

Inter-Office Memo



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TO: International Executive Board
FROM: Legislative Department
SUBJECT: Weekly Legislative Update on the Trump Administration

1) TRADE & MANUFACTURING

The U.S. Trade Representative launched new sweeping section 301 investigations into [forced labor](#) and [excess manufacturing capacity](#), targeting imports from over 60 countries. These investigations will likely highlight legitimate structural problems with the free trade system that undermine U.S. jobs and production. However, because USTR has long indicated that these investigations are intended to reimpose the reciprocal tariffs struck down by the Supreme Court, it is widely expected that the 301 investigations will recreate country-specific tariffs on all imports, rather than targeted solutions.

The Department of Justice has again [sued](#) the California Air Resources Board, this time to prevent the state from enforcing its 2012 Advanced Clean Cars regulation, which set greater limits on greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from vehicles. Last year, Congress and the Trump administration repealed California's 2022 regulation, leaving vehicles in the state subject to the older 2012 regulation. While protracted litigation over both standards is expected, this action makes clear the Trump administration is intent on ending California's ability to enforce its own vehicle emissions standards.

General Motors filed a [petition](#) with the International Trade Commission (ITC) for a section 337 investigation into parts imports, primarily from China and Taiwan, that violate the company's patents. The ITC [voted this week](#) to launch the investigation over the company's allegations that certain imports of aftermarket replacement parts are designed as copies of patented GM Genuine Parts. The company is requesting an exclusion order to ban all imports of the relevant parts. Representatives Dingell, Stevens, McDonald Rivet, and Scholten submitted a [letter](#) in support of the company's petition.

This week the ITC also surprisingly [declined to impose](#) antidumping and countervailing duties on imports of active anode material (a core component of EV batteries) from China, disagreeing with the Commerce Department's determination that imports harmed U.S. industry. The tariffs that Commerce imposed on these imports reached as high as 160% and will now be removed.

2) NIH

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) [announced](#) it will no longer recognize NIH Fellows United-UAW, saying that the union "should never have been certified," and filed a unit clarification petition with the FLRA.

3) EDUCATION

A federal appeals court [ended](#) the SAVE plan, President Biden's income-driven repayment plan which would have significantly lowered monthly payments for many borrowers but has been in limbo as a result of a legal challenge. The appeals court reversed a lower court ruling from February that dismissed the legal challenge. Borrowers currently enrolled in the SAVE plan await guidance from the Department of Education on next steps.

4) CONGRESS

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has now been shut down for a month, and the path to ending the partial government shutdown remains unclear. The House was in recess this week, with Republicans in Florida for their annual retreat. The Senate was in session, but Senate Democrats [blocked](#) the House-passed bill to end this shutdown and fully fund DHS for the fourth time. Senate Democrats have tried to fund agencies within DHS that do not deal with immigration enforcement, such as TSA and FEMA, but Republicans have [blocked](#) those efforts as well.

Trump and MAGA Republicans have spent weeks trying to convince Senate Majority Leader John Thune to change the Senate filibuster rules in order to pass the SAVE America Act, a House-passed partisan election bill. Trump has called for Republicans to either eliminate the filibuster entirely or re-establish a “talking filibuster,” which would force Democrats to speak on the floor continuously to prevent a final vote, but such a move is tricky to pull off and faces concerns within the Republican caucus.

Trump has said he will not [sign](#) any other legislation, except for DHS funding, until the SAVE America Act passes. Thune has quietly pushed back on calls to change official Senate rules on the filibuster, and the bill is slated to be brought to the Senate floor this coming week. Still, days of debate sessions and countless amendments are [expected](#) to take up a considerable amount of floor time even without an official “talking filibuster.”

The Senate [overwhelmingly](#) passed the biggest piece of housing legislation in decades by a vote of 89 to 10. The 21st Century Renewing Opportunity in the American Dream (ROAD) to Housing Act ultimately aims to increase housing affordability by expanding federal incentives, promoting efficient manufactured housing, cutting down on red tape, limiting the role of institutional investors, and more. The bill heads back to the House, where it faces opposition over changes from the Senate.

Both the House and the Senate have voted down legislation that would prevent the Trump administration from carrying out further strikes against Iran. Some Senate Democrats have threatened to [stall](#) the Senate floor unless they get more opportunities to vote on such resolutions or public hearings from key administration officials.

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cc: Brandon Keatts
Jason Wade