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Congressional Updates

Congress continued to clash this month with the release of the President's Budget for fiscal year 2020 and the Mueller Report. President Donald Trump is seeking one of the largest-ever cuts to domestic discretionary spending with a \$4.7 trillion fiscal 2020 budget proposal that also boosts defense spending and adds \$8.6 billion for building a border wall. The budget request mirrors the one the White House produced last year. Trump in his fiscal 2019 plan called for \$3.6 trillion in cuts; this year, he is proposing \$3.9 trillion in cuts tempered by \$1.1 trillion in increases for priorities like defense and infrastructure.

In response, President Trump declared a national emergency in order to receive funds for a southern border wall. This move has faced several legal challenges, including groups suing to block President Donald Trump from diverting funds from the federal budget to spend about \$8 billion on his promised border wall. Additionally, President Trump issued his first veto after the U.S. House passed a resolution that would block President Trump's emergency declaration without congressional approval.

Robert Mueller, special counsel for the U.S. Department of Justice, released the report on his two-year investigation of Russian collusion in the 2016 presidential election. The report has not been made public yet, although Attorney General William Barr published a summary indicating there was no collusion, but Trump has not yet been exonerated. House Democrats are gearing up to issue a subpoena to release of the full report

without redactions - a move that will cause more tension between the executive branch and Congress.

Lawmakers have also been considering a federal privacy regulation that aims to protect consumer data. Companies, such as Google and Facebook, are looking to the federal government to preempt strict privacy laws at the state level. Lawmakers are currently divided on whether current California state laws should be a "floor" to enacted federal law or consider the full preemption of all state laws. Tech companies worry that a patchwork of state laws harms innovation and is untenable. Congress will be meeting in the coming weeks to discuss potential agreements that would provide consumer protections in exchange for either broad preemption or preempt California law.

NCCA Advocacy Update

During the month of March, we had a very productive meeting with the House Veteran Affairs Committee staffer that works on the Transition Assistance Program (TAP). The committee has jurisdiction over the program at the point of a service member's separation from the military. There is a lot of support on the committee to make improvements to the program and to gather data to ensure that the best outcomes are being achieved. We discussed the need for long-term tracking of service member's in order to analyze the impact of the program. We indicated that NCCA believes strongly that service members are better served when qualified individuals are administering the courses within TAP and have the necessary tools and training to advise individuals on their career path. He was very receptive and encouraged us to keep in touch and stated that a reasonable goal would be inserting language in the defense spending authorization bill next year that moves the program in the direction of our goal.

Until next month,

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