

## **On the Floor**

### **Appropriations Update**

Even as Congress gets set to go on vacation until September 10<sup>th</sup>, leaving 8 working days for the House and 11 days for the Senate before the beginning of the 2013 Fiscal Year, there are still six spending bills yet to be approved by the House and 12 bills – that’s all of them, by the Senate.

The House has yet to act on:

- Agriculture
- Financial Services
- Interior and Environment
- Labor/HHS/Education
- State/Foreign Operations, and
- Transportation/HUD

On the Senate side, the Appropriations Committee has yet to finish work on:

- Defense
- Interior and Environment, and
- Legislative Branch

The House looks like it may take action sooner rather than later on an Agriculture bill as the nation’s drought worsens and farmers (voters) demand some government relief, pointing out not coincidentally that farmers vote. Speaker Boehner has stated that the House is working to come up with “relief” for farmers.

With a looming deadline to provide funding to keep the government running after September 30<sup>th</sup>, the usual solution(s) come to the fore, especially since Senate Leader Harry Reid is adamant that the Senate will not vote on any spending bills, relying instead on spending levels agreed upon during last year’s debt limit debate. It has been reported that the Republican House is now willing to go along with those spending levels. The Senate seems to be bilaterally comfortable with them as well.

Work is apparently underway to come up with a six-month Continuing Resolution, a catch-all bill that will keep the government running well past Election Day and even past the swearing in of a new Congress. A three month extension has been discussed but that would put the ball right in the hands of a lame-duck Congress where all sorts of things might or might not happen.