**This Week in Congress:** The House and Senate are in recess until September 8th; however, the House returned to Washington, D.C. on Saturday to vote on a postal reform bill, which passed by a vote of 257-150, to provide $25 billion for the United States Postal Service, and it reversed operational changes made in the past several months. All of the Democrats voted for the legislation along with 26 Republicans. The House bill would keep United States Postal Service (USPS) leaders from making changes that
- "impede prompt, reliable, and efficient services" to mail delivery through January 2021;
- require all election mail to be handled as first class; and
- ban removing or decommissioning sorting machines and collection boxes.
Six states have filed lawsuits against Postmaster General DeJoy on the grounds that his cost-cuts were "unlawful," and designed to impede efforts to conduct "free and fair elections."
The White House has threatened to veto the legislation. It is not expected that the Senate will act on the House passed bill.

Finally, this week was the Republican National Committee’s 2020 Virtual Presidential Convention.

**Revised HEALS Act:** Senate Republicans released a slimmed down version of their coronavirus relief legislation. It is unclear when a vote on this revised version will take place. It is expected that a compromise between the Democratic leadership and the White House on the next COVID-19 bill will more than likely not be resolved until close to the end of September, and then attach the package to the Continuing Resolution to keep the government funded. The Senate bill includes:

- $10 billion loan to the U.S. Postal Service into a grant if the agency's financial condition deteriorates.
- $300 in weekly unemployment insurance benefits through December 27th;
- $158 billion more for Small Business Administration (SBA) Loans;
- Extend liability protections to businesses, schools and health care professionals, similar to legislation (S 4317) introduced last month by Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas;
- $105 billion for K-12 schools and colleges and universities;
- $29 billion for COVID-19 vaccine and drug development and distribution; and
- $16 billion for testing and contact tracing.

Not included in the Senate bill:

- $1,200 payments to individuals;
- employer tax credits;
- funding to build a new FBI headquarters in downtown Washington;
- $8 billion for the Pentagon to procure various weaponry; and
- No additional direct state and local government aid.

**Unemployment Benefits:** Memorandum on Authorizing the Other Needs Assistance Program for Major Disaster Declarations Related to Coronavirus Disease 2019 can be found
The President intends to reprogram unspent funding from the CARES Act and funds from the Homeland Security Department’s Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) to provide weekly unemployment benefits of $400 with $100 of the benefit required to be covered by States. The previous amount was a $600 weekly benefit with the entire cost covered by the Federal government. The benefit will be extended through December 6, 2020 or until the DRF is spent down to $25 billion.