

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) reached a budget deal offered as an amendment to the continuing resolution package the U.S. House of Representatives passed on February 6th. The deal is projected to add \$296 billion in spending to the currently allowed levels over fiscal years 2018 and 2019. An increase in non-defense discretionary spending, the funding that can support a variety of infrastructure programs; is included in the deal. Specifically, in 2018 a 11.6% increase over the 2017 enacted level, and an additional 3.2% increase in 2019; providing a combined increase of \$130.7 billion over two years.

Other key points of the deal include:

- \$20 Billion increase in infrastructure spending toward "existing" water and energy projects, rural broadband and surface transportation.
- An extension of the current continuing resolution through March 23, 2018. This would allow both House and Senate Appropriations Committees the time to write a final FY2018 omnibus appropriations bill under the increased spending caps.
- A suspension of the national debt limit to March 1, 2019.
- \$89.3 billion in immediate emergency supplemental appropriations for natural disasters – directed heavily to the hurricane impacted areas of Texas, Louisiana, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Monies are also allocated to the west coast wildfires.
- Included as part of the disaster relief funds are major portions of H.R. 4460, the Disaster Recovery Reform Act.

The Senate passed the measure 73-26 and the House passed the measure 240-186. President Trump signed the bill into law ending a temporary government shutdown.

*Source - ASCE*