
Weekly COVID-19 Oversight & Enforcement Report

November 12, 2020

A. Congress

1. As lawmakers debate whether to extend the Federal Reserve's emergency loan programs, Congressional Oversight Commissioners are divided on the issue. The *New York Times* [reported](#) that Commissioner Senator Pat Toomey (R-PA) is arguing that the Federal Reserve and Treasury do not have the authority to extend the programs beyond this year without congressional approval, but Commissioner Bharat Ramamurti said, "It's clear that the Fed and the Treasury have the authority to extend the facilities, and they should. There is continuing need for municipalities and smaller businesses, and there is a significant chance of market disruption if these facilities are not extended."
2. Democratic senators, including Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), [urged](#) the Federal Reserve and the Treasury Department to expand emergency lending programs for businesses and states and municipalities to provide support while Congress debates additional fiscal stimulus. In a letter to Fed Chair Jerome Powell and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin obtained by *Bloomberg*, the senators asked that the programs be extended beyond their December 31 deadlines and that changes be made to make them more broadly available.
3. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) [announced](#) the House will dramatically expand COVID testing for lawmakers. The announcement is partially in response to an order from D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser that requires visitors to the city to get a negative COVID test within 72 hours of traveling to D.C. and get another test once they arrive if they plan to stay longer than three days.
4. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) [said](#) Congress should pass a limited stimulus bill before the end of 2020, in the wake of the encouraging vaccine data and a decline in unemployment. His comments showcased continued Senate Republican opposition to the larger-scale aid that Democrats want, risking a stalemate into next year. Committee chairs from across the House of Representatives sent [letters](#) directing the White House and more than 50 federal agencies within their jurisdictions to comply with federal record-keeping laws and preserve information responsive to congressional subpoenas and investigations.

B. Executive Agencies

1. The Republican-led Senate Appropriations Committee [proposed](#) an \$11.5 million spending cut to OSHA. The panel's spending bill covering the Labor Department, unveiled Tuesday, would set

OSHA's funding at \$570.3 million for fiscal 2021, nearly \$23.5 million less than what House Democrats called for in a bill (H.R. 7617) that passed that chamber in July.

2. In the absence of any federal emergency rule enacted by OSHA that would apply to employers nationwide, Oregon on Friday [became](#) the third state in the nation to adopt a coronavirus-specific workplace safety standard. The rule takes effect November 16. Oregon's emergency rule is expected to stay in effect for at least six months, or until it is replaced by a permanent regulation next year. It requires employers to assess risks their workers face from COVID-19 and to develop an infection control plan. Virginia and Michigan have enacted similar rules, and California is likely to adopt a rule by early December.

C. State Attorneys General

1. California AG Xavier Becerra and New York AG Letitia James, leading a coalition of 23 AGs, filed an [amicus brief](#) urging the D.C. Circuit to reverse a trial court decision largely upholding two proclamations issued by President Trump that bar entry to immigrants and foreign workers traveling on nonimmigrant work visas. The coalition asserts that the proclamations unlawfully separate families, harming the states' and the nation's economic recovery from COVID-19.

D. Special Inspector General for Pandemic Recovery (SIGPR)

No updates this week.

E. Pandemic Recovery Accountability Committee (PRAC)

No updates this week.