



January 31, 2020



## THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

### Are We There Yet?

Congratulations to you all on making it to the deadline for the Hazard Mitigation Assistance grants application! We know that these are labor-intensive and successful applications are critical to your state's mitigation goals. You also get extra credit for not being as distracted as the rest of D.C. by the ongoing impeachment.

As Puerto Rico continues to suffer significant seismic activity, House Appropriations released its Puerto Rico Earthquake Supplemental. Committee Chairwoman Lowey (D-NY) introduced the emergency appropriations bill, expected to be considered in the House next week. The legislation provides \$4.67 billion in assistance, which is \$1.3 billion over the previously released text, almost entirely derived from increases to the projected CDBG-DR block grant award.

In less positive news, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released its [Budget and Economic Outlook: 2020 to 2030](#). The forecast isn't optimistic, with the deficit expected to reach \$1.02 trillion this year for the first time since 2012 and federal debt projected to grow to 98 percent of GDP by 2030. None of this bodes well for fulfilling spending priorities moving forward, like further increases to EMPG funding or proactive pre-disaster spending. There is already talk of Appropriators having to craft bills within very tight allocations. As always, the NEMA staff will continue to encourage appropriators that despite financial squeezes, spending on emergency management will provide a critical return on investment for the nation.

Finally, today the Senate is expected to vote to reject calling witnesses to testify in the President's impeachment trial and then vote to acquit the President either tonight or tomorrow morning, drawing the impeachment process to an official close. As always on the Hill, "it ain't over 'til it's over," but the path to a

vote where witnesses can be called is narrow and drawing tighter with every Senator who announces they'll vote no.

### Hearings the Week of February 3, 2020

#### [The Northern Northern Border: Homeland Security Priorities in the Arctic, Part II](#)

House Committee on Homeland Security

Wednesday, February 5, 10:00am ET

#### [Assessing the Transportation Needs of Tribes, Federal Land Management Agencies, and U.S. Territories](#)

House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

Thursday, February 6, 10:00am ET

*More News from the Nation's Capital...*

### **WHO Declares Coronavirus a Public Health Emergency of International Concern**

With 213 deaths reported worldwide in the span of a month, the World Health Organization is leveraging an emergency declaration to further international cooperation to manage the crisis.

[Read More](#)

### **House Committee Chairs Release Infrastructure Investment Framework**

The proposed plan is a five-year, \$760 billion investment into increasing resiliency and improving highways, rail and transit, airports, ports and harbors, 911 modernization, and water infrastructure.

[Read More](#)

### **GAO Reports FirstNet Could Strengthen Communication and Oversight on Deployment**

AT&T is currently meeting build-out and adoption benchmarks, but public safety stakeholders have reported dissatisfaction with the quality of contract information provided by FirstNet.

[Read More](#)

*Other News from DC and Around the Country:*

Stateline: [As States Prepare for Disasters, They Acknowledge Things Will Get Worse](#)

Bloomberg News: [Here is What a WHO Global Health Emergency Means: QuickTake](#)

HS Today: [Fake News During Disasters Putting People's Lives at Risk, Warns Intel Bulletin](#)

nemaweb.org



Copyright NEMA 2019. All rights reserved.