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Lawmakers Considering Several Key Bills during the Lame-Duck Session

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Lawmakers have moved quickly to consider and pass a number of significant bills as part of the year-end wrap up.

On December 12, the House passed a conference agreement on the Farm Bill, which extends major federal farm, nutrition assistance, rural development, and other USDA programs for five years. The Senate passed the measure the previous day, and President Trump is expected to sign the legislation shortly. The compromise agreement rejects controversial House provisions to tie food stamp benefits to expanded work requirements, but embraces House proposals to expand subsidies to more farmers' relatives. The conference bill adopts Senate provisions to legalize agricultural hemp production by removing industrial hemp from the statutory definition of marijuana under the Controlled Substances Act.

On December 13, the House and Senate passed a package of legislation to establish new rules for the handling and disclosure of sexual harassment claims against members of Congress. After months of negotiations, the bipartisan legislation would change the process for victims reporting harassment, including ending a 30-day "cooling off" period in which victims had to undergo mediation with their employer before submitting a complaint.

The table below outlines additional key bills that lawmakers may pass during the lame-duck session. Congress may attach several of these bills to the year-end appropriations package.

| Topic | Action |
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| Criminal Justice Reform | <ul style="list-style-type: none">On December 18, the Senate voted 87-12 to pass a bipartisan criminal justice reform bill that aims to reduce the number of federal inmates through changes in sentencing laws and additional help for prisoners returning to society.The House is expected to pass the bill shortly. President Trump has indicated that he will sign the measure. |
| Health and Tax Extenders | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Lawmakers seek to pass a package of health care and tax extenders, but the timing remains uncertain.House Republicans have proposed a tax package that would delay the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) medical device tax (through 2024), health insurance tax (through 2021), and the Cadillac tax (through 2022). The package also |

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| | <p>includes technical corrections to the 2017 tax cut law.</p> |
| Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congress must pass a TANF extension by December 21. • Lawmakers are likely to opt for a short-term extension and continue consideration for a full reauthorization next year. |
| Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congress must resolve differences between House and Senate versions of a reauthorization bill to the nation's law on preparing and responding to national and global public health emergencies resulting from a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear disaster or attack. • The House votes today on a revised version of the pandemic response program authorization bill. |
| Violence Against Women Act | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The domestic violence law expires on December 21. Lawmakers may pass a short-term extension by year-end. • House Democrats are planning a full reauthorization next year. |
| National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congress must pass an NFIP extension by December 21. • The House passed a five-year reauthorization bill, H.R. 2874, in November 2017, but the Senate has not acted on that legislation. • Lawmakers have included a short-term extension as part of the latest stopgap funding measure and may revisit a longer-term extension next year. |
| Disaster Aid Supplemental | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lawmakers will likely seek additional disaster supplemental funding to address wildfire and hurricane damage. |