee Chairman John Yarmuth (D-KY) said that there are plans to include instructions that they hope would allow the House and Senate to raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour. "We're going to put that in the instructions and see what the [Senate] parliamentarian says," Yarmuth said in an interview. He did indicate he thought it would be "a stretch" to think the parliamentarian would allow the minimum wage provisions to survive the reconciliation process.

President Biden acknowledged on Monday, January 25 that it could take "a couple of weeks" to reach an agreement and said Democratic leaders would ultimately decide whether to use reconciliation depending on how negotiations go.

Additionally, on Thursday, January 28, the White House signaled that the administration did not support breaking down the \$1.9 trillion package into individual portions of the larger proposal.

"The needs of the American people are urgent from putting food on the table, to getting vaccines out the door to reopening schools. Those aren't partisan issues," White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki stated. "We are engaging with a range of voices—that's democracy in action—we aren't looking to split a package in two."

Republican senators have indicated they do not support such a large package at this time, pointing to the relief bill Congress passed in late December. The skepticism of Sens. Mitt Romney (R-UT) and Susan Collins (R-ME), two more moderate Republicans who are potential partners for the administration, has led to questions about whether the bill will get any GOP support.

For final passage of a coronavirus relief package, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) indicated he hoped to secure passage of the next round of relief by mid-March ahead of the expiration of federal benefits that were extended in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 that was enacted in December of 2020.

Biden Administration, Lawmakers Express Disagreement on Oil and Gas Drilling

On Wednesday, January 27, the President Biden signed an executive order to pause new oil and gas leases on public lands. The order directs the Interior Department to limit new leases "to the extent possible," while excluding oil activity on Native American lands that can be a serious revenue generator for tribes. The order also directs agencies to end federal subsidies for fossil fuels "as consistent with applicable law."

The actions follow an order signed by acting Secretary Scott de la Vega on January 20 hours after President Biden was inaugurated bars the department from pushing ahead with any new leasing or drilling permits, freezing such leases for the next 60 days. It also blocks any new major mining actions.

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President Biden's climate plan calls for "banning new oil and gas permitting on public lands and waters," a pledge made by each Democratic candidate in the primary after the idea was first proposed by Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA).

The 60-day timeline pauses several other actions at Interior, including any promotions for department staff or transfer of public lands back to the states.

President Biden has nominated Representative Deb Haaland (D-NM) to lead the Interior Department, and her signature would be required to establish a permanent moratorium on new oil drilling on public lands.

However, several Republican members of the House and Senate disagree with the Administration over the actions.

Senator Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) is set to introduce a bill that would restrict the White House from unilaterally blocking new leasing for oil and gas drilling on federal lands without congressional approval.

Representative Yvette Herrell (R-NM) is set to be the lead sponsor of the House version of the bill, which has little chance of passing the Democratic-controlled chamber.

"For the president to attempt to use his authority as president to override provisions that are in federal law is inappropriate and certainly will be catastrophic," Senator Lummis said.

Additionally, several members of the Congressional Western Caucus released statements on Wednesday in opposition to President Biden's actions.

Western Caucus Chairman Dan Newhouse (R-WA) stated "This decision is a direct attack on the hardworking men and women who rely on these good-paying jobs, local economies, and rural communities that rely on the revenue from these leases. Worse, it puts American energy security in jeopardy."

Many congressional Democrats welcome President Biden's actions to stop oil and gas drilling on public lands, and plan to take advantage of the majority the party holds in the House and Senate to see that the moratorium is accomplished.

Representative Jimmy Panetta (D-CA) has reintroduced the California Central Coast Conservation Act, which establishes a moratorium on all new oil and gas leasing on federal public land on the central coast of California.

Representative Panetta originally introduced this legislation in December 2019 in direct response to the Trump Administration's decision to allow for new oil and gas leasing and development on over 720,000 acres of public land in Central California.

The bill prohibits the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) from implementing the decision until it completes and publishes a supplemental environmental impact statement assessing the impacts of oil and gas drilling on the Central Coast.

Several California members are original cosponsors of Representative Panetta's legislation including Representatives Alan Lowenthal, Grace Napolitano, Salud Carbajal, Mark Takano, Ro Khanna, Mark DeSaulnier, Anna Eshoo, Jared Huffman, and Barbara Lee.

"We are talking about millions of acres of public lands, not a disposable commodity for sale to the highest bidder in the oil and gas industry," Representative Lowenthal commented on the legislation.

Biden EPA Asks DOJ to Hit Pause on Defense of Trump-Era Rules

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is asking the government to pump the brakes in its defense of Trump-era environmental rollbacks in court.

In a letter to the Department of Justice (DOJ), EPA's acting general counsel Melissa Hoffer asks government lawyers to hit pause on cases where the previous administration has been challenged by environmental groups.

The move is a way for the Biden administration to disavow the Trump rollbacks, buying time as they signal that they plan to issue their own regulations.

The Trump administration scaled back more than 170 environmental regulations while in office, easing regulations on vehicle emissions and methane leaks from the oil and gas industry, and limiting how the EPA weighs public health data.

In an executive order issued on his first day in office, Biden signaled that he intends to review at least 58 rollbacks that were promulgated under Trump.

Hoffer's request references two recent orders from Biden, one ordering a review of existing environmental regulations, and another that freezes all Trump-era rules that have not yet taken effect. The reversal of stance in court comes as Biden's Department of Justice takes over a dizzying number of suits, with many rules facing multiple suits from both attorneys general and various environmental groups.

Biden's Cabinet Gradually Confirmed by Senate

A week after being sworn in, President Biden is slowly seeing his Cabinet start to come together.

The slow trickle of nomination approvals in the Senate comes as President Biden only had one member of his cabinet vetted and confirmed by senators on Inauguration Day: Avril Haines, President Biden's pick for Director of National Intelligence.

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It's a historically small number of Cabinet picks to get through the Senate on the first day of a new administration and comes after Republicans were furious in 2017 when Democrats allowed only two Cabinet picks to be confirmed on former President Trump's first day.

By comparison, former President Barack Obama got six Cabinet picks confirmed on his first day, former President George W. Bush got seven on his first day and former President Clinton got three. Former President Carter got eight, while former President Nixon got 11.

In the days since the inauguration, the Senate has confirmed three additional nominees, with plans to confirm at least two more during the first week of February.

In addition to Haines, the Senate has confirmed:

- Lloyd Austin as Secretary of Defense in a 93-2 vote on Tuesday, January 22.
- Janet Yellen, former Chairwoman of the Federal Reserve, as Secretary of the Treasury in an 84-15 vote on Friday, January 25.
- Antony Blinken, one of Biden's longtime advisers, as Secretary of State in a 78-22 vote on Tuesday, January 28.

Confirmation votes for Alejandro Mayorkas to be Secretary of Homeland Security and Pete Buttigieg to be Secretary of Transportation have been scheduled for the week of February 1st.

But Biden is still missing permanent officials to helm the key departments of Justice and Health and Human Services (HHS), as well as the CIA — let alone deputy positions across government that also need Senate-confirmed officials.

Energy Secretary nominee Jennifer Granholm, Housing and Urban Development nominee Marcia Fudge, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations nominee Linda Thomas-Greenfield, and Commerce Secretary nominee Gina Raimondo have sat for hearings over the past two weeks.

A large theme of the nomination hearings has been President Biden's focus on policy to address climate change.

Granholm, the former governor of Michigan, will be tasked with helping implement the president's goal of expanding clean energy as part of an effort to reach net-zero emissions by 2050.

Both Biden and Granholm have stressed that they want to create jobs as part of the transition. During her nomination hearing on Wednesday, January 27, Granholm expressed before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee that the goal is to create 10 million jobs.

Republicans, particularly those from fossil fuel-producing states, expressed skepticism during the hearing about replacing oil and gas jobs.

During the nomination hearing for President Biden's pick to lead the Transportation Department, former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg on Thursday, January 21, many of the questions from senators stemmed from the Administration's climate vision.

Buttigieg fielded questions from Republicans on issues like increasing the gas tax and Biden's executive order from Wednesday revoking a permit for the Keystone XL pipeline.

"More good paying union jobs will be created in the context of the climate and infrastructure work we have before us," Buttigieg said in response to questions from Republicans about job loss due to the cancellation of the Keystone pipeline. "We cannot afford to not invest in climate."

Additionally, newly confirmed Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has expressed the importance of consideration of climate change in defense policy.

"There is little about what the [Defense] Department does to defend the American people that is not affected by climate change. It is a national security issue, and we must treat it as such," Secretary Austin commented.

Congress Affirms Biden Win Following Riot at Capitol

Congress, early in the morning on Thursday, January 7, formally affirmed President-elect Joe Biden's election victory after rioters supporting President Trump overwhelmed Capitol Police and broke into the Capitol on Wednesday afternoon.

The extraordinary attack on the symbolic epicenter of the U.S.'s democracy left five people dead including a Capitol police officer, and lawmakers in both parties shell-shocked by the unprecedented threat to their safety in a building previously thought to be virtually impenetrable.

Shortly before 4 a.m., after lawmakers formally tabulated each state's Electoral College votes, Vice President Pence announced before a joint session of Congress that Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris had won 306 votes over Trump's 232.

The images of chanting Trump supporters smashing windows, brawling with Capitol Police and marching unimpeded through the Rotunda quickly ricocheted around the globe, stunning Washington, the nation and the entire free world while leading to accusations from lawmakers that it was the president himself who had incited the riot.

"There is no question that the president formed the mob, the president incited the mob, the president addressed the mob," said Representative Liz Cheney (R-WY), the third-ranking House Republican. "He lit the flame."

The vote to certify the president-elect's victory in the Electoral College, the final step before his inauguration on January 20, is largely a matter of course, but party leaders in both chambers decided that delaying it, even briefly, would deliver the message that the mob had won. Lawmaker also opted not to seek to meet in an alternate location even though both the House and Senate are prepared for such action in the event the Capitol is inaccessible.

Instead, they raced to finalize their votes accepting the state tallies, hoping it would send a very different signal to the stunned country: The nation's democratic institutions remain strong even under direct attack.

“We must and we will show to the country — and indeed to the world — that we will not be diverted from our duty, that we will respect our responsibility to the Constitution and to the American people,” Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) said while presiding over the House floor.

“The United States Senate will not be intimidated. We will not be kept out of this chamber by thugs, mobs or threats. We will not bow to lawlessness or intimidation,” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) said as he reconvened the upper chamber Wednesday night.

The day's proceedings were extraordinary even before the arrival of the violent mob, as more than 100 of Trump's closest allies in both chambers had vowed to challenge the election results in as many as six battleground states where they claimed, without evidence, that fraud had been rampant.

The House and Senate were less than an hour into separately debating the first GOP objection to a state that Biden won — Arizona — when the rioters breached nearby office buildings and eventually the Capitol itself.

Both chambers went into recess for more than 5 1/2 hours as law enforcement struggled to contain the chaos unfolding inside the Capitol. The mobs breached the Senate chamber, broke the glass of one of the center doors leading into the House chamber and vandalized Speaker Pelosi's office nearby.

Both the House and Senate ultimately voted late Wednesday to reject the challenge to Arizona's electoral votes on a bipartisan basis. That outcome was expected, but the day's shocking events acted to diminish the number of Republican objectors.

Still, 121 Republicans in the House and six in the Senate voted to challenge Arizona's results. Hours later, the House and Senate beat back a challenge to Pennsylvania's result by similar margins. The Senate rejected it by 92-7, while the House voted 282-138.

For an objection to be heard, federal law requires that it be made by at least one lawmaker in each chamber to trigger two hours of debate and a vote. GOP senators and House members had planned to also launch objections to Georgia, but ultimately backed down after the day's chaos.

“When I arrived in Washington this morning, I fully intended to object to the certification of the electoral votes. However, the events that have transpired today have forced me to reconsider and I cannot now, in good conscience, object,” Senator Kelly Loeffler (R-GA), who lost reelection in a runoff the night before, announced on the Senate floor.

The Capitol itself bore physical damage hours after law enforcement cleared the rioters out of the building. Wednesday marked the first time that a group breached the Capitol since the British in August 1814.

“This will be a stain on our country not so easily washed away,” said Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY) following the Senate’s return to the chamber following the riots. “But we are a resilient, forward-looking and optimistic people. And we will begin the hard work of repairing this nation tonight.”

Senate Party Makeup Set as Warnock, Ossoff Win Georgia Senate Seats

Democrats have won control of the Senate after securing victories in two runoff races in Georgia, a historic shift that will effectively give the party full control of the government under President Joe Biden.

Democrat Raphael Warnock defeated Senator Kelly Loeffler (R-GA), while Democrat Jon Ossoff defeated Senator David Perdue (R-GA), in hotly contested runoff races, giving each party 50 seats in the Senate. Vice President Kamala Harris will cast the tie-breaking votes, giving Democrats control of the Senate for the first time since 2014.

Rev. Warnock’s victory over Senator Loeffler was called early in the morning on Wednesday, January 6. The race between Mr. Ossoff and Senator Perdue was closer and was not called until the afternoon.

Heading into Tuesday, January 5, Republicans held a 50-to-48 seat advantage in the Senate. Republicans only needed to win one of the two Georgia runoffs to maintain a slim majority in the Senate.

Democrats last controlled the House, Senate and White House when President Obama was first elected in 2008.

Rev. Warnock, the senior pastor at the Historic Ebenezer Baptist Church, where Martin Luther King, Jr. once preached, follows Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC) to become the second Black senator to represent a Southern state since Reconstruction.

Mr. Ossoff, the 33-year-old chief executive of a London-based documentary film company, will become the first Jewish senator from Georgia.

The last time the Senate was divided 50/50 was during the opening days of the George W. Bush Administration. As Republicans controlled the White House, Republicans were in the majority. However, the Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-MS) and Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD) reached a historic power sharing agreement that saw equal representation on all committees and set up other procedural mechanisms that recognized that the chamber was equally divided.

"Mitch and Chuck are going to need to work together but it’s going to be a challenge for them and for the Senate," said former Senator Trent Lott, who was majority leader during another rare 50-50 Senate for several months in 2001.

Schumer's first task as majority leader will be developing with McConnell what will be, in part, a power-sharing agreement with Republicans: a Senate organizing resolution that will lay out matters like committee membership, staff budgets, who gets which offices and other rules. The resolution needs 60 votes to pass, so Republicans are likely to negotiate more privileges than a usual minority would have.

"I look forward to sitting down with Leader McConnell," Schumer said Wednesday, before chaos enveloped the Capitol. "Certainly, we'll have to talk."

House Impeaches Trump for a Second Time – With Some GOP Support

House lawmakers on Wednesday, January 20 impeached former President Trump for his role in the deadly attack on the U.S. Capitol, capping an extraordinary week of violence, apprehension and partisan brawling in Congress just as Washington cranks up security in preparation for Joe Biden's inauguration.

The 232-197 vote was historic: It made Trump the first president in the country's history to be impeached twice. Half of all presidential impeachments have occurred during Trump's term of office.

The Democrats' single impeachment article charged Trump with misleading the country by falsely claiming a "landslide" victory in an election he lost, then whipping up a volatile crowd with violence-laced pleas to fight back against the electoral process. As a result, the article charged, Trump had "threatened the integrity of the democratic system, interfered with the peaceful transition of power, and imperiled a coequal branch of Government."

The resolution was sponsored by Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), a constitutional law expert. Raskin will serve as the lead impeachment manager on the part of the House when a trial occurs in the Senate.

Unlike the first debate, this time the president's Democratic critics had support across the aisle. Ten Republicans joined every voting Democrat to approve the single impeachment article, which accuses Trump of inciting violence against the same federal government he leads.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), who oversaw both impeachment efforts, said President Trump's refusal to concede his election defeat — and his subsequent efforts to rally supporters to the Capitol to overturn the election results — amounted to sedition. The president, she said, gave Congress no choice.

"We know we experienced the insurrection that violated the sanctity of the people's Capitol," Pelosi said in a floor speech before the vote. "And we know that the president of the United States incited this insurrection, this armed rebellion, against our common country.

"He must go," she added. "He is a clear and present danger to the nation that we all love."

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In addition to GOP Conference Chair, Representative Liz Cheney (R-WY), the nine other Republicans who voted to impeach Trump were Representative John Katko (NY), the top Republican on the Homeland Security Committee; Representatives Fred Upton (MI) and Jamie Herrera Beutler (WA), co-chairs of the centrist Tuesday Group with Katko; Representatives Adam Kinzinger (IL) and Peter Meijer (MI), both war veterans; and Representatives Anthony Gonzalez (OH), David Valadao (CA), Tom Rice (SC), and Dan Newhouse (WA).

The impeachment vote will lead to a trial in the Senate, though the timing and outcome in the upper chamber are unclear.

In a remarkable statement, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) declared that he had not determined how he would vote in the trial, saying he would listen to the legal arguments.

The first time Trump was impeached, there was clear opposition from Senate Republicans and only one GOP Senator, Mitt Romney (UT), voted in favor of one of the two articles of impeachment.

If all Democrats vote to convict, which is not a certainty in the Senate, 17 Republican votes would be needed to convict and vote separately to bar him from ever holding federal office again.

The long-term implications of both the Capitol siege and Trump's second impeachment remain unclear.

Republicans opposing the impeachment effort in the House did not all defend Trump's actions surrounding the Capitol assault; in fact, many condemned it. But they also warned that taking the drastic step of attempting to remove the president would only exacerbate the country's already cavernous political divisions, inflaming the resentment of the president's supporters — and perhaps leading to greater violence down the road.

Taking the floor just before the vote, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), a staunch Trump loyalist, conceded that Trump "bears responsibility" for the Capitol assault. But he quickly cautioned that impeachment "would further divide this nation" and "would further fan the flames of partisan division."

Prior to the vote on impeachment, the House voted 223 to 205 (with only one Republican—Adam Kinzinger—voting with Democrats) to call on Vice President Mike Pence to "convene and mobilize the principal officers of the executive departments of the Cabinet to activate section 4 of the 25th Amendment to declare President Donald J. Trump incapable of executing the duties of his office and to immediately exercise powers as acting President." Vice President Pence wrote Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) indicating he would not take such a step.

On Monday, January 25, House Democrats sent their article of impeachment to the Senate, officially putting him on trial.

The ceremonial delivery was a legal formality. Senators were sworn in on Tuesday as jurors for the trial, which is expected to start in roughly two weeks.

On Tuesday, January 26, the Senate rejected an effort by Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) to declare the looming trial unconstitutional. The Senate voted 55-45 to set aside Paul's motion, with all but five GOP senators siding with Senator Paul. GOP Senators Mitt Romney (UT), Ben Sasse (NE), Susan Collins (ME), Lisa Murkowski (AK) and Pat Toomey (PA) voted with Democrats to table Senator Paul's point of order.

The vote is the clearest sign yet that Trump is heading toward a second acquittal and offers an early insight into which Republicans are lining up behind an argument that his second impeachment trial isn't constitutional.

Use of Congressional Review Act Could Come with Democratic Majority

President-elect Biden's victory provides Congress with a valuable opportunity to overturn recent Trump Administration rulemakings through the use of the Congressional Review Act (CRA). The CRA allows new regulations to be overturned through a joint resolution of disapproval that needs a simple majority vote in both chambers and the President's signature.

If a rule is overturned, an agency can't take a similar action unless Congress passes another law allowing it.

With the Georgia Senate runoffs having given Democrats majority control of the Senate, the CRA is almost certain to play a significant role early in the 117th Congress.

Republicans at the start of the 115th Congress used their unified control of the House, Senate, and White House to overturn 16 rules, all of which were issued under the Obama administration or by Obama appointees.

Among the slew of regulations overturned during the first two years of President Donald Trump's administration were Obama-era rules dealing with labor law violations by federal contractors, mining operations, and reducing leaks from oil and natural gas production.

Before the Republicans won the White House and both chambers of Congress in the 2016 election, only one rule had been overturned using the law. The only time the CRA had previously been used was in the opening days of the George W. Bush administration where Congress overturned a Clinton-era OSHA regulation.

The CRA requires federal agencies to submit most final rules to Congress and the Government Accountability Office before they can take effect.

Lawmakers must then act within specified time periods to use the law's "fast track" procedures to block the rules. For instance, the Senate can pass a disapproval resolution with a simple majority, but it must act within 60 session days of a rule being submitted to Congress or published in the Federal Register.

If Congress adjourns its annual session before the 60-day period expires, the clock resets starting on the 15th working day of the following session. That means Democrats in the 117th Congress could try to use the CRA to block Trump-era rules that were finalized since August 2020, according to several estimates.

The law also prevents “major” rules from taking effect during a 60-day review period. The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, part of the White House Office of Management and Budget, designates such rules if it determines they would do one of the following:

- Have an annual economic effect of \$100 million or more.
- Result in a major increase in costs or prices for consumers, industries, governments, or geographic regions.
- Have significant adverse effects on competition, employment, investment, productivity, innovation, or on the ability of U.S.-based enterprises to compete with foreign-based enterprises in domestic and export markets.

White House Intervened to Weaken EPA Guidance on Forever Chemicals

The Trump Administration intervened as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was weighing a strict ban on imports of products that contain PFAS chemicals, substantially weakening the guidance.

As the EPA worked to limit the importation of any product with PFAS inside or out, the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) stepped in and significantly watered down the guidance in December, barring importation of only those products with a PFAS coating on the outside.

With the White House’s changes, companies can still import products that have components covered with PFAS on the inside without alerting the EPA. It’s not clear why the White House stepped in to weaken the guidance.

The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) within OMB typically reviews major regulations before they are finalized but does not typically review guidance documents. An executive order from President Trump, however, allows the process.

That’s not the first time that’s happened under the Trump administration when it comes to PFAS.

The December guidance weakened by OMB was a follow up to a PFAS rule finalized by the agency in June laying out requirements for any “significant new use” of the chemical, a term that kicks off more oversight from EPA.

But in August, Senator Tom Carper (D-DE) asked for an investigation of that rulemaking process, alleging Nancy Beck, then the EPA’s principal deputy assistant administrator for the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention, was involved in significantly weakening it.

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Senator Carper accused Beck of working to weaken the rule, “urging for the adoption of a complicated and time-consuming analytic barrier” when weighing whether a product with PFAS posed a reasonable potential for exposure.

The EPA at the time denied any involvement from Beck.

“These accusations against Nancy Beck are baseless. Dr. Beck was not involved in pushing for any provisions in the final rule,” EPA spokesman James Hewitt said in April.

The rule was finalized in June, disappointing environmentalists who hoped the EPA would take a more aggressive approach in regulating PFAS.

The December guidance that was weakened by OMB shows a commitment to a narrower interpretation of how the rule should be applied.

EPA branded the changes as a routine result of interagency review.

“Consulting with other federal agencies on actions is a normal process across government. When issuing a rule or guidance, EPA often engages in an interagency review process led by OMB. This collaboration is important as other agencies have information and expertise that may be useful to EPA,” an agency spokesperson said.

Staffing

Please see below for a table of potential officials that President-elect Biden may pick for various roles in his cabinet, as well as officials that he has announced his intention to nominate. We will update the table each month as President-elect Biden announces his intent to nominate certain officials for various cabinet positions. As the Senate considers each nomination, we will bold the names of officials that have been confirmed. Note that not all officials below require Senate confirmation.

Administration Transition

Please see below for a table of potential officials that President-elect Biden may pick for various roles in his cabinet, as well as officials that he has announced his intention to nominate.

Officials already announced by President-Elect Biden:

Position	Official	Career History
Chief of Staff	Ron Klain	Former Chief of Staff to Joe Biden when he was VP; former Chief of Staff to VP Al Gore
Chief of Staff to Jill Biden	Julissa Reynoso Pantaleon	Partner at the law firm Winston & Strawn; former U.S. Ambassador to Uruguay and deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Obama Administration
Counsel	Dana Remus	General counsel to Joe Biden’s campaign; deputy assistant and deputy counsel for ethics to President Obama.

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Counselor	Steve Ricchetti	Chief of Staff to Vice President Joe Biden during the Obama administration and Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations under President Bill Clinton.
Deputy Chief of Staff	Jennifer O'Malley Dillon	Joe Biden's presidential campaign manager, Former Executive Director of DNC, deputy manager of President Obama's 2012 campaign.
Director of Oval Office Operations	Annie Tomasini	Currently Joe Biden's traveling Chief of Staff. Former deputy Press Secretary for Joe Biden when he was VP.
Director of White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs	Julie Rodriguez	Deputy campaign manager of Joe Biden's presidential campaign. served as special assistant to the president and senior deputy director of public engagement in the Obama Administration.
Senior Adviser	Mike Donilon	chief strategist for the Biden campaign; previously served as a counselor to then-Vice President Biden in the Obama White House
Senior Adviser to Jill Biden	Anthony Bernal	Deputy campaign manager and Chief of Staff to Jill Biden during the presidential campaign.
Senior Advisor and Director of the White House Office of Public Engagement	Cedric Richmond	Currently U.S. Representative to Louisiana's 2 nd congressional district who also served as co-chairman of President-Elect Biden's campaign.
National Security Adviser	Jake Sullivan	Former National Security Adviser to VP Biden
Department of State	Antony Blinken	Served in various roles in the Obama Administration including deputy secretary of state, assistant to the president and principal deputy national security adviser.
Department of Homeland Security	Alejandro Mayorkas	Deputy secretary of Homeland Security during the Obama administration, and served as the director of the Department of Homeland Security's United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.
Director of National Intelligence	Avril Haines	Former Deputy NSA, Former Deputy Director of the CIA
Special Presidential Envoy for Climate	John Kerry	Former Secretary of State
Treasury	Janet Yellen	Served as the Chair of the Federal Reserve from 2014 to 2018
UN Ambassador	Linda Thomas-Greenfield	Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (2004–2006), Ambassador to Liberia (2008–2012), and Director General of the Foreign Service and Director of Human Resources (2012–2013)
White House Deputy Director for Legislative Affairs	Shuwanza Goff	Currently Deputy Director for Legislative Operations for House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer.
White House Communications Director	Kate Bedingfield	Former Biden campaign communications director, and communications director for Biden when he served as Vice President
White House Press Secretary	Jen Psaki	Served as White House communications director from 2015-2017, held various communications and press roles in the Obama Administration.
Council of Economic Advisers Chair	Cecilia Rouse	Member of the Council of Economic Advisers in the Obama Administration.

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National Economic Council	Brian Deese	Global Head of Sustainable Investing at BlackRock. Former senior advisor in the Obama Administration, and deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget.
Chief of Staff to VP Harris	Tina Flournoy	former President Bill Clinton's Chief of Staff.
Domestic Policy Adviser to VP Harris	Rohini Kosoglu	Currently a Senior Adviser to Senator Harris.
National Security Adviser to VP Harris	Nancy McEldowney	Director of European Affairs on NSC in Clinton Administration, former U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria, and principal deputy assistant secretary of State in Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.
Communications Director to VP Harris	Ashley Etienne	Strategic Adviser for Biden campaign, former Communications Director for Speaker Pelosi, Communications Director in the Obama Administration and senior adviser.
Senior adviser and Chief Spokesperson to VP Harris	Symone Sanders	Senior Adviser for Biden's presidential campaign. former CNN commentator.
HHS	Xavier Becerra	Currently Attorney General of California.
Chief Medical Officer	Anthony Fauci	Director of National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases since 1984. Served as one of the leading members of President Trump's Coronavirus Task Force.
Surgeon General	Vivek Murthy	Former Surgeon General under the Obama Administration and Vice Admiral of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.
Defense	Lloyd Austin	Retired four-star Army general, former head of U.S. Central Command and military forces in Iraq
Agriculture	Tom Vilsack	Currently president of the U.S. Dairy Export Council; served as agriculture secretary under President Obama.
HUD	Marcia Fudge	Current Representative for Ohio's 11th congressional district
U.S. Trade Representative	Katherine Tai	Currently Chief Trade Counsel on House Ways and Means
Veterans Affairs	Denis McDonough	Former White House Chief of Staff and deputy National Security Adviser during the Obama administration
Head of White House Domestic Policy Council	Susan Rice	National Security Adviser and Ambassador to the United Nations under Obama Administration
Transportation	Pete Buttigieg	Former Mayor of South Bend, Indiana
White House Office of Domestic Climate Policy	Gina McCarthy	Former Air Chief of EPA in Obama's first term and as EPA administrator in his second
Energy	Jennifer Granholm	Former Governor of Michigan
White House Council on Environmental Quality	Brenda Mallory	Current director of regulatory policy at the Southern Environmental Law Center, and previously worked as CEQ's general counsel during the Obama administration
EPA Administrator	Michael Regan	Currently Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality and has previously served at the EPA
Interior	Deb Haaland	Current Representative for New Mexico's 1st congressional district

Education	Miguel Cardona	Currently Connecticut's education commissioner
Deputy Secretary of Defense	Kathleen Hicks	Currently heads Biden's transition team for the Pentagon, and director of the International Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Served as deputy undersecretary of defense for Strategy, Plans and Forces from 2009-2012 and as principal deputy undersecretary of defense for policy from 2012-2013.
White House Director for Legislative Affairs	Louisa Terrell	Served as Deputy Chief of Staff to Biden when he served in the Senate, worked on legislative affairs in the Obama Administration, she has also worked for consultants McKinsey and Co., Yahoo! and Facebook.
Deputy Chief of Staff	Bruce Reed	Former President Bill Clinton's chief domestic policy adviser. He worked with Biden in the Obama White House and was a senior adviser on his campaign.
Attorney General	Merrick Garland	Currently serves as a United States Circuit Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.
Deputy Attorney General	Lisa Monaco	Former Homeland Security Adviser to President Obama.
Labor	Marty Walsh	Current Mayor of Boston.
Small Business Administration	Isabel Guzman	Served as Deputy Chief of Staff at the SBA in the Obama administration, and is currently director of California's Office of the Small Business Advocate.
Commerce	Gina Raimondo	Current Governor of Rhode Island.
Central Intelligence Agency Director	William Burns	Currently the president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and served as deputy secretary of state under President Obama.
USAID	Samantha Power	Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
Senior Advisor to the Counselor to the President	John McCarthy	Deputy National Political Director on the Biden-Harris Campaign throughout the primary and general election. Former Chief of Staff for U.S. Representative Brendan F. Boyle (D-PA) and former legislative aide to Representative Frank Pallone (D-NJ)
Senior Advisor to the Deputy Chief of Staff	Zayn Siddique	Chief of Staff for the Domestic and Economic Team of the Biden-Harris Transition. Former Deputy Policy Director for Beto O'Rourke's presidential campaign and a Senior Policy Advisor to his senate campaign.
Senior Advisor to the Deputy Chief of Staff	Thomas Winslow	Chief of Staff to the Campaign Manager on the Biden-Harris Campaign, previously worked on Beto O'Rourke's campaign.
Director of Presidential Scheduling	Lisa Kohnke	Director of Scheduling for the Biden/Harris campaign. Former Director of Global Affairs for two Mayors of Chicago, Rahm Emanuel and Lori Lightfoot. Also has worked in scheduling and advance for the U.S. Dept. of Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker and in various roles in the Obama Administration.
Chief of Staff for the Office of Management and Administration	Sarah Feldmann	Operations Director for the Domestic/Economic Agency Review team on the Biden-Harris Transition; former Director of Operations and Special Projects for John Hickenlooper's Senate campaign.

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Chief Diversity and Inclusion Director	Michael Leach	This will be the first-ever Chief Diversity and Inclusion Director for the White House. Served as Chief People, Diversity, & Inclusion Officer on the Biden-Harris Campaign. Former NFL employee and assistant to the Head Coach for the Chicago Bears.
Deputy Director of Management and Administration for Personnel	Christian Peele	Currently deputy lead for operations on the Biden-Harris Transition, also served various roles in the Obama Administration.
Director of COVID-19 Operations	Jeffrey Wexler	Previously worked on the COVID-19 Preparedness team on the Biden-Harris Campaign and served as the Director of COVID-19 Preparedness on the Biden-Harris Transition, served as Director of Operations & Advance during the Obama-Biden administration.
Deputy National Security Advisor for Cyber and Emerging Technology	Anne Neuberger	National Security Agency's Director of Cybersecurity, where she leads NSA's cybersecurity mission
Homeland Security Advisor and Deputy National Security Advisor	Elizabeth D. Sherwood-Randall	Distinguished Professor at the Georgia Institute of Technology and a Senior Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Served in various capacities in the Obama Administration.
Deputy Homeland Security Advisor	Russ Travers	Former Acting Director and the Principal Deputy Director of the National Counterterrorism Center. Additionally, served in various roles on the National Security Council.
FEMA	Deanne Criswell	currently serves as the Commissioner of the New York City Emergency Management Department, previously worked at FEMA under the Obama Administration.
EPA Deputy Administrator	Janet McCabe	Previously served as the acting assistant administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation at EPA for much of the Obama administration.
Senior Adviser to the President	Anita Dunn	Held various positions in the Obama Administration. *Note - Dunn's position is expected to be temporary and she plans to return to her public affairs firm, SKDKnickerbocker, later this year.
Deputy CIA Director	David Cohen	Held the position from 2015 to 2017 during the closing days of the Obama administration, also previously served as undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence in the Department of Treasury.
Deputy Director of Office of Management and Budget	Shalanda Young	Currently the staff director and clerk for the House Appropriations Committee.
Deputy Assistant to the President	Kurt Campbell	Current chairman of the board of Center for a New American Security and a former State Department official in the Obama Administration.
Deputy Agriculture Secretary	Jewel Bronaugh	Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Deputy Transportation Secretary	Polly Trottenberg	Led NYC's transportation department for the past seven years and served in Department of Transportation in the Obama Administration.

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Deputy HHS Secretary	Andrea Palm	Held several roles at HHS during the Obama Administration, also led Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Deputy Interior Secretary	Elizabeth Klein	Deputy Director of the State Energy & Environmental Impact Center, served in roles in the Obama and Clinton administrations.
Deputy Education Secretary	Cindy Marten	Currently superintendent of the San Diego Unified School District, 32-year career as an educator.
FBI Director	Christopher Wray	President Biden plans to keep Christopher Wray in his current position as FBI director.

Officials under consideration for various cabinet positions:

Position	Possible Candidate	Prior Administration Experience / Current Role
NASA	Kendra Horn	Former U.S. Representative from Oklahoma
NASA	Pam Melroy	Former NASA Astronaut, she has worked at DARPA and FAA's Office of Commercial Space Transportation
NASA	Wanda Austin	Former president and chief executive of The Aerospace Company
NASA	Gretchen McClain	Former NASA official
NASA	Wanda Sigur	Former vice president and general manager for civil space at Lockheed Martin
USCIS	Ur Jaddou	Currently the leader of Biden's DHS transition agency review team, previously served for three years as USCIS chief counsel
CISA	Robert Silvers	Partner at the Paul Hastings law firm, vice-chair of the firm's privacy and cybersecurity practice and co-chair of AI practice, served in various capacities at DHS under Obama Administration

Bill Number	Sponsors	Title and/or Summary	Summary/Status	Latest Action
XX	Biden Coronavirus Relief Proposal	Legislation has not yet been introduced, though Democratic Leaders in the House and Senate have indicated the outline will be used to draft legislation that may move through the Budget Reconciliation process.	<p>Biden's proposal would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide an additional \$1,400 to individuals in the form of an economic impact payment. - Provide for the continuation and enhancement of Federal Unemployment Aid. - Provide \$25B in rental assistance - Provide for a 15% SNAP boost - Provide \$25B for childcare providers - Includes the temporary expansion of Child Tax Credits - Would mandate sick leave through 9/30 - Includes \$350B in state and local funding - Includes a proposal to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15/hr. 	<p>Biden has indicated that this is the first step in a two step Coronavirus relief proposal.</p> <p>The second proposal, which has not yet been detailed, is expected to focus on economic recovery and include funding for projects meant to stimulate the economy.</p> <p>Lawmakers hope to pass elements of the current proposal by mid-March either as a stand alone bill with bipartisan support or through budget reconciliation along party lines.</p>
H.R. 365	Rep. Greg Steube (R-FL)	To provide for the rescheduling of marijuana into schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act.		The legislation was introduced on January 19, 2021 and referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and the Committee on the Judiciary.
S. 29	Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)	A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize certain programs relating to nonpoint source management, and for other purposes.		The legislation was introduced on January 22, 2021 and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.
H.R. 59	Rep. Don Young (R-AK)	Strengthening Fishing Communities and Increasing Flexibility in Fisheries Management Act	The legislation would amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to provide flexibility for fishery managers and stability for fishermen, and for other purposes.	The legislation was introduced on January 4, 2021 and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Bill Number	Sponsors	Title and/or Summary	Summary/Status	Latest Action
H.R. 456	Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-CA)	California Land Protection Act	The legislation would block new fracking or oil and gas drilling on federal lands on California's central and southern coasts.	<p>The legislation was introduced on January 25, 2021, and referred to the House Committee on Natural Resource.</p> <p>Two additional California members, Representatives Brownley and Panetta, are original cosponsors of the legislation.</p>

INFORMATION
ITEM
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CALIFORNIA STRATEGIES, LLC

Date: January 29, 2021
To: Inland Empire Utilities Agency
From: John Withers, Jim Brulte
Re: California Strategies, LLC January 2021 Activity Report

- 1) This month Jim Brulte and John Withers participated in a senior staff meeting via Microsoft Meetings on January 4th due to the Coronavirus.
- 2) Topics of discussion included:
 - a) **SAWCo:** After the General Manager spoke at a Board Meeting with SAWCo, the General Manager later met with SAWCO leadership. This was the first time the General Manager had spoken to the Board, and he said it was a good meeting and there was a good discussion between the entities.
 - b) **WSIP:** A briefing with MET is set for next week giving them an update on the project. The staff believe that MET will be supportive of a project that would potentially benefit the MET service area. There are discussions that IEUA may attempt to get early funding. There were also staff discussions regarding the lack of inflation factored into the funding formula, which was based on 2015 numbers. IEUA staff has communicated to the Board that, per their direction, staff will turn over every stone to ensure that all options and opportunities are being explored before any money is returned.
 - c) **REGIONAL ISSUES:** Monte Vista has applied for a latent power's activation at LAFCO to provide sewer service.
 - d) **BUDGET:** As the budget is developed, there is a discussion about funding levels for the programs, projects and staffing in the biennial budget that will go to the Board for approval later this year.