



SEN. JOHN THUNE

Recently, Senator Thune was reelected by his colleagues to serve as the Republican whip, or assistant majority leader, the second-highest position in Senate Republican leadership. Serving as whip will help Senator Thune continue advancing South Dakota's priorities and give a strong voice to rural America in Washington.

While there are a couple of Senate races that have yet to be settled, he is confident that Republicans will control the Senate in the 117th Congress, which begins in January. Regardless of the outcome, his focus will remain the same: delivering real results to South Dakotans.



SEN. MIKE ROUNDS

The Senate is back in session for what is known as a "lame duck" session, the period between an election and when the new Congress begins. During this time, the Senate will continue confirming Trump-nominated judges to the federal bench. Congress will also have to pass some sort of appropriations measure to fund the government past December 11, when the current continuing resolution that funds the government runs out.

Additionally, we anticipate concluding

work on the National Defense Authorization act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021. The Senate-passed version includes a number of important provisions, such as:

- Provides a three percent pay raise for our troops;
- Supports military family readiness by advocating for the employment of military spouses and making sure the Department of Defense provides high-quality and accessible child care for military families;
- Includes a Rounds-sponsored provision to establish a pilot program enabling Tricare beneficiaries to draw brand name maintenance medications from their local pharmacy;
- Reemphasizes focus on training to make certain our service members can conduct missions safely and effectively; and
- Strengthens our cybersecurity efforts.

With regard to the election, Rounds said: "We have a fight on two fronts. It's important that the president pursue all legal remedies. But, we also need to defend the GOP senate. We still have two seats in Georgia to protect in January. If we lose those, there is no firewall left."



REP. DUSTY JOHNSON

Earlier this month, Reps. Johnson and Spanberger (D-VA) introduced the Securing Affordable Vaccines Equally (SAVE) for Seniors Act, bipartisan legislation that would ensure seniors on traditional Medicare have access

to a future COVID-19 vaccine without cost-sharing. Following the SAVE for Seniors Act introduction, the administration made the fix administratively. The SAVE for Seniors Act ensures cost is not an obstacle for one of our most vulnerable to COVID-19 populations – our seniors. Dusty is grateful the administration recognized this loophole and made the fix administratively.

On November 12, 2020 the Senate passed Dusty's bipartisan bill to safeguard Educational Impact Aid for military and tribal schoolchildren amid the pandemic. The bill is now headed to the President's desk to be signed into law. The Impact Aid Coronavirus Relief Act (H.R. 8472) ensures that Federal Impact Aid for public school districts with high concentrations of children of U.S. servicemembers and tribal land will not be adversely affected by COVID-19. Dusty's introduced this bipartisan bill on August 25th, and was passed in the House by unanimous consent on October 2nd. Senator Thune led this legislation in the Senate. The Impact Aid Program is critical for schools located on federal property. These public schools collect less in local property taxes to fund their schools and without the program would be underfunded. The bill allows these districts to use their student headcount from the 2020-2021 school year, which have already been calculated, for their Impact Aid applications for the 2021-2022 school year, which are due this fall.

On the horizon, Dusty is still hoping the House considers a bill for increased testing and PPE to ensure our schools remain open. The Senate has introduced spending bills so they will likely consider an omnibus appropriations bill before December 11th.

Rapid City Council Update

City Hall renovation will be complete by the New Year. Please note that masks are now required while conducting business or attending meetings at City Hall.

For the month of October building permit activity in the city reached record levels again last month with the City's Building Services Division issuing 702 permits with a total valuation of \$42,658,164 building permits issued. The valuation total was the highest-ever for the month of October, shattering the old mark of \$27,041,520 from October 2007.

Regarding the Home Rule Committee, recommendations to City Council on whether we should pursue Home Rule or not are expected early 2021. More information can be found at www.rapidcityhomerule.org.

The City is currently advertising for full-time HRC/MOA Alliance Coordinator and commission members. Interviews for the Coordinator will take place in November and the new hire will be on board by the New Year. The commission selectees will be appointed by the City Council by the New Year.

Ron Weifenbach was elected on November 3rd to the Ward One position on the Rapid City Council. Ron will fill an unexpired term through June of 2022. He has served as a Council member for Ward 1 in previous years

City Hall will be closed November 11 in observance of Veterans Day, and November 26 & 27 in observance of Thanksgiving.



South Dakota Mines will help lead [Cat® Labs MineStar™ Consortium](#), which partners university faculty and students with Caterpillar engineers and researchers to help build the next generation of mining and construction technology.

South Dakota Mines supports business development through research and innovation, entrepreneurship, and workforce development. [See more about how South Dakota Mines is open for business.](#)

Employers can now register to be part of the Spring Career Fair Tuesday, February 2nd, 2021 from 11am to 4pm MDT. This will be a virtual event. You can register [here](#).