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SENATE PASSES FISCAL 2009 OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

This week the Senate approved the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 (H.R. 1105) by a vote of 62 – 35, which would fund nine of the 12 annual spending bills providing \$410 billion in overall discretionary spending. The government is currently funded at fiscal year 2008 levels by a continuing resolution (CR) that expired Wednesday.

As PMAA previously reported, the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) program will receive \$115 million of which \$77 million will provide the traditional LUST funding to state agencies to help state environmental efforts. This \$77 million is similar to recent years and would not enable meaningful increased funding for states. However, the economic stimulus package, which passed last month, included an additional \$200 million in funding for LUST remediation. State and Tribal Assistance Grants commonly called STAG grants will receive \$35.5 million. These grants can be provided to state agencies for LUST related purposes. Petroleum marketers have now paid over three billion dollars into the LUST fund and continue to pay \$140 million each year. To a great extent, the LUST tax has just become another federal tax used to support the overall EPA budget.

Other funding measures include \$217 million for grants to improve production of alternative fuels such as cellulosic ethanol and biodiesel, \$9.8 million for the Northeast Home Heating Oil Reserve, \$60 million for grants to reduce emissions from diesel engines and \$68 million targeted for priority climate change research at the U.S. Geological Survey. No additional LIHEAP funding was included in the omnibus bill; however, it does include \$200 million for weatherization grants. PMAA was also successful in obtaining an additional \$34.7 million for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), which will now receive \$146 million to monitor futures trading.

Finally, the appropriations bill contains a requirement that the EPA make a decision by June 30, 2009 on a Clean Air Act waiver that would allow California to enforce greenhouse gas emissions rules for automobiles.

UNION ADVOCATE CONDEMNS CARD CHECK

Former South Dakota Senator and 1972 Democratic Presidential nominee George McGovern has come out opposed to legislation that would eliminate an employee's right to a private vote whether to join a union. For those outside the Washington DC area, Senator McGovern, a long-time supporter of unions, appears in a commercial airing on local TV stations opposing card check legislation. McGovern notes his strong support for unions and his belief that card check legislation is a bad idea.

Earlier this week Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Representative George Miller (D-CA), chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, introduced "card check" legislation, which is designed to make it easier for employees to vote to unionize at their workplace. Last year, the House passed similar legislation that would have removed the secret-balloting process for workers voting whether to unionize. Instead, workers would be forced to vote publicly in front of a union representative leaving workers open to coercion and intimidation. With union membership sliding from 20 percent in 1983 to 12 percent of the labor force today, unions see a need to put more peer pressure on workers to vote for unionization. PMAA will continue to aggressively oppose "card check" legislation.

PMAA MEMBERS TO RECEIVE DISCOUNTED RATES FOR DEF CONFERENCE

PMAA members can now register at deeply discounted rates for an intensive workshop to help fuel retailers prepare for the upcoming demand for diesel exhaust fluid (DEF). The Petroleum Equipment Institute (PEI) and NATSO, who are jointly organizing the one-day workshop, have announced that they will extend their member rate of \$149 to PMAA members, a savings of over 50 percent.

Retailers at the PEI, NATSO DEF Conference will leave the session with all of the information they need to begin planning for their own launch of this product, including how DEF will be handled, stored and dispensed. Participants will also learn how they can market their locations to drivers through the Department of Energy's "DEF Locator" service that truckers will be relying on to find DEF. Sessions will also share lessons learned from the successes and mistakes retailers made during the DEF roll out in Europe, where DEF has been sold at truckstops for the past three years.

The conference will be held at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Conference Center in Nashville, Tennessee. Attendees can reserve sleeping rooms for the very low rate of \$149 per night (plus a \$15 per night resort fee). To receive this rate, attendees must call the hotel at (866) 972-6779 and mention group code X-NATSS by Monday, May 18, 2009. Registration for the DEF conference will cost \$149 for NATSO, PEI and PMAA members. The non-member rate is \$349. Additionally, a limited number of tabletop exhibits are available for \$750. Online registration is now available. For more information about the conference, please contact NATSO at (703) 739-2100 or PEI at (918) 494-9696.

2009 WPMA POST-CONVENTION TOUR - HUBBARD GLACIER CRUISE

Many have been asking where our next WPMA Travel Adventure will be. We have found an absolutely incredible cruise aboard Celebrity Cruise Line's ultra-luxurious ship Infinity, sailing from Seattle, Washington through the spectacular Inside Passage to Alaska, June 12-19, 2009.

Reservations must be made within the next 30 days, or as long as space lasts. WPMA has only a certain number of staterooms available on a first come-first serve basis. Call Chris Lambert at Destinations, Inc. at (801) 446-5000 or toll free at 1-800-748-4777 for more information and to book your reservations.

2010 WESTERN PETROLEUM MARKETERS CONVENTION & CONVENIENCE STORE EXPO LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Start planning now to attend the 2010 WPMA Convention and Convenience Store Expo. It will be held at the Mirage in Las Vegas, Nevada. Mark your calendars for February 16-18, 2010.

SAVE THE DATES FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2009

June 9-11, 2009 – MPMCSA Convention, Trade Show & Golf – Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula, MT

June 18, 2009 – UPMRA Golf Classic – Wasatch Mountain State Park, Midway, UT

June 23-25, 2009 – WOMA Convention and Golf Tournament – Suncadia Resort, Cle Elum, WA

July 29-30, 2009 – IPM&CSA Convention and Golf Tournament – Sun Valley Resort, Sun Valley, ID

August 30-31, 2009 – NMPMA Convention and Golf Tournament – Embassy Suites, Albuquerque, NM

September 20-22, 2009 – UPMRA Convention and Golf Tournament – Courtyard Marriott, St. George, UT

Petro Pete: "A calm sea does not make a skilled sailor."

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