Washington, D.C. Update

Congress recessed last week for the midterm elections, and will reconvene for a lame-duck session. Before leaving town, Congress passed H.R. 3081, a Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011 Continuing Resolution (CR), which temporarily funds Federal programs and operations at current levels through December 3, 2010. The CR, which the President signed into law (Public Law 111-242), was required because none of the 12 FFY 2011 appropriations bills have been enacted.

Besides FFY 2011 appropriations, Congress left many other major issues unresolved, including expiring tax cuts, defense authorization legislation, and expiring programs, which are supported by the County, such as the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Contingency Fund (ECF), Build America Bonds (BABs), Recovery Zone (RZ) Bonds, and the use of Federal child support performance incentive payments as child support enforcement matching funds.

TANF ECF: Last week, the Senate was unsuccessful in moving S. 3849 (Kerry, D-MA), introduced on September 28, 2010, which would have appropriated $500 million for TANF ECF and extended the program through December 31, 2010. Because S. 3849 was blocked and the CR did not include language to extend TANF ECF, the program ended on September 30, 2010, including its highly successful subsidized employment program.

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National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Extension Act of 2010: President Obama signed S. 3814 (Vitter, R-LA), into law on September 30, 2010, which extended the NFIP for an additional year through September 30, 2011. On July 15, 2010, the House passed H.R. 5114 (Waters, D-CA), a County-supported bill, which would have extended the NFIP through the end of FFY 2015. However, similar to many other House-passed bills this year, the Senate has yet to act on that bill. The last long-term reauthorization for the NFIP expired on September 30, 2008, and Congress has temporarily extended the program several times since then.

Child Welfare Demonstration Projects: On September 23, 2010, the House passed H.R. 6156 (McDermott, D-WA), legislation which would provide the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to approve up to 10 new Section 1130 child welfare demonstration projects per year through Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2016. This new authority does not affect the renewal of California’s current Title IV-E demonstration project, which will expire in 2012, because HHS currently has the authority to renew existing projects. The Senate has yet to act on H.R. 6156 or similar legislation.

We will continue to keep you advised.

WTF:RA
MT:er

C: All Department Heads
   Legislative Strategist