



WASHINGTON, DC UPDATE: NOVEMBER 17, 2023

1. GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN AVERTED

This week, Congress reached a deal to fund the government into early 2024, thus avoiding a shutdown.

- **What's next:** The “two-tiered” [stopgap bill](#) will fund part of the federal government until January 19 and the other part until February 2.
- **Why it matters:** This deal prevented a harmful government shutdown that would have wreaked havoc with Thanksgiving holiday/end-of-year travel and halted government support for events.

ECA continues to push for its top policy priorities as part of final FY24 government funding legislation.

2. ECA PUSHING FOR \$300 MILLION FOR VISA BACKLOGS

Last week, ECA wrote a [letter](#) to House and Senate Appropriations Committee leaders reiterating our request for \$300 million in supplemental funding to address visa and passport backlogs.

- **In our words:** “ECA encourages you to make investments that eliminate the long visa wait times that are harming American workers and businesses, including those in our industry.”
- **Where it stands:** The House-passed FY 2024 State, Foreign Operations, & Related Programs Appropriations Act includes ECA’s \$300 million request, but the Senate’s draft bill does not.

ECA will continue to push for supplemental funding as part of the ongoing government funding debate, but final resolution is highly unlikely until Q1 2024.

- **Go deeper:** Skift Meetings wrote an [article](#) about the ongoing impact of visa delays and ECA’s advocacy on Capitol Hill.
- **Elsewhere,** the Canadian government [announced](#) plans to expedite business visitor visas.

3. CALIFORNIA ISSUES FINAL DRAFT FORKLIFT RULE

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has [issued](#) the final draft of its zero-emission forklift rule.

- **By the numbers:** ECA’s partners at the California Coalition for Smart Decarbonization believe that this rule will phase out 90,000+ propane-powered forklifts in California by 2035.
- **Good news:** The draft maintains the ECA-won phase-in delay until 2028. That said, there are further opportunities to better align the rule’s environmental aims with industry feasibility.

ECA strongly encourages those with California operations to reach out with details about how the new rule will impact them. This will inform ECA’s response to the CARB rule, which is due by December 26.

4. IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- ECA submitted [written testimony](#) to the House Ways & Means Committee on the importance of the Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow’s Workforce Act
- ASAE wrote an [article](#) about the recent music licensing amicus brief, signed by IAVM and ECA.
- **Austin O’Boyle**, who is leading ECA’s advocacy capacity development work, was [named](#) a top grassroots lobbyist by the National Institute of Lobbying & Ethics.
- This week’s **EXHIBITOR Now** Association Focus [podcast](#) had the latest ECA advocacy updates.