



What's ahead for Washington this week, with the budget, Bernanke & Scott Brown in play

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Washington, Jan. 24 – Now that the unexpected ascent of incoming Massachusetts Sen. Scott Brown has Republicans re-energized, tighten your seat belts for a wild ride this week as the markets watch closely to see:

- what Congress does this week about confirming Fed Chairman Bernanke for a second term before his term expires Jan. 31st,
- what the Senate votes on Tuesday to do about the proposed bipartisan budget deficit commission to decide issues too hot for a divided Congress to handle,
- what the Congressional Budget Office delivers on Tuesday in its 2010 budget and economic outlook.
- what the Federal Open Market Committee decides to do with interest rates on Wednesday,
- what new attacks President Obama launches against Wall Street greed in his State of the Union address Wednesday evening,
- and what Friday's 4th Quarter GDP growth report says about U.S. economic recovery . . . or relapse.

On the USDA front, Deputy Secretary Merrigan will address the Rural Health Policy Institute Wednesday on Rural Health and Rural Community Development. This week's reports from USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) include:

- Monday, Jan. 25, Cotton Ginnings, Poultry Slaughter
- Tuesday, Jan. 26, Weather-Crop Summary
- Wednesday, Jan. 27, Broiler Hatchery, Vegetables - Annual
- Thursday, Jan. 28, Capacity of Refrigerated Warehouses, Peanut Stocks and Processing
- Friday, Jan. 29, Dairy Products Prices, Agricultural Prices, Catfish Production, Cattle, Egg Products, Peanut Prices, Sheep and Goats

An already crowded congressional agenda for the week includes these hearings:

Monday, Jan. 25

- House Agriculture Subcommittee hearing in Colton, CA to review federal nutrition programs.

Wednesday, Jan. 27

- Senate Homeland Security Subcommittee hearing on cutting the federal government energy bill by switching to renewable energy sources
- House Budget Committee hearing, Congressional Budget Office Budget and Economic Outlook with CBO Director Dr. Douglas Elmendorf
- House Veterans' Affairs Committee Roundtable on Meeting the Unique Health Care Needs of Rural Veterans
- House Science and Technology Committee hearing on The Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy (ARPA-E): Assessing the Agency's Progress and Promise in Transforming the U.S. Energy Innovation System

Thursday, Jan. 28

- Senate Budget Committee hearing to examine the budget and economic outlook, focusing on fiscal years 2011-2020, with CBO Director Dr. Douglas Elmendorf
- Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee hearing on Green Jobs and the New Economy, Joint hearings to examine solar energy technology and clean energy jobs.
- Senate Appropriations Subcommittee hearing on Oversight of the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, with Commerce Secretary Gary Locke

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#30