



## This Week in Washington: February 14, 2014

GOVERNMENT INSIDER | FEB 20, 2014

### **Debt ceiling debate ends**

On Tuesday night, the House of Representatives passed a "clean" bill to increase the nation's borrowing authority. The House voted 221 to 201 to raise the debt ceiling, with just 28 Republicans joining 193 Democrats in moving the legislation. [more]

### **Military cuts restored**

This week, in a rare show of bipartisanship, both chambers overwhelmingly passed legislation to restore the \$6 billion in cuts to veterans' benefits that were included in last year's budget deal. The Senate voted 95 to 3 after the House voted 326 to 90 in favor of the legislation. [more]

### **Employer mandate delayed again**

The Obama administration had previously delayed implementation of the Affordable Care Act requirement that large employers—those with more than 50 full-time employees—either provide health insurance to their workers or pay a penalty until 2015. This week, the administration announced it was delaying the employer mandate even further. [more]

### **President Obama signs minimum wage executive order**

This week, President Obama made good on a promise he included in his State of the Union address by signing an executive order raising the minimum wage for the employees of federal contractors from \$7.25 to \$10.10. [more]

### **Wyden says extenders is top priority**

New Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR) said this week that extending tax credits and deductions set to expire are a top priority for his committee. While extenders will be a top priority, broader tax reform, however, looks increasingly unlikely. Wyden said that it was unlikely that comprehensive tax reform could take place before the 2014 mid-term elections. [more]

### **EPA weighs in on fracking**

The Environmental Protection Agency on Tuesday released guidelines for the use of diesel fuel in fracking operations—a move that was greeted warmly by environmentalists but will likely be challenged by those in the natural gas industry. [more]

### **Transportation in Focus**

A new feature in our This Week in Washington briefing is a section called Transportation in Focus. Every week this section will share news and information relevant to the issues surrounding transportation and infrastructure. [more]