

News!

SEPTEMBER 4, 2009

VOL III, No. 30



CONGRESS RECONVENES NEXT WEEK

Following four weeks of recess, Congress returns Tuesday to an agenda filled with health-care discussions, appropriations and nomination votes. Near the top of the Senate agenda will be to pass their remaining eight appropriations bills, including the Interior appropriations bill. However, the looming end of the federal fiscal year (September 30th), and the large amount of appropriations bills remaining, creates a scenario where it's likely many of the remaining bills will be combined into an omnibus package.

Another Senate agenda priority will be moving the Administration's political appointees, including Jon Jarvis's appointment as Director of the National Park Service. In late July the Senate Energy and Natural Resources committee approved Jarvis's nomination. However, the possibility of a "hold" on his nomination is still possible as several Energy committee members had raised concerns during his nomination hearing.



TWO HISTORIC TAX CREDIT BILLS TO BE INTRODUCED IN THE HOUSE

During the week of September 13th, a historic homeowners tax credit bill and a bill making improvements to the federal rehabilitation tax credit are expected to be introduced by Rep. Carnahan (D-MO) and Rep. Schwartz (D-PA), respectively. Both bills will be referred to the House Ways and Means Committee.

The historic homeowner tax bill would create a 20 percent tax credit, capped at \$60,000, for homeowners who make expenditures to rehabilitate historic structures in accordance with the Secretary's standards. To qualify, the taxpayer must make qualified rehabilitation expenditures over a 2 year period that exceed the greater of \$5,000 or the taxpayer's basis in the property, and must use the home as his/her principal residence. The credit would also be available for developers who rehabilitate homes and sell them to individuals for use as their principal residence and the credit would be increased for rehabilitation projects in designated HUD difficult to develop areas.

The soon to be introduced new version of the Community Restoration and Revitalization Act, proposes ten amendments to improve the existing federal commercial rehabilitation tax credit. The bill contains several provisions that would encourage the rehabilitation of smaller projects that populate rural America, main streets, and older neighborhoods. For the first time the bill also places an emphasis on accomplishing significant energy efficiency and savings during the rehabilitation process.

Other provisions include permitting the 10 percent non-historic credit for older buildings to be used

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for rehabilitation residential rental property, allowing for more moderate rehabilitation by reducing by half the substantial rehabilitation requirements and specifying that proceeds from the sale of state historic tax credits should not be taxed at the federal level.



UPCOMING GATEWAY COMMUNITIES/TRIBES POLICY FORUM

On September 15th, the Obama Administration along with the Western States Tourism Policy Council, the Southeastern Tourism Society and the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association will be holding a policy forum for gateway communities and tribes. The meeting will be held at the Interior Department and Secretary of the Interior, Ken Salazar, as well as Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood, is scheduled to participate.

The forum, Stimulating Economic Vitality and Resource Conservation in Gateway and Tribal Communities, will focus on strategies for gateway and native communities to “balance their need for growth and vitality with the conservation and protection of natural resources during a time of severe economic challenges,” says a program.

Federal officials will sit in on the various summit panels, including representatives of the Forest Service, the Department of Commerce, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Also expected to attend are the National Park Hospitality Association, the National Association of Gateway Communities, the U.S. Travel Association, the National Association of Counties, and the National Parks Conservation Association. Nancy Schamu, NCSHPO executive director will also be attending.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

October 13-17, 2009 – National Preservation Conference, Nashville, TN

October 14-15, 2009 – NCSHPO Winter Board Meeting, Nashville, TN