



Member Update

Congressional Budget Reconciliation Update

Last Wednesday, two key committees for NATCA members marked up portions of the budget reconciliation package under their respective jurisdictions. There are both significant gains and real threats in the packages that were debated and passed out of committee.

The most important thing to remember, at this point, is none of these provisions are on the verge of becoming law. We are still in the phase during which the U.S. House of Representatives committees are developing and marking up their portions of the House's budget reconciliation bill. We do not know when the process will end with a final bill, but we anticipate it will be in July or later.

- Budget Resolution – Passed each chamber requiring significant cuts to federal spending with instructions for each committee to identify the specific cuts for inclusion in a budget reconciliation bill
- House Committees markup their portions of budget reconciliation bill (currently ongoing)
 - Chair amends provisions in the form of a substitute provision
 - Committee members propose amendments; committee votes on amendments
 - Provisions pass out of Committee
- Budget Reconciliation Bill Moves to House Floor
 - Rules Committee sets procedures for amendments to the bill
 - Amendments proposed and voted upon
 - Final House reconciliation bill passes House
- Senate Committees markup their portions of budget reconciliation bill
 - Chair amends provisions in the form of a substitute provision
 - Committee members propose amendments; committee votes on amendments
 - Provisions pass out of Committee
- Budget Reconciliation Bill Moves to Senate Floor
 - Amendments proposed and voted upon
 - Amendments and final bill require a simple majority to pass (avoids Senate 60-vote super-majority rule that applies to most legislation)
 - Final Senate reconciliation bill passes Senate
- House-Senate Conference Committee to resolve differences between bills
- Each chamber votes on conference report with no amendments possible (simple majority of both chambers)
- President signs Budget Reconciliation bill

Last Wednesday, the Oversight and Government Reform (OGR) Committee, with jurisdiction over federal employee benefits among other things, started the week proposing very severe cuts to rights and benefits for all federal employees, including raising the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) contribution rates for all employees to 4.4% regardless of date of hire, conversion from high-3 retirement calculation to a high-5 calculation, elimination of the supplemental annuity, forcing all new hires into a choice between paying an extra 5% toward their retirement or giving up merit principles and the ability to challenge adverse actions, and charging employees for challenging their removals before the Merit Systems Protection Board.

Protecting these benefits for federal employees was the message nearly 500 NATCA members carried to their meetings on Capitol Hill at NATCA in Washington. That continued with our [Voter Voice Campaign](#) that began on April 14.

Activists brought this message directly to their members of Congress in district meetings during the April Congressional recess and carried that effort into the week of the markups, with Allison Schwaegel and Corey Soignet from the National Legislative Committee (NLC) coming back to Washington, DC to visit dozens of offices. Charlotte ATCT (CLT) FacRep Anthony Shifano worked with members with whom he's had a long-term relationship to schedule meetings for himself and NATCA's Government Affairs staff with OGR staff and House leadership staff to discuss the importance of protecting these benefits. NATCA staff met with Congressional staff and coordinated our efforts with other unions seeking to remove the harmful proposals from the OGR package.

By the time the markup began, NATCA had made significant progress. The Chair accepted the following changes to the proposal:

- Air traffic controllers, along with federal fire fighters and federal law enforcement officers, were excluded from FERS the contribution increase.
- Air traffic controllers, along with along with federal fire fighters and federal law enforcement officers, were excluded from the conversion from high-3 to high-5.

Throughout the markup process in OGR, there were no proposals to increase the employee share of premiums in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) plan.

Although there were many amendments introduced at markup to strike the provisions harmful to federal employees, none of them passed. NATCA will continue fighting to remove or significantly amend those provisions as the legislation moves forward in the House and as it is developed in the Senate.

Also last Wednesday, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (T&I) passed a meaningful funding increase for FAA on priorities that NATCA has been advocating in favor of for over a decade. The air traffic control provisions of the T&I reconciliation package include an additional \$12.5 billion to be expended before September 30, 2029, which directly affects our current and future members. This is despite the fact that T&I had to come up with \$10 Billion in total cuts within programs subject to its jurisdiction.

Highlights of the Air Traffic Control provisions:

- \$1 billion allocated for recruitment, retention, and training of air traffic controllers
- \$2 billion for tower and TRACON replacement, including \$240 million for Federal Contract Towers
- \$500 million for runway safety programs and airport surface surveillance projects
- \$3 billion for radar systems replacement
- \$4.75 billion for telecommunications infrastructure
- \$260 million for weather observation technology in Alaska.

This commitment provides a major downpayment for improving our staffing, facilities, and equipment. NATCA expressed its support for the inclusion of this additional funding.

It is important to remember that these markups are still in an early phase in the budget reconciliation process. They are not close to becoming law. NATCA will continue to fight to remove the harmful proposals and maintain or expand the positive proposes from T&I. We will call on you to help bring that fight.

As the budget reconciliation process continues to unfold, we will keep you updated.

Visit our



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