

House Advances Iraqi Visas Legislation

WASHINGTON (AP) — A measure to provide special visas for Iraqis who risked their lives to help the United States is one step closer to securing President Barack Obama's signature.

By voice vote late Wednesday, the House passed the measure and sent it to the Senate, which is expected to approve it Thursday.

The special visa has allowed more than 12,000 Iraqi contractors, interpreters and others who aided U.S. efforts, and family members, to move to the United States since 2007. It expired earlier this week, with an estimated 2,000 applications still in the bureaucratic process, but the Senate extended it by unanimous consent a half-hour ahead of Monday night's deadline.

The program was created during the worst years of the Iraq war, with Iraqis who helped U.S. forces facing targeted killings, death threats and other forms of harassment. The goal was to resettle them in the United States faster than the often protracted general refugee process might allow. More than 90,000 Iraqis have moved to the U.S. as refugees, though the process can take months or years.

The House has voted several times previously to reauthorize the special visa, which entails its own set of sometimes complicated requirements for applicants, including paperwork or certificates from the U.S. military, Iraqi police and other bodies.

Author Tom Clancy Dies At Age 66

NEW YORK (AP) — In 1985, a year after the Cold War thriller "The Hunt for Red October" came out, author Tom Clancy was invited to lunch at the Reagan White House, where he was questioned by Navy Secretary John Lehman.

Who, the secretary wanted to know, gave Clancy access to all that secret material?

Clancy, the best-selling novelist who died Tuesday in Baltimore at 66, insisted then, and after, that his information was strictly unclassified: books, interviews and papers that were easily obtained. Also, two submarine officers reviewed the final manuscript.

In an interview with The New York Times in 1987, he explained that unclassified information can lead to insights about state secrets.

BY STEVE ROTHWELL

AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK — Fear of a protracted U.S. government shutdown is making global investors increasingly nervous.

U.S. and European stock markets fell Wednesday as investors and world leaders worried about the threat to the global economy. Europe's top central banker called the partial shutdown "a risk if protracted." Boston's Federal Reserve Bank president cited the budget battle as a reason the Fed refused to pull back its economic stimulus last month, and President Barack Obama appeared on financial network CNBC to urge Congress to pass a budget and avoid derailing the nation's economic recovery.

After shrugging off the first day of the shutdown Tuesday, Wall Street made it clear on the second day that it was more and more nervous that the budget fight could turn into something worse, a failure to raise the nation's borrowing limit.

"I'm not going out there and beating my chest and saying the world is coming to an end here," said Brad McMillan, the Chief Investment Officer at Commonwealth Financial, an investment adviser. "But we face the possibility for significantly greater disruptions."

not been made aware of any immediate fiscal impact for any of our federally funded programs," he said. "However, we are experiencing disruption with certain federally-operated websites for our school lunch program and school impact aid program."

The school district's Title, IDEA and Carl Perkins programs flow through the state Office of Grants Management on a reimbursement basis, Bietz said. Food service claims, commodities and produce — such as fresh fruits and vegetables — all flow through the State Child and Adult Nutrition Office.

Bietz isn't sure what to expect in terms of an impact from any long-term federal closure.

"There has been little communication to date from the state offices regarding the potential for a prolonged shutdown and what impact, if any, there would be on the Yankton School District," he said.

The loss of federal funds isn't new for Marty Indian School superintendent Mike Elsberry. He pointed to cuts already implemented this year under federal sequestration.

"The sequestration has been the big thing for the Marty Indian School. The school has cut way back on everything," he said.

"The (Bureau of Indian Education) informed us to cut deep. We went further than that. But I made the decision that we were not going to reduce staff, since they were our student's most valuable resource."

The Marty school holds no plans for further layoffs or cuts, Elsberry noted.

"We are good to go for awhile," he said. "If it gets to the point that the money is not there, then the district will face the issue at that time."

The Marty school staff has

The looming crisis has been growing for weeks. Republicans in the House of Representatives are insisting that Democrats negotiate over a new health care law as part of the budget talks. Senate Democrats, led by Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada, insist that Republicans pass a straightforward temporary funding bill with no strings attached.

The political gridlock could prevent the U.S. government from borrowing more money to cover its bills and pay back creditors later this month. The financial market sees that as a disastrous move that could send the U.S. into recession.

On Wednesday, the major indexes opened sharply lower, as U.S. lawmakers appearing unwilling to yield in their entrenched positions. After Obama summoned Congressional leaders to the White House later in the morning, the market started to recoup some of its losses, but the recovery faded throughout the afternoon.

"The markets are sending a loud message to Washington lawmakers to get their act together and resolve the budget crisis," said Peter Cardillo, chief market economist at Rockwell Global Capital.

The Dow Jones industrial average ended the day down

58.56 points, or 0.4 percent, at 15,133.14 points. The Standard & Poor's 500 index fell 1.13 points, or 0.1 percent, to 1,693.87. The Nasdaq composite declined 2.96 points, or 0.1 percent, to 3,815.02.

Six of 10 industry sectors in the S&P 500 fell. Declines were led by the makers of consumer staples and industrial companies.

Defense companies, which rely on government contracts for a large part of their revenue, led declines for industrial companies. Raytheon fell \$1.73, or 2.2 percent, to \$76.08. Lockheed Martin dropped \$2.42, or 1.9 percent, to \$125.

Earlier, European Central Bank head Mario Draghi said that the partial U.S. government shutdown was a risk to economic recoveries in the U.S. and globally.

Chief executives from the nation's biggest financial firms met with Obama for more than an hour Wednesday. Referring to the potential showdown over raising the government's borrowing limit, Lloyd Blankfein, CEO of Goldman Sachs, said: "We shouldn't use threats of causing the U.S. to fail ... as a cudgel."

Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew told Congress that unless lawmakers act in time, he will run out of money to pay the nation's bills by Oct. 17. Congress must periodically raise

the limit on government borrowing to keep U.S. funds flowing, but the once-routine matter has now become a bargaining chip in battles over the federal budget deficit.

The last time there was an impasse over the borrowing limit, in August 2011, it led to a downgrade of the United States' credit rating by Standard & Poor's and a plunge in the stock market.

The government shutdown is ill-timed because the U.S. economic recovery is still on shaky foundations.

U.S. businesses added 166,000 jobs last month, payroll company ADP said Wednesday, a level consistent with only a modest improvement in hiring. Economists polled by FactSet had forecast 180,000 jobs would be added.

"It's clear that the economy hasn't picked up steam like people were anticipating," said Kate Warne, an investment strategist at Edward Jones. "Especially with the government shutdown, there's not a lot that is going to help it do so over the next couple of months."

About 800,000 federal workers were staying home again Wednesday on the second day of the first partial shutdown of the U.S. government since the winter of 1995-96.

Sign

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The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has closed the Cottonwood campgrounds, the Nebraska tail waters camping area and the Cottonwood Day Area, according to the Corps' Gary Ledbetter. However, the public can continue to access the Missouri River. The training dike is open for paddlesfish season, and the boat ramps are open at the training dike into the river and the Nebraska tailwaters into the river.

In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has closed all refuge program offices and the properties they manage, including Lake Andes.

Fuks uses the tourist inquiries to point out that most of the Yankton area attractions remain unaffected by the federal shuttering of its facilities.

"Our official statement: 'What shutdown?'" she said. "We aren't affected by anything at this point, and we predict our region won't be greatly impacted by the shutdown."

Fuks is working to get out the word through her office. The state tourism department is also spreading the message, she said.

"We're open for business (in the southeast region). The trails are open, and the state parks are open," she said. "For the most part, people can still come and enjoy things."

Even where federal sites are closed, visitors can enjoy plenty of other options, Fuks said.

"The Missouri National Recreational River is closed, but that's their office, not the river itself," she said. "We want to make sure people know, if they are staying in federal campgrounds and getting pushed out (because of the shutdown), there's lots of room at state parks. We have plenty of available room for them."

The current promotion ties in with the push of the "shoulder" season for autumn tourism, Fuks said. This fall features a number of festivals, particularly Oktoberfests and winery trails, along with hunting seasons. In addition, the less-crowded parks and campgrounds are attractive to retired travelers, she said.

HEALTH CARE

While Fuks sees positive trends amidst the federal shutdown, other local and state officials are more uncertain of what the future holds.

The South Dakota Department of Health (DOH) doesn't anticipate a disruption for its Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program, said spokeswoman Barb Buhler.

"South Dakota's WIC program has federal funding on hand to cover vouchers for WIC participants through October, and the program remains open and able to serve participants," she said. "WIC participants who have questions can contact their local WIC clinic or the state WIC office."

The state health department is maintaining all of its functions but doesn't have access to national data, according to state epidemiologist Lon Kightlinger.

"We are doing West Nile investigations and reporting, but the (Centers for Disease Control) did not release national case numbers like they usually do on Wednesdays," he said.

"We are doing flu vaccination and flu surveillance, but we are not getting national reports and don't have access to the national influenza lab."

Kightlinger doesn't want to see a prolonged suspension of federal resources. "I hope this shutdown is over soon," he said.

EDUCATION

Area schools are also moving forward with daily operations amidst the federal shutdown.

The Yankton School District hadn't encountered major problems during the first two days of the shutdown, according to business manager Jason Bietz.

"For the short term, I have

It's the first of the month...

OCTOBER

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Yankton Medical Clinic, P.C. is pleased to announce the association of Carrissa Pietz, MD, Board Certified Family Medicine Physician.

Dr. Pietz is originally from Lesterville, SD and completed her undergraduate degree at Mount Marty College. She is a graduate of Sanford School of Medicine of The University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD. Dr. Pietz completed her family medicine residency at Sioux Falls Family Medicine Residency, Sioux Falls, SD.

Dr. Pietz joins Drs. David Barnes, McKenzie Hanson, Scott Weber, and Certified Nurse Practitioner, Jennifer McGinnis, in providing family care.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Pietz, her husband, Aaron, and their children, Noah and Carson, to Yankton.

Dr. Pietz began seeing patients at the Yankton Medical Clinic, P.C. September 9, 2013.

Appointments can be made by calling 605-665-8910.

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