

[View this email in your browser](#)



MINE Update
MINING INDUSTRY NEWS E-COMM UPDATE

Issue 8 | November 20, 2020

Brought to you by the National Mining Association

This Week in The News

In the campaign world, all eyes turned toward Georgia where a pair of January 5 runoff elections will determine control of the U.S. Senate. Both chambers of Congress are back in session this week for a lame duck session that includes a December 11 deadline to avoid a government shutdown. Discussions aimed at another COVID relief package bogged down, but the National Mining Association (NMA) remained engaged with efforts to advance mining's interests with both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue. Plus we have updates on how energy and mining markets are faring.

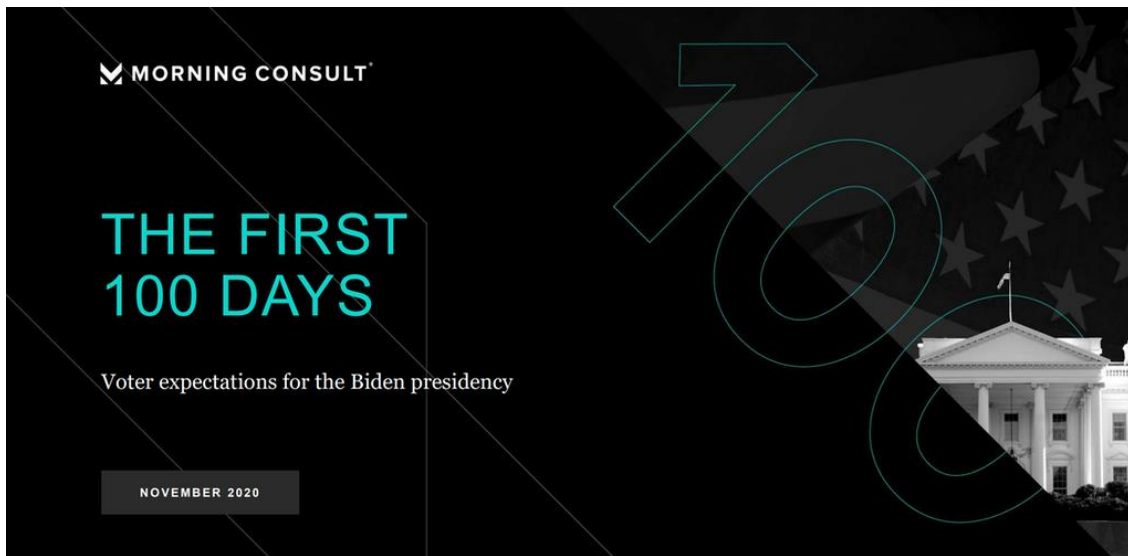
Safety Share

With the end of 2020 rapidly approaching, here are “[12 workplace safety tips](#) every employee should know in 2021.”

Paycheck Protection Program Oversight

The NMA joined a coalition of over 80 trade associations cautioning the [U.S Treasury and the Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) and [Congressional leadership](#) against new loan necessity questionnaires being distributed from the SBA requesting financial details from borrowers beyond information requested in the borrowers’ original loan applications. These questionnaires appear to be only targeted to Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) recipients receiving over \$2 million through the PPP. Although the administration announced earlier this year that it would be reviewing loans for appropriateness and loan forgiveness, the NMA and other trade associations argue that the questionnaires go beyond appropriate oversight and may lead to inappropriately questioning the award and need of many PPP loans. The NMA will continue to follow this issue to ensure our members maintain assistance through Congressional COVID-19 relief legislation programs like the PPP and will assist members with the SBA or other federal relief granting agencies.

Final 2020 Election Results



This week's NMA Government Affairs Committee (GAC) call featured Sean Trende, Senior Political Analyst for Real Clear Politics. [Sean's presentation](#) spoke to polling deficiencies, trends in national elections becoming more polarizing among voters, and the status of litigation concerning the presidential race and redistricting in the upcoming 2022 congressional contests. Last week, NMA's GAC call featured pollsters from Morning Consult, NMA's pollster and a pollster for *Politico*, reporting on trends from this year's election. You can find their presentation [here](#). Currently, there are very few House races left uncalled [from the election](#). You can find the final remaining list [here](#). Should election results maintain their trends, the ultimate result of the House election could be 222 or 223 Democratic seats to 213 or 212 Republican seats. Two hundred eighteen votes gets a majority vote in the House. This would be the slimmest majority since the 2000 elections.

For All the Peaches



The NMA and its members are heavily involved and invested in the remaining two Senate races for the 2020 election cycle. NMA's Political Action Committees will be providing maximum legal contributions to Senators Perdue and Loeffler for the Georgia runoff election. Under Georgia law if a candidate does not receive at least 50% of the vote in the general election, the top two candidates face off in a general election runoff, which will be held on January 5, 2021. Both Senators Perdue and Loeffler will be on the ballot on January 5 facing two Democratic challengers. These two Senate races remain crucial to the control of the Senate next year. Continued divided control of the chambers of Congress will help ensure that NMA members have a meaningful seat at the table in any bipartisan policy discussion. We would request your companies strongly consider contributing to Senators Perdue and Loeffler. Many NMA members joined a [NMA hosted fundraiser for Senator Perdue today](#), but there is still an opportunity to contribute. Please hold Tuesday, December 1 at 2:30pm EST for a fundraiser with Senator Loeffler. An invitation and contribution information are forthcoming soon.

MSHA's Proposed Revisions to Permissibility and Approval Requirements Will Speed Deployment of New and Improved Safety and Health Technologies

In a welcome move long advocated by NMA, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) published on November 19, 2020, its proposal to revise its 30 CFR Part 18 standards governing permissibility testing for electric motor-driven mine equipment and accessories. Examples of this equipment include portable two-way radios, remote control units, longwall mining systems, portable oxygen detectors, miner-wearable components for proximity detection systems, and powered air-purifying respirators. NMA and its members have tenaciously worked for this change to streamline the process by which MSHA approves and certifies equipment for use in gassy mines.

Current MSHA standards generally accept only the agency's permissibility tests, which limits technology that may be deployed to create safer mine environments and enhance miners' health and safety. MSHA proposes to incorporate by reference 14 "voluntary consensus standards" (VCS) developed by the American National Standards Institute, the International Society of Automation, UL LLC, and the International Electrotechnical Commission. The agency will accept tests from these organizations in lieu of MSHA's standards. The VCS contain general and specific construction and testing requirements for equipment used in explosive gas atmospheres, explosive dust atmospheres or hazardous locations. MSHA's adoption of VCS can create a more efficient and effective process for mine operators and equipment manufacturers to have permissible equipment implemented more quickly in U.S. mines.

Member Satisfaction Survey Closes Friday

Last week [you received a survey](#) to help us determine member satisfaction. If you have not yet completed it, we would appreciate if you could offer a few minutes of your time to improve your membership experience and help us build a strong association for the future. Thank you in advance for your time and your commitment to our collective success.

New Leadership at the Senate Energy Committee and Senate Environment Committee



Sen. John Barrasso



Sen. Lisa Murkowski



Sen. Shelley Moore Capito

Due to term limit rules in the Senate Republican Conference, Senator Murkowski (R-AK) will no longer chair the Senate Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Committee next Congress. Should Republicans retain the majority in the U.S. Senate following the general election runoff races in Georgia held on January 5, 2021, Senator John Barrasso (R-WY) announced Wednesday that he plans to follow Senator Murkowski as the new chairman of the committee. Currently Senator Barrasso serves as chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee and is not yet subject to term limits leading that committee but will cede that chairmanship in favor of ENR. Regardless of the election results in Georgia, with this decision and the expected votes of Republicans on the ENR Committee, it is certain that Senator Barrasso will be the lead Republican member of the committee next Congress. Senator Barrasso's departure from the leadership of the Environment and Public Works Committee leaves the lead Republican role for the Environment and Public Works Committee to Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.V.). Senator Murkowski is expected to remain a member of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and Senator Barrasso is expected to remain a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee.

NMA and Third-Party Voices

[Reuters](#) featured the National Mining Association in a story on how U.S. mining companies are moving fast to reach out to the president-elect's team, saying the lithium, copper and other metals they produce can help the new administration achieve many of its goals.

[Inside Sources](#) and the [Northwest Indiana Times](#) ran an op-ed by NMA's Rich Nolan in which he argues that Biden's strategy to 'build back better' depends on American mining for infrastructure and energy projects, among other industries.

Rich Nolan continued to participate in a variety of radio interviews to discuss the mining industry and the importance of securing our domestic supply chains with U.S.-mined materials. Shows included the nationally syndicated Ringside Politics and Arizona's Jeff Oravits show.

[Gillette News Record](#) (WY), [Watertown Daily Times](#) (NY) and the [Dominion Post](#) (WV) carried an op-ed by Syd S. Peng, the Charles E Lawall Chair of Mining Engineering emeritus in the Department of Mining Engineering at West Virginia University, in which he argues carbon capture, utilization and storage is necessary for a globally replicable approach to emissions reduction.

Energy and Mining News

[S&P Global reported](#) that "as more winter-like temperatures arrive across the U.S. Northeast, rising cash prices there could begin to pressure market share for gas as power generators switch away from the fuel in favor of coal."

And [coal production in the](#) Uinta Basin "jumped 6.6% in the third quarter of 2020 compared to the previous quarter but remained lower than prior-year figures, in line with

other basins appearing to return from diminished second-quarter totals sapped by the coronavirus pandemic.”

[U.S. coking coal producers](#) “appear largely unfazed ahead of Biden's presidency, with most of them focused on taking advantage of the recent surge in Chinese demand for low-volatile and mid-volatile alternatives to Australian coals amid an import curb.”

U.S. Energy Information Administration lowered its estimate for 2020 coal production to 520.6 million tons, the [lowest level in 56 years](#).

In its [“State of the Market: Mining Q3 report,”](#) S&P found that the industry is slowly starting to recover, slower than originally expected due to prolonged coronavirus recovery, but China is continuing to rebound strongly. Metals prices are holding up well (copper, zinc, gold) and there is less market volatility now that the election has passed.



Copyright © 2020 National Mining Association, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).