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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

Is No News Really Good News?

The old adage goes that “no news is good news,” but amid a stalemate on Capitol Hill and questions surrounding PPE reimbursement eligibility, how accurate that phrase is remains to be seen.

House Speaker Pelosi (D-CA) and White House chief of staff Meadows spoke for the first time in weeks in an attempt to restart negotiations on a coronavirus relief package, with Speaker Pelosi offering a \$2.2 trillion package overall. This appeared to be a nonstarter and the discussions remain at an impasse. It is looking more and more likely that any additional legislation will drag into late September, pushing up against the annual funding appropriations deadline (which in turn is expected to be pushed beyond its deadline via Continuing Resolution, although Congress hasn't yet agreed on the length of the expected CR).

Meanwhile, GOP senators are still looking to build consensus within their ranks on “skinny” legislation to address Post Office concerns, federal unemployment benefits, liability protections for schools and businesses, and money for hospitals and testing. At the moment, timing for such legislation is still unclear, as it still has to face procedural hurdles and an uphill climb for enough votes to pass.

Recently, questions across regions have come up regarding potential changes to personal protective equipment (PPE) and disinfectant eligibility under FEMA Public Assistance for COVID-19. In response, NEMA and the Big 7 Associations (NGA, NCSL, NLC, NACo, ICMA, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and CSG) sent a letter to Administrator Gaynor requesting that FEMA maintain current eligibilities and provide clear guidance on funding streams across the federal government.

In certifiable good news, though, National Zoo panda Mei Xiang welcomed her third cub last Friday night. If you need to take a moment to de-stress, we highly recommend the zoo's [Giant Panda Cam](#), where it's all panda, all the time.

More News from the Nation's Capital...

DHS CISA Releases 5G Strategy

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) officially released its 5G Strategy to advance the development and deployment of fifth generation (5G) infrastructure that is secure and resilient.

CISA seeks to accomplish this through the strategy's five strategic initiatives: support policy and standards development by emphasizing security and resilience; expand situational awareness of 5G supply chain risks and promote security measures; partner with stakeholders (including SLTT) to strengthen and secure existing infrastructure to support future 5G deployments; encourage innovation in the 5G marketplace to foster trusted 5G vendors; and analyze potential 5G use cases and share information on risk management strategies.

View the [5G Strategy here](#) and the [5G Basics Infographic here](#).

COVID Money Tracker Published

The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget released a tracking tool to follow funding authorized by Congress, the Federal Reserve, and Administration in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to their data, so far \$414 billion (70 percent) of administrative support has been committed or disbursed, along with \$2.2 trillion (almost 60 percent) of legislative support and \$2.2 trillion (over 30 percent) of Federal Reserve support. State and local funding constitutes \$192 billion committed or disbursed out of \$217 billion allowed.

View the interactive [COVID money tracker here](#).

FEMA Amends HMA Regulations to Fit Current Agency Practice

FEMA is proposing to amend its Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) program regulations to reflect its current statutory authority and agency practice. These proposed rule changes include revising the FMA grant program regulations to incorporate changes made by amendments to the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (NFIA) and updating terms and definitions throughout the HMA and Mitigation Planning program regulations to better align with uniform administrative requirements that apply to all federal assistance.

You can view the full Federal Register post and submit comments through October 27, 2020 [at this link](#).

Other News from DC and Around the Country:

Washington Post: [Cities, States Fear They May Lose Critical FEMA Dollars for Coronavirus Response](#)
GovExec: [High-Ranking Democrat Launches Investigation Into USDA Pandemic Food Assistance Program](#)
Center for Public Integrity: [Disasters are Driving a Mental Health Crisis](#)
LA Times: [Pandemic Spreads Like Wildfire, and Fire is a Contagion Too](#)
NOLA: [15 Years After Katrina, New Orleans Levees Are In The Best Shape Ever. Experts Say It's Not Enough](#)

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