

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS WEEKLY REPORT

Weekly Highlights At-A-Glance

FEDERAL – Legislative

H.R. 266– Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act. Late last week, the [U.S. Congress passed another round of COVID-19 stimulus](#), passing [H.R. 266](#), known as the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act, which President Trump signed into law. The legislation provides \$484 billion in new funding due to the COVID-19 pandemic and was negotiated between the Trump administration and congressional leaders. It provides \$310 billion to replenish the Paycheck Protection Program, which was part of the \$2 trillion stimulus approved late last month and which recently ran out of money. The law allows the government to take new applicants for the program, which provides forgivable loans to small businesses that keep employees on their payroll for eight weeks. The bill sets aside \$30 billion of the loan funds for banks and credit unions with \$10 billion to \$50 billion in assets and another \$30 billion for even smaller institutions. The plan also includes \$60 billion in loans and grants for the separate Economic Injury Disaster Loan program and makes farms and ranches eligible for the loans. The package also includes \$25 billion for expanded testing capacity and \$75 billion for hospitals and health care providers. As reported, Republicans originally wanted to pass a smaller package, but Democrats demanded more funding for hospitals and testing. Democrats did fail to secure \$150 billion for aid to state and local governments, which may be part of future stimulus. [Read more.](#)

Congressional Schedule Changes. The U.S. House of Representatives Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) announced that due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the chamber is not expected to meet again prior to May 4, 2020. However, if

action is required on critical legislation related to the coronavirus response (as seen above) or other legislative priorities, legislators may be called back to Washington. U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) echoed the House announcement and said he also does not expect his chamber to reconvene until May 4. [Read more.](#)

FEDERAL – Regulatory

Proposed BLM Interim Guidance to Provide Relief for Oil & Gas Operators – Washington, DC.

On April 21, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) issued two separate Interim Guidance statements to help alleviate some of the hardships created by the COVID-19 pandemic and collapse in oil prices. The draft Interim Guidance statements are outlined below. The first guidance, *Interim Guidance for Lease Suspension Requests During the COVID-19 National Emergency*, may allow for a suspension of production or a suspension of operations under the force majeure provision of the Mineral Lease Act. The second guidance, *Interim Guidance for Royalty Rate Reduction Requests for Oil and Gas Leases during the COVID-19 national emergency*, would qualify federal oil and gas leases for a temporary royalty reduction under specified circumstances. We will keep members updated once the BLM officially publishes the guidance statements. [Read more.](#)

Oil Production; Strategic Petroleum Reserve – Washington, DC. Amidst the rout in oil prices, last Monday President Trump said he wants to add as much as 75 million barrels of oil to the national Strategic Petroleum Reserve to take advantage of low prices and help U.S. producers. Trump also said he will look at a proposal from Sen. Kevin Cramer (R-ND) seeking to block Saudi oil shipments to the U.S. [Read more.](#)

Oil Production; Tariffs – Washington, DC. On April 20, Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK) delivered a letter to U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross urging the Trump administration to do more to punish Saudi Arabia and Russia for continuing to flood the global oil market, including imposing tariffs on imported oil from Saudi Arabia and Russia. “Despite recently agreed to production cuts by Russia, Saudi Arabia and members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the global oil market is still well oversupplied as the price of oil has failed to stabilize,” wrote Inhofe. “It remains clear that the Saudis and Russians continue to flood the global oil market in what I view as an effort to crush American oil and gas producers and capture their market share.” According to Inhofe, the actions of OPEC, the Russians and Saudis “are hindering our economic and national security.” [Read more.](#)

BLM Uncompahgre Resource Management Plan – Colorado. On April 10, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) published its Record of Decision (ROD) for the Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the Uncompahgre Field Office located in southwestern Colorado, in Montrose, Delta, Gunnison, Ouray, San Miguel and Mesa counties (See [85 Fed. Reg. 20296](#)). The Colorado State Director signed the ROD on April 2, 2020. The ROD makes the Approved RMP effective immediately. The Uncompahgre Approved RMP replaces the 1985 San Juan/San Miguel RMP, as amended; and the 1989 Uncompahgre Basin RMP, as amended. The BLM developed the Uncompahgre Field Office RMP in collaboration with 18 cooperating agencies. The Approved RMP describes landscape-level management actions and allowable uses for resources and special designations within the Uncompahgre Planning Area. [Read more.](#)

BLM Resource Advisory Council Meeting – Utah. On April 24, the BLM announced a *Notice of Public Meeting, Utah Resource Advisory Council, Utah* ([85 Fed. Reg. 23056](#)). The Utah Resource Advisory Council (RAC) is scheduled to meet on June 10, 2020, from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. MDT. However, a teleconference may substitute for an in-person

meeting if public health restrictions are in effect. The meeting will be held at the Richfield Interagency Fire Center, 2031 South Industrial Park Road, Richfield, Utah 84701. Written comments to address the RAC may be sent to the BLM Utah State Office, 440 West 200 South, Suite 500, Salt Lake City, Utah 84101, or via email to BLM_UT_External_Affairs@blm.gov with the subject line “Utah RAC Meeting.” The meeting is open to the public. RAC meetings discuss various topics including public land issues, BLM regulations updates, and other issues to be determined.

[Read more.](#)

FEDERAL – Judicial

Leasing; Unitization; Bonus Payments – Ohio.

On March 26, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Ohio denied a motion to dismiss a complaint which alleged lease expiration, failure to make bonus payments, and other claims. In *Scenicview Estates, LLC v. Eclipse Resources I, LP* (Case No. 2:19-CV-39), the lessee-defendants claim the operation of wells within the unit extended the lease at issue without having to make bonus payments. The plaintiff claimed the unit was not properly unitized and the lease expired. The Court found that “Scenicview has sufficiently pleaded that the Remaining Property was not validly unitized or pooled at the time the primary term expired.” However, the Court also held that “dismissal may still be warranted if it is found that [one of the defendants] conducted operations or produced oil or gas on the Remaining Property prior to the primary term’s expiration.” [Read more.](#)

Leasing; Surface Rights– Fifth Circuit (Mississippi).

On March 25, in *Petro Harvester Operating Co., L.L.C. v. Keith* (Case No. 19-60151), the U.S. Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit, on appeal from the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi, addressed a case where Petro Harvester was assigned the rights under a mineral lease and became the mineral lessee and operator. When the lease expired, Petro Harvester sought a declaratory judgment that it could continue to operate its oil and gas extraction activities on the

Keiths' surface land even without a surface lease, pointing to its explicit and implicit surface rights as a mineral lessee. The Keiths responded that the surface lease required Petro Harvester to return the surface land to its pre-lease condition upon expiration, meaning Petro Harvester was required to remove its machinery and vacate the property. The district court granted summary judgment in favor of Petro Harvester. The Keiths appealed and this court affirmed in favor of the lessee-operator. The Court held that the surface lease did not supersede the mineral lessee rights in this case, but also noted "that our holding should not be construed to preclude the possibility that a surface owner who also owns the mineral rights could include surface-use restrictions in the mineral lease. Indeed, an appropriately drafted surface lease that refers explicitly to the mineral lease may be capable of modifying the mineral lease; and a mineral deed that initially severs the surface from the mineral rights might also establish surface-use restrictions. But no such language is presented here, so the question is academic, and we need not address the issue." [Read more.](#)

Royalty Class Action Settlement – Tenth Circuit (Colorado). On March 18, the U.S. Court of Appeals, Tenth Circuit, on appeal from the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado, upheld a royalty class action settlement in *Elna Sefcovic, LLC v. TEP Rocky Mountain, LLC* (Case No. 19-1120). The case involved the alleged underpayment of lease royalties to class members. Here, the litigants attacked the fairness of the settlement agreement approved by the district court. Upholding the agreement, the Court noted, "the *Sefcovic* complaint alleged an array of errors in the calculation and payment of royalties to the *Sefcovic* class based on the sale of natural gas and similar products, and this is precisely what the release purports to cover." [Read more.](#)

STATE – Legislative

Remote and Electronic Notarial Acts Update – Multiple States. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, many states have issued remote and

electronic notarization emergency orders. At present, 32 states have issued such orders and/or relaxed notarial act rules. Access the list of orders and their implementing dates here: [Read more.](#)

Employee Misclassification – Virginia. (*Update to 3/2/20 Weekly Report*) On April 6, Gov. Ralph Northam (D) signed HB 1407 into law. The Act, sponsored by Del. Jeion Ward (D), provides that if an individual performs services for an employer for remuneration, that individual shall be considered an employee of the party that pays that remuneration unless such individual or his employer demonstrates that such individual is an independent contractor. The bill allows for misclassification civil penalties against employers. The Act is effective January 1, 2021. [Read more.](#)

Employee Misclassification – Virginia. (*Update to 3/2/20 Weekly Report*) On April 6, Gov. Ralph Northam (D) signed SB 744 into law. The Act, sponsored by Sen. Jeremy McPike (D), provides "that, if an individual performs services for an employer for remuneration, that individual shall be considered an employee of the party that pays that remuneration unless such individual or his employer demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Department of Taxation ('the Department') that such individual is an independent contractor." The Act is effective January 1, 2021. [Read more.](#)

Hydraulic Fracturing – Virginia. (*Update to 3/16/20 Weekly Report*) On April 2, Gov. Ralph Northam (D) signed SB 106 into law. The Act, sponsored by Sen. Scott Surovell (D), states that "No person shall conduct any hydraulic fracturing in any well that has been drilled through any portion of a groundwater management area declared by regulation pursuant to the provisions of the Ground Water Management Act of 1992 (§ [62.1-254](#) et seq.). The Act defines hydraulic fracturing as the treatment of a well by the application of hydraulic fracturing fluid, including a base fluid and any additive, under pressure for the express purpose of initiating or propagating fractures in a target geologic formation to enhance production of oil or natural gas." [Read more.](#)

Ad Valorem Taxes – Wyoming. *(Update to 3/16/20 Weekly Report)* On March 24, Gov. Mark Gordon (R) signed HB 159 into law. The Act, sponsored by the Select Committee on Coal/Mineral Bankruptcies (R), requires all mineral producers in the state to report and remit ad valorem taxes on mineral production on a monthly basis to the Department of Revenue on behalf of counties as an attempt to reduce uncollectable ad valorem taxes. Ad valorem tax reports and estimated payments would be due on or before the twenty-fifth day of the second month following the month of production, and the bill sets forth effective calendar years for the new provisions. The bill also provides for a transition period and tax credits for certain remittance procedures. [Read more.](#)

Tax Liens on Mineral Production – Wyoming. *(Update to 3/2/20 Weekly Report)* On March 24, Gov. Mark Gordon (R) signed SF 139 into law. The Act, sponsored by the Select Committee on Coal/Mineral Bankruptcies (R), amends prior law regarding enforcement of tax liens on mineral production, including provisions for perfecting tax liens, notice provisions, and amendments to the definition of “delinquent taxpayer.” The House companion bill, [HB 182](#), did not move in favor of the Senate version which is effective July 1, 2020. [Read more.](#)

Underground Disposal Wells – Wyoming. *(Update to 3/16/20 Weekly Report)* On March 10, Gov. Mark Gordon (R) signed SF 45 into law. The Act, sponsored by the Joint Minerals, Business & Economic Development Interim Committee (R), amends prior law regarding regulation of underground disposal wells to remove the term “noncommercial” from regulations governing Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission authority over underground disposal injection wells. The Act is effective July 1, 2020. [Read more.](#)

STATE – Regulatory

COGCC Hearing – Colorado. As members are aware, over the past year we have been covering

SB19-181 and the Colorado Oil & Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) rulemaking process to implement the law, which “ensures that oil and gas development and operations in Colorado are regulated in a manner that protects public health, safety, welfare, the environment and wildlife resources.” In recent months, COGCC has stalled the process due to COVID-19 disruptions. However, on April 24, the COGCC announced it will hold an online hearing on April 29 regarding the rulemaking process to implement SB19-181. According to COGCC Director Jeff Robbins, he will provide an update to the SB 19-181 rulemaking schedule and the COGCC will have a discussion following. To access the agenda, [click here](#). The public may submit written comments in advance but there will be no public comment during the hearing itself. To submit advance comments on the COGCC portal: [click here](#). For background information on SB19-181, [Read more.](#)

Severance Tax Extension – Louisiana. The deadline for Louisiana oil and gas severance tax filings and collections has been pushed back to June 25. The state’s Department of Revenue formally announced the delay last Wednesday following an announcement by Gov. John Bel Edwards (D) that a delay was expected. The February 2020 monthly oil and gas severance returns, payments, and reports typically were due April 25. No penalties or interest will be assessed if those collections are made by June 25, according to Revenue Information Bulletin No. 20-011. [Read more.](#)

Emergency Temporary Shut-In Rule – New Mexico. As a response to the current oil glut and related COVID-19 impacts, on April 21, New Mexico State Land Office Commissioner Stephanie Garcia Richard announced the issuance of an emergency rule allowing operators to apply for a temporary shut-in of oil wells. The rule will “allow oil and gas lessees to temporarily stop production of oil wells for at least thirty days, with longer-term relief coming through the statutory rule change process. The next steps for a longer-term shut-in rule and language to make operators comply with future bonding increases

will be announced soon. By statute, the State Land Office must provide the public with 30 days of notice and opportunity to provide public comment. After that period, a hearing will be held on the consideration of the rule change. Members of the public will be able to provide testimony." [Read more.](#)

Shut-In Discussions – North Dakota. On April 21, the North Dakota Industrial Commission (NDIC) met to consider what actions might be appropriate amidst the current oil market problems. Lynn Helms, director of the Oil and Gas Division of the state's Department of Mineral Resources, told the commission about 5,000 oil wells in the state have been shut in, an approximation based on his division's conversations with producers. Those shut-ins have cut the state's production by almost 300,000 b/d or about 20 percent from its February average of 1.45 million b/d. Helms advised against a decision to order output pro-rationing for now. The Department of Mineral Resources will continue to monitor the market situation and gather information and plans to conduct a hearing to consider the impact of such an emergency order. NDIC has yet to announce a date for the hearing. [Read more.](#)

Landman Registration Renewal Extension – Ohio. For those landmen who are already registered with the Ohio Department of Commerce, Division of Real Estate & Professional Licensing, the annual registration renewal date has been extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Per the Superintendent's notice: "We hope you are staying safe and healthy during this time. While Ohio land professional registrations expire annually on April 30, on March 27, 2020, Governor Mike DeWine signed House Bill 197. This bill provides an extension of time to file your renewal. The extension is until either ninety days after the emergency order ends or December 1, 2020 – whichever is sooner. During this time, any registrations not renewed will remain active. We are still processing your renewals as they are coming into our office. You may send in the paperwork as soon as you are able. Please contact Laura Monick at Laura.Monick@com.state.oh.us

with any questions." [Read more.](#)

School Land Board Policy Updates – Texas. On April 21, Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush announced the Texas School Land Board unanimously approved policies to work with operators to mitigate the oil and gas crisis. The policies delegate "the Land Commissioner the authority to grant up to a six-month extension on all drilling commitments, when it's deemed to be in the state's best interest, made by lessees of permanent school fund property during 2020, and a 90-day tolling on calculations for enforcing lease terminations for halting of production or failure to produce in paying quantities. Additional actions include adopting a policy addressing a waiver of penalties and interest on late royalty payments submitted from April 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020 in light of the current oil and gas crisis facing the nation." The Texas School Land Board is the state agency that oversees oil, gas and mineral acreage owned by the Permanent School Fund. [Read more.](#)

Railroad Commission Proration Meeting – Texas. (*Update to 4/13/20 Weekly Report*) As members are aware, on April 14 the Texas Railroad Commission (RRC) held an open meeting via teleconference to consider a [joint motion filed by Pioneer Natural Resources U.S.A., Inc. and Parsley Energy Inc. Requesting a Market Demand Hearing and Market Demand Order Effective for May 2020 Production](#) with the RRC which requested that the agency conduct a hearing (a) to determine whether waste of oil and gas is taking place in Texas or is reasonably imminent and, if so, to adopt an order to prevent waste and (b) to inquire as to the reasonable market demand for oil pursuant to Section 85.058 of the Texas Natural Resources Code and to issue any order, effective for May 2020 production, as the RRC may deem appropriate in response to its findings." You may view the [archived hearing here](#). You may [review the submitted public comments here](#). (For [further background information click here](#).) On April 21, RRC commissioners debated the matter and decided to hold off on a vote until May 5. "Chairman Wayne Christian and Commissioner

Christi Craddick said they intend to consult with legal staff and the state attorney general in the hope of preventing any action from being hung up in court by lawsuits. Christian argued that a legal challenge could hold up action far longer than a 2-week delay to the May 5 meeting.” [Read more.](#)

Unemployment Benefits – Texas. On April 23, WFAA-ABC (DFW) Senior Business/Consumer Reporter Jason Wheeler interviewed Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Executive Director Ed Serna to get answers on the many difficulties Texans have had claiming their unemployment benefits. Many of the same issues noted in the AAPL member discussion forums were also addressed with Serna. Among many topics covered, Wheeler’s report and interview answer important questions, including how independent contractor filings work, claimants who previously received TWC benefits but now have trouble accessing their accounts, and how the extra \$600/week federal payments are distributed. To access Wheeler’s report and the 31-minute interview with TWC Executive Director Serna, [Read more.](#)

Production Cuts; Well Shut-Ins – Oklahoma. On the heels of proration requests in Texas, the Oklahoma Energy Producers Alliance has asked the Oklahoma Corporation Commission (OCC) for production controls as well. The application argues there is no correlation in Oklahoma between what producers in the state are getting and its actual value, and further asserts the cost to recover crude oil for many operators exceeds current value, which statutorily constitutes waste under Oklahoma law. “Crude oil waste, the application states, adversely impacts royalty owners, working interest owners, the operators themselves and Oklahoma, which gets much of its revenue from gross production taxes and is the state’s largest mineral owner. The organization and its supporting companies ask in their application that the commission adjust, modify, amend, set or establish allowables for Oklahoma crude oil production or to take other steps it deems appropriate to prevent its waste.” However, [“opponents of prorationing,](#) including the American

Petroleum Institute, Marathon, Occidental and Chevron, argue that the government should let the marketplace determine oil production, and not try to manipulate output.” [Read more.](#) [UPDATE: On April 22, the OCC issued an emergency order allowing operators to shut-in or curtail oil production in wells to prevent economic waste. “There was no way for Oklahoma and other U.S. producers to anticipate and plan for up to 30 million barrels per day of consumption to disappear within just a few weeks,” said OCC Commissioner Dana Murphy. The order allows oil companies to “consider their unprofitable production economic waste, allowing oil and gas producers with money-losing wells to retain leases that could otherwise be voided if they halted output.” [Read more.](#) At press time, the OCC had yet to make the announcement and order publicly available on their website, but until then, for further information please call the OCC Oil & Gas Division directly at 405-522-0577 or view the April 23 Landnews posting with a PDF of the announcement and order.]

Tax Exemptions – Texas. On April 13, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton issued a legal opinion ([No. KP-0299](#)) at the request of state Sen. Paul Bettencourt (R-Houston). The nonbinding opinion was issued in response to Bettencourt’s request for guidance on whether “purely economic, non-physical damage to property caused by the COVID-19 disaster” is eligible for the state temporary tax exemption that state legislators approved in 2019 in response to property damage caused by Hurricane Harvey in 2017. “Section 11.35 of the Tax Code creates a temporary tax exemption for qualified property damaged by a disaster, as declared by the Governor,” Concluding that the tax exemption would not apply to the COVID-19 situation, Paxton wrote, “A court would likely conclude that the Legislature intended to limit the temporary tax exemption to apply to property physically harmed as a result of a declared disaster.” [Read more.](#)

STATE – Judicial

Leasing; Bonus Payments; Statute of Frauds – Michigan. On March 19, in *Murray v. Chesapeake*

Energy Corp. (Case No. 346062), the Michigan Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Chesapeake and other oil and gas production defendants when addressing a case where various oil and gas companies planned to explore for minerals in the northern lower peninsula and arranged to pay signing bonuses to landowners willing to lease their mineral rights. Before all the agreements were reduced to writing, the companies changed their minds. In a separate action, those landowners who had executed agreements with the oil and gas companies received their signing bonuses. The plaintiffs in this appeal did not have completed agreements and were not part of that earlier settlement. The trial court summarily dismissed the plaintiffs' breach-of-contract action because the leasing "agreements" did not comport with the statute of frauds. This Court agreed and affirmed the lower court holding. Here, the Court noted that as to the agreement at issue, the "form" requirements to satisfy the statute of frauds were not met and other documents did not mend this deficiency. [Read more.](#)

Dormant Mineral Act, Marketable Title Act – Ohio.

On March 28, in *McClellan v. McGarty* (Case No. 2020-Ohio-1109), the Ohio Court of Appeals affirmed a lower court ruling interpreting the Dormant Mineral Act (DMA) and Marketable Title Act (MTA) to a mineral interest dispute. The trial court found that a mineral interest exception in a 1921 warranty deed was extinguished by operation of the MTA, and that court also concluded that a warranty deed recorded in 1974 was appellees' root of title because it contains a specific reference to an oil and gas exception in a 1947 deed. Here, the Court held "the trial court did not err in concluding that the 1974 deed is Appellees' root of title." The appellants also contended that specific provisions of the DMA prevailed over general provisions of the MTA. However, this Court found that "assignment of error is meritless" holding that "the trial court extinguishing the mineral interest in this case pursuant to the MTA is affirmed." [Read more.](#)

Leasing; Delay Rentals – Pennsylvania. On March 26, in *Barton v. Graham* (Case No. 1704 WDA 2018),

the Pennsylvania Superior Court affirmed a trial court summary judgment ruling in favor of the successor lessors. Those lessors had sent letters by certified mail to the successor lessees advising them that the lease had expired due to a lack of production, and because the Bartons (lessors), specifically their predecessor the Barton Equity Partnership, had purchased the Property in good faith and for value in 1999. Because the lease was not recorded until 2011, the Bartons advised that the partnership was a bona fide purchaser for value without record notice of the lease which, therefore, cannot encumber the property. The Bartons requested that the Grahams execute releases of their interest in the Lease, but the successor lessees refused to do so. Issues were also raised regarding rejection of rental payments. Here, the Court affirmed the lower court holding, concluding that pursuant to the lease terms and prior judicial holdings, the lease at issue "ended when production ceased and the Bartons refused the Grahams' delay rental payments." [Read more.](#)

INDUSTRY NEWS FLASH

► **TXOGA President appointed to Gov. Abbott's Strike Force to Open Texas.** On April 20, Gov. Greg Abbott (R-TX) announced the Governor's Strike Force to Open Texas and appointed Texas Oil & Gas Association (TXOGA) President Todd Staples as a leader of the Energy Working Group. The Strike Force and its working groups, including TXOGA, are being assembled to provide input and guidance on safely reopening Texas in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. [Read more.](#)

► **Oil production shut-ins.** On April 20, Rystad Energy estimated that in March at least 175,000 barrels-per-day of domestic production was shut in, mainly in the Bakken. "For May, 177,000 b/p/d of shut-ins is expected across multiple shale plays, based on the latest press releases from Continental Resources and ConocoPhillips," said Rystad Energy analysts. This came the same day Crescent Point Energy Corp. announced it is shutting-in 25,000

barrels-per-day of its current production, of which 70 percent is oil. [Read more.](#)

LEGISLATIVE SESSION OVERVIEW

Session Notes: Arkansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, the Missouri House, Pennsylvania and Vermont are in regular session. The District of Columbia Council is also in regular session.

The following legislatures are postponing their 2020 legislative sessions due to COVID-19 until the dates provided: Missouri Senate (April 27), Ohio House and Rhode Island (April 28), Ohio Senate (April 29), Iowa and Michigan (April 30), Puerto Rico (May 1), Alabama, California, New Hampshire, New Jersey and the U.S. Congress (May 4), Kansas (May 6), Delaware (May 15), Colorado (May 18), Tennessee (June 1) and Alaska, Arizona, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Wisconsin (TBD).

North Carolina is in a scheduled recess until April 28.

The Utah legislature adjourned its special session on April 17 after expanding voting by mail for upcoming elections, reports [The Houston Chronicle](#). After a historic virtual special session, the legislature approved mail in voting for the upcoming primary on June 30.

Connecticut adjourned its 2020 legislative session early on April 21, reports [WTNH](#). In a joint statement, House and Senate leaders stated that they are planning to convene for a special session within the next several months to ensure the continuity of government functions.

Arkansas is expected to adjourn on April 24. Arizona was originally scheduled to adjourn on April 25 but is now expected to adjourn on May 1.

Nebraska was scheduled to adjourn on April 23 but will instead adjourn on a date to be decided.

Mississippi is scheduled to adjourn on May 3 but is

likely to postpone in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Signing Deadlines: Maryland Republican Gov. Larry Hogan has until May 7 to act on legislation or it becomes law without signature. Connecticut Democratic Gov. Ned Lamont must sign or veto legislation within 15 calendar days of presentment or it becomes law without signature. Florida Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis has 15 days from presentment to act on legislation or it becomes law without signature. Kentucky Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear has 10 days from presentment, Sundays excepted, to act or legislation becomes law without signature.

Interim Committee Hearings: [North Dakota](#) has cancelled all interim hearings from now until the end of May. ■

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