

POLICY MATTERS

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House Subcommittee to Examine Impact of \$15.00 Minimum Wage. On December 5, the House Subcommittee on Workforce Protections will hold a [hearing](#) titled "Mandating a \$15 Minimum Wage: Consequences for Workers and Small Businesses." The hearing appears to be a preemptive effort by the outgoing Republican committee leadership to ensure its viewpoints are made part of the legislative record. The incoming Democratic leadership -- specifically, expected Committee Chair Bobby Scott -- has made [clear](#) that a minimum wage increase is a high priority (although it's less clear how large an increase will be sought).

Senate Committee Clears Additional Nominees. Meanwhile, on the other side of the Capitol, the Senate HELP Committee voted to approve the nominations of Gordon Hartogensis to the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation and John Pallasch to be the Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training at the Department of Labor. Their nominations now head to the Senate floor.

But Key Nominees Still Pending Before Full Senate. Pallasch and Hartogensis, however, join a number of labor nominees who have gotten out of committee, but who await confirmation by the full Senate, including Janet Dhillon and Daniel Gade to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Scott Mugno to be the Assistant Secretary for OSHA, and Cheryl Stanton -- who this week [resigned](#) her position at the South Carolina Department of Labor -- to head the Wage & Hour Division.

And Some Still Wait for a Committee Vote. In addition to the individuals pending before the full Senate, several labor nominees still await action from the HELP Committee, including Mark Pearce to be a member of the NLRB, Bryan Jarrett to be the Assistant Secretary for Policy at the Labor Department, Sharon Fast Gustafson to be General Counsel of the EEOC, and Chai Feldblum to be a member of the EEOC. With Senator Alexander's [announcement](#) that today's markup would be the final of this Congress, the wait for these individuals will continue and their fates will be left to the new Congress.

Multiemployer Pension Reform Efforts Continue. The Joint Select Committee on the Solvency of Multiemployer Pension Plans, co-chaired by Chairmen Orrin Hatch and Sherrod Brown, [announced](#) that it was not able to reach a compromise by November 30. When the Joint Select Committee was created, November 30 was the expected date for a vote on a package addressing the multiemployer pension crisis. Both Senators noted, however, that they have made substantial progress towards a compromise and will continue to work past the November 30 deadline. Whether such a compromise can be reached before the Congress adjourns is uncertain, but it is clear that the Congress recognizes on a bipartisan basis that the system is in serious trouble and that a solution must be reached, whether in this Congress or early in the next.

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