

Senate Passes Budget Reconciliation Bill

Last Sunday, the Senate voted on party-lines to pass the “Inflation Reduction Act” which is a budget reconciliation bill crafted by Senate Democrats. The legislation contains \$433 billion in new spending for energy and climate change programs along with extending Affordable Care Act (ACA) credits. According to Democratic leaders, the bill would raise approximately \$700 billion in new federal revenue by enacting a 15% corporate minimum tax on businesses with average annual income over \$1 billion, enhancing IRS tax enforcement and reforming prescription drug pricing. The bill also enacts a 1% excise tax on stock buybacks and extends existing excess business loss limitation rules for certain pass-through businesses for two years through 2028.

Importantly, the Senate removed onerous tax increases on pass-through entities and small businesses which were proposed last month. NDA had been lobbying Congress against these tax increases over the last several weeks. The House of Representatives will be returning from their August recess today to begin consideration of the budget reconciliation package. The bill is expected to pass the House and be signed into law by President Biden later this month.

Department of Commerce Launches Job Quality Tool

The U.S. Department of Commerce recently launched the [Job Quality Toolkit](#), which provides strategies and actions to help small-and-medium-sized organizations recruit and retain a high-performing workforce. The Toolkit also includes eight [case studies](#) of organizations that have committed to increasing the quality of the jobs they offer. Each case study explains how companies have worked to improve the quality of the jobs they offer by focusing on one or more drivers.

The Toolkit builds on the “[Good Jobs Principles](#)” that the Departments of Commerce and Labor published in June and was informed by the input of several job quality experts over the past year. The Toolkit offers numerous strategies for all employers to consider through a cycle of dialogue with their workforce, action, and measurement.

The Toolkit’s strategies are organized around eight drivers, or essential elements: Recruitment & Hiring, Benefits, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility (DEIA), Empowerment & Representation, Job Security & Working Conditions, Organizational Culture, Pay, and Skills & Career Advancement.

OSHA Publishes Updated Technical Manual Noise Chapter

This week, OSHA published a newly updated OSHA Technical Manual (OTM) Noise Chapter: [OSHA Instruction TED 01-00-015, Section III, Chapter 5, "Noise"](#). The chapter provides technical information to OSHA compliance staff, safety and health professionals, and the public when performing noise inspections or evaluating noise hazards. Key changes include:

- Revised information on evaluating noise exposures during extended work shifts.
- New, brief sections with awareness-level information on workplace hazard analyses, training, and hearing conservation programs.
- Updated information on noise equipment in use by the agency.
- Updated information on how/where to obtain noise inspection data.
- Updated guidance on performing optional age-adjustment for audiograms.

- Appendixes revised to clarify technical information and reflect current capabilities and procedures.