

Volume 387 May 13, 2014

With the House out of session this week, the Senate will grab the spotlight in Congress with votes on two key agenda items: energy and tax cuts. Lawmakers will vote Monday on whether to end debate on an energy-efficiency bill that has been the subject of intense partisan bickering this month. The bill is authored by Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D- N.H. , and Rob Portman, R-Ohio. The measure would help increase the use of energy-efficient technology in homes and businesses and would create jobs, proponents say. But despite its appeal to both parties, the legislation is likely headed for defeat on Monday.

Democrats, who control 55 votes, are unlikely to pick up the five Republican votes necessary to cut off debate and proceed to a final vote on the measure. That's because GOP lawmakers did not get their wish to amend the bill with energy provisions that are a top priority to the Republican party. Those amendments include speeding up natural gas exports, blocking new Environmental Protection Agency regulations on new coal-fired power plants and banning a tax on carbon emissions.

Sen. Harry Reid, D- Nev. , rejected the GOP's move to amend the bill last week, saying the Republican provisions were not germane to the legislation. Instead Reid stuck to his original offer. In exchange for Republicans passing the energy-efficiency bill, Reid would call up a vote on a binding measure to allow the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline project, which is another top GOP priority.

Republicans, and several Democrats, are eager to greenlight the pipeline, which would extend from the oil sands of Canada to the Gulf Coast. The Obama administration, which is under pressure from green energy groups to block the project because it would increase oil production, has put off making a decision on whether to allow its construction until after the key 2014 midterm elections.

Proponents of the Keystone measure say there are 58 Republican and Democratic senators who would vote for it, three shy of what is needed to keep the bill from failing. With no Keystone win in sight, Republicans have rejected Reid's offer, insisting on getting their five amendments to the energy-efficiency bill.

"It seems like this is nothing but a game of diversion and obstruction to many Senate Republicans," Reid said last week. "But it's not a game. Every time a group of Republicans feigns interest in bipartisanship, only to scramble away at the last moment, it is part of a calculated political scheme."

Sen. Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R- Ky., said the amendments, such as the one blocking new coal regulations, are important and would boost the nation's sagging economy.

Electricity Pricing – May 13, 2014 Com Ed Historical Average LMP Electric Price

Time Period	Average per Kwh
May,2013	\$.03501
Jun,2013	\$.03215
Jul,2013	\$.04067
Aug,2013	\$.03112
Sep,2013	\$.03274
Oct,2013	\$.03183
Nov,2013	\$.03087
Dec,2013	\$.03432
Jan,2014	\$.07837
Feb,2014	\$.06204
Mar,2014	\$.05165
Apr,2014	\$.03870
May 1 – May 13	\$.04380

Extended Temperature Forecast:

Chicago Area

	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
High	58	54	56	62	67
Low	44	42	39	40	43

