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All eyes were on the political sphere as Congress debated and ultimately failed to vote on a new health bill, but the rest of the economic news during the week was more positive, if slightly mixed. The housing market was a bit uneven in February. Existing sales of homes dipped over the month, but new home sales grew.

Durable and capital goods orders surged in February, with civilian aircraft orders up for the second consecutive month. But it was capital goods shipments, nondefense ex-air that was most impressive, with a stronger-than-expected 1% in February after declining in January. This part of the durable goods report feeds directly into quarterly gross domestic product (GDP) report, so it should provide a bump.

The short end of the London interbank offered rate (Libor) was unchanged last week from the week prior, with 1-month Libor remaining at 0.98%, 3-month at 1.15% and 6-month at 1.43%.