



Monthly Report

In November, the White House and Capitol Hill focused most of their attention on trade policy reforms, healthcare, and the impeachment inquiry. Regarding trade policy the US and China have agreed to discussing rolling back tariffs on each other's goods in phases. This will be done in the same proportion and simultaneously once the two sides sign a "phase one" deal. However, the following day President Trump appeared to contradict these claims. This makes unclear any chances of a trade accord getting signed this year. The U.S. Commerce Department issued a notice introducing a new procedure for identifying, assessing, and addressing transactions that pose a national security risk to its telecommunications network and service supply chain. The procedure will give the U.S. government power to restrict U.S. companies from importing and using foreign technology in their domestic supply chain infrastructure.

The USMCA is a priority for the Trump Administration. Democrats have negotiated for months with the Administration on changes to the USMCA. The president and congressional Republicans have pushed for Pelosi to bring up a vote to ratify the deal by the end of the year. Pelosi said the version of USMCA crafted last year "still left American workers exposed to losing their jobs to Mexico, included unacceptable provisions to lock in high prescription drug prices, and fell short of key environmental standards." Trump argued Pelosi was "incapable of moving" the agreement through the House and claimed Canada and Mexico could

soon pull out of USMCA, though neither country has indicated it would. Mexico has ratified the deal but Canada has not. The countries are the two largest American export markets.

The healthcare crisis that is on the forefront of recent debates is vaping and flavored electronic cigarettes. President Trump said the administration would propose a minimum age of 21 for the purchase of e-cigarette products during a robust "listening" session at the White House with vaping industry executives, public health advocates, as well as some members of Congress and the Administration. Trump earlier expressed support for a ban on non-tobacco flavored e-cigarettes. He appears to reverse course saying he believes prohibition often leads to less safe black market products. The session was called amid reports of soaring vaping-related lung illnesses, with some 5 million U.S. teens now using those products.

Public hearings into the impeachment inquiry began. Chairman Adam Schiff said President Trump may have committed bribery, which is an impeachable offense in the Constitution. Private and public congressional testimony by twelve government witnesses presented a significant body of evidence indicating President Trump demanded a quid pro quo of a political favor in exchange for official action. The Committee will host hearings beginning the first week of December and later in the month. President Trump has been invited to attend. These are expected to be followed by the drafting of articles of impeachment and a subsequent House vote. The resolution is unlikely to pass the Senate.

During the month of November, our team worked to find support for the career counseling bill. We met with the policy director for the Blue Dogs Caucus that is the caucus for the moderate democrats in the House. This group is particularly influential because they are the ones representing the formerly republican districts that were critical for the Democrats to take back the House. He was very interested in our position because it deals with two issues that matter to a number of members - education and workforce development. He wrote down the information regarding the bill and will discuss with his members. We will continue to engage with them in the hopes that we can get multiple members to support the bill in the near future.

Until next month,

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