D.C. Political News Round-Up | May 2025

May 30, 2025

Categories:

Presidential Administration Impacts
Publications
Webinar/Video

Authors:

Jonathan S. Miller
Jan de Beer
Katelyn O. Meckes

D.C. Deep Dive

In this month's deep dive, Frost Brown Todd D.C. Partner-in-Charge Jonathan Miller interviews attorney and tariff expert Jan de Beer to discuss how businesses can navigate the United States' ever-evolving tariff policies. From shifting trade priorities to regulatory uncertainty, learn what your company can do to stay ahead of the curve.

Keeping Up

U.S. Court Halts "Liberation Day" Tariffs

A federal court ruling significantly curtails the administration's use of emergency powers to impose broad trade restrictions. The U.S. Court of International Trade invalidated key portions of the "Liberation Day" tariffs, asserting that the president exceeded his legal authority under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act. This marks a notable judicial check on executive trade authority and carries wide-ranging implications for manufacturers, mobility firms, and global suppliers who had adjusted operations based on these tariffs.

2026 FBT Gibbons LLP. All rights reserved. ADVERTISING MATERIAL.

FBT Gibbons

Carbon Border Fee Proposal Gains Steam

Bipartisan legislation introduced in Congress named the Foreign Pollution Fee Act of 2025 would levy tariffs on imports based on their carbon intensity. The goal is to protect U.S. clean manufacturers from carbon leakage and encourage cleaner global production. Though designed to create a level playing field, the measure could trigger retaliatory tariffs, particularly from trading partners like the EU and China.

Executive Orders Accelerate Nuclear Buildout

President Trump signed four executive orders aimed at reviving the U.S. nuclear sector, with a focus on small modular reactors (SMRs), microreactors, and mobile nuclear units to support both defense installations and grid resilience. The orders expedite permitting and signal a major policy shift toward energy density and domestic energy independence.

$14B in Clean Energy Projects Paused or Canceled

An analysis released this month revealed more than $14 billion in renewable projects, primarily solar and wind, have been canceled or delayed in 2025 due to proposed rollbacks of tax incentives under the House's budget proposal. The uncertainty has led developers to freeze capital deployment, threatening jobs and long-term clean energy momentum.

Fed Signals Caution on Inflation and Employment

The Federal Reserve's May meeting minutes flagged persistent inflation risks, sluggish wage growth, and softening employment numbers as key concerns. Officials cited new tariffs and weakened business investment as contributing factors. While rate hikes are off the table for now, monetary policy remains highly sensitive to macroeconomic signals. This is especially relevant in trade-heavy industries and commercial real estate finance.

CFPB Faces Operational and Legal Uncertainty

2026 FBT Gibbons LLP. All rights reserved. ADVERTISING MATERIAL.

FBT Gibbons

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is navigating a lawsuit over recent workforce reductions, which comes amid broader scrutiny of its enforcement authority. With leadership in flux and internal morale reportedly low, the agency's direction remains uncertain. Be sure to check out Frost Brown Todd's update here by Emilia Rubin and Jared Tully.

CFPB Withdraws Multiple Guidance Documents

On May 12, the CFPB announced it would withdraw a broad set of guidance documents that many institutions rely on for compliance clarity. While the Bureau claims the move promotes regulatory simplification, it also leaves open questions regarding enforcement expectations. Financial institutions may need to revisit internal policies and consult with counsel to avoid unintended noncompliance. For more information, check out Frost Brown Todd's update here by Melody Charlton, Bill Repasky, and Nancy Eff Presnell.

EPA Reaffirms Key PFAS Limits, Revisits Others

In a partial course correction, the EPA announced it will retain maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for PFOA and PFOS (two of the most studied PFAS chemicals), but intends to reconsider thresholds for other compounds. This dual-track decision may reduce short-term liability while extending regulatory ambiguity across other PFAS families. Affected industries include utilities, industrial processors, and chemical manufacturers. For more information, check out Frost Brown Todd's update here by Lindsey Bryant, Stephen Haughey, Chris Kim Kahn, and Kevin McMurray.

On the Horizon

Senate Prepares to Debate "One Big Beautiful Bill"

The House passed a sweeping budget and tax bill featuring major corporate tax reductions, partial repeal of clean energy incentives, and a new class of retirement savings accounts called "MAGA Accounts." While the bill passed largely along party lines, Senate

2026 FBT Gibbons LLP. All rights reserved. ADVERTISING MATERIAL.

leaders have signaled an openness to negotiate certain provisions, particularly those affecting energy, housing, and retirement savings. Stakeholders are closely watching how the clean energy rollback language fares in Senate negotiations, especially amid growing pressure from both utilities and environmental groups.

Potential Shutdown Looms This Fall

The current continuing resolution expires on September 30. With major policy disagreements persisting over defense, domestic spending, and border security, there is a growing risk that Congress will not reach agreement on full-year appropriations. Without action, the federal government faces a partial shutdown that could disrupt agency operations and delay regulatory enforcement across key sectors including transportation, energy, and agriculture.

PFAS Reporting Delay Buys Industry Time

The EPA has delayed the PFAS reporting period under the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) by nine months, citing industry feedback on data complexity. The rule requires companies to disclose information on PFAS substances used in products dating back to 2011. While environmental advocates expressed concern about the delay, industry stakeholders welcomed the additional time to compile the necessary technical and supply chain data. For more information, check out Frost Brown Todd's update here by Lindsey Bryant, Stephen Haughey, Chris Kim Kahn, and Kevin McMurray.

New Restrictions Target Vehicle Connectivity with China, Russia

Beginning in 2025, the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) imposed new restrictions on vehicle and automated system technologies with links to China and Russia. These rules apply to hardware and software that collect or transmit vehicle data, including telematics systems, AI components, and certain cloud-based services. For more information, check out Frost Brown Todd's update here by Jan de Beer and Zachary Mills.

2026 FBT Gibbons LLP. All rights reserved. ADVERTISING MATERIAL.

FERC to Hold June 4 Resource Adequacy Summit

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) will host a technical conference on June 4, 2025, focused on long-term resource adequacy across U.S. electricity markets. Topics will include the intersection of demand growth, clean energy integration, capacity procurement, and market design. This summit is particularly timely as utilities face tightening reserve margins and rising electrification demand. FERC aims to identify ways to bolster grid reliability while accommodating evolving resource mixes. The summit may result in new guidance or proceedings influencing future rulemakings.

For more information, contact the authors or any member of Frost Brown Todd's Lobbying and Public Policy team.

Presidential Administration Impacts

Frost Brown Todd has a dedicated team closely monitoring the significant policy changes and their impact on businesses. We are committed to keeping our clients informed as these changes take effect and new information emerges. Visit our resource page for insight into the latest developments and their implications for business and industry.

View Collection

© 2026 FBT Gibbons LLP. May be considered attorney advertising in some jurisdictions.

2026 FBT Gibbons LLP. All rights reserved. ADVERTISING MATERIAL.

FBT Gibbons