
Weekly COVID-19 Oversight & Enforcement Report

May 27, 2021

A. Congress

1. On May 26, SBA Administrator Isabella Casillas Guzman began a series of hearings on the Hill that will continue through May 28. On May 26, she testified before the House Committee on Small Business in a [hearing](#) titled “An Examination of the SBA’s COVID-19 Programs” and the Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship in a [hearing](#) titled “The Pandemic Response and the Small Business Economy: An Update from the U.S. Small Business Administration.” On May 28, Administrator Guzman will testify before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government in a [hearing](#) regarding “Small Business Administration Oversight.” The hearings are focused on the SBA’s administration of pandemic-relief programs and challenges in program implementation.
2. A group of 16 Republican Senators sent a [letter](#) to Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo and U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai on May 19 urging the Biden Administration to walk back its support of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) waiver for COVID-19 vaccines and treatments. The Senators called the decision to support the TRIPS waiver “disastrous,” said “it will do nothing to end this global pandemic,” and characterized other countries who support the waiver as “want[ing] to steal our intellectual property and medical technology.” The Senators seek information about how the Biden Administration reached its decision to support the TRIPS waiver and request answers to the questions posed in their letter no later than June 19.
3. Relatedly, Sen. Mike Crapo (R-ID), Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, [introduced](#) an amendment to the U.S. Innovation and Competitiveness Act in response to the Biden Administration’s support of the TRIPS waiver. The amendment—which failed to garner enough votes for adoption—would have required a congressional vote on the Administration’s TRIPS waiver proposal and excluded Russia and China from the waiver.

B. Executive Agencies

1. On May 24, Republican members of the House Committee on Education and Labor sent Labor Secretary Walsh a [letter](#) urging him to withdraw the COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard (“ETS”) currently under review. “Well over a year since the pandemic was declared, every worker in the United States is eligible for a vaccination, and businesses have been authorized by federal and state governments to relax restrictions based on the latest science from the CDC,” the 23 Republicans wrote. The ETS is in its fifth week of OMB review.

2. The Senate Labor Committee [has scheduled](#) a May 27 confirmation hearing for Doug Parker to lead OSHA. Parker now runs the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health. Senators may question his lead role in developing California’s COVID-19 ETS and how Parker would execute President Biden’s call for more enforcement of federal safety regulations.
3. A Texas man has [pleaded guilty](#) to filing fraudulent applications seeking more than \$3 million in PPP loans. According to court documents, his applications falsely claimed that his wedding-planning company employed 126 individuals with an average monthly payroll of \$700,000, when in fact the company had only two employees. Within days of receiving over \$1.5 million in PPP funds, he used the money to pay off his home mortgage and purchased two Teslas, two Freightliner trucks, and a Mercedes Benz van.

C. State Attorneys General

No updates this week.

D. Special Inspector General for Pandemic Recovery (SIGPR)

No updates this week.

E. Pandemic Recovery Accountability Committee (PRAC)

No updates this week.

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