

Capitol Counsel – Coronavirus Action Update

Senate Passes Phase 2 Response Legislation

Wednesday, March 18, 2020, 4:33 PM – The Senate has passed Phase 2 of the legislative response to the coronavirus pandemic. The bill passed by a vote of 90-8 with all three considered amendments (Paul/Murray-Gillibrand/Johnson) failing on their votes prior to final passage.

This measure, The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, H.R. 6201, first passed in the House in the early morning hours of Saturday, March 14, 2020. It was further amended by the House this week by way of unanimous consent passage of H.Res. 904 to make changes in the enrollment of the bill. It was then transmitted to the Senate. Among provisions in this package, it would provide that individuals affected by the novel coronavirus could receive paid leave and food assistance. Unemployment insurance would be expanded and Medicaid funding to states would be increased.

President Trump had previously endorsed the bill via his Twitter account and it is expected that he will sign it into law. All eyes now turn to the Phase 3 legislative response for negotiation in the coming days and a potential vote early next week. Phase 3 is expected to require near \$1 trillion in spending for economic stimulus related to the impact of the pandemic on individuals and industry.