



August 7, 2020



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

No End in Sight

One Step Forward! In July, the House Appropriations Committee moved to complete work on a funding bill for DHS through FY21 (September 30, 2021). With victories included like an additional \$30 million for EMPG, the bill was full of good-news stories for emergency management and the Appropriations process. Shortly after the committee completed their work, DHS joined six other bills to form a "mini-bus" (HR 7617) and moved to the House floor for passage.

Two Steps Back! Remember that one friend that you'd invite to go out with everyone, but no one really loved having them around? So went the "night out" for HR 7617 a couple weeks later as DHS was unceremoniously ejected from the mini-bus-party-bus while the six others kept on going. Coupled with the deafening silence from the Senate, the Appropriations process for DHS finds itself once again hoping for a Continuing Resolution (CR) as the best-case scenario.

Will Opposites Attract? Talks over the latest COVID supplemental have been a tough slog. One lawmaker privy to the negotiations said "we can't even agree on what we agree on." Perhaps the most honest assessment came from Sen. John Kennedy (R-LA) when he told reporters "I'm telling people the truth - that this entire thing has been a very impressively large cluster. As bad as ... it is from the outside, they ought to see it from the inside ... just the mess that this is." Politico reported Wednesday that the only path forward for coming to a deal on another COVID supplemental and avoiding a shut-down of regular government operations would be to include a CR with the next relief package.

It's a long road to hoe regardless. According to reports, real offers and counter offers were exchanged on unemployment insurance, an eviction moratorium, and state and local funding. But there is no final deal on those items. Still other issues include elections, pensions, education, childcare, post office funding, broadband, SNAP benefits, renter/homeowner insurance, and testing. After a long series of meetings between Democratic leadership, White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, and Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin indicated the grand summation of progress on a deal has been...effectively none. In the (expected) event that further meetings today don't result in significant progress, the White House is making plans for executive orders

but any such executive action would have a much narrower reach than a relief package passed by Congress.

We have officially reached August Recess, but if a package is agreed to, it's expected that lawmakers who've returned to their home states will have 24 hours' notice to return for a vote.

In other news, Title 32 authorization for the National Guard was extended through the end of 2020 earlier this week. While undoubtedly critical for states' response to the pandemic, most states were informed that the current full federal funding will be cut to a 25 percent cost share later this month, in addition to losing funding for troops' equipment and supplies. Governors have spoken out against the changes and it remains to be seen whether the new directive will stick.

More News from the Nation's Capital...

FEMA BRIC NOFO Released

The day has finally arrived! The [Notice of Funding Opportunities](#) (NOFOs) for the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant program and the new Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) pre-disaster mitigation grant program have been released. This year there is \$660 million available for these two programs combined, with \$500 million of pre-disaster mitigation funding available through BRIC.

As laid out in the NOFO, the BRIC priorities are to incentivize:

- public infrastructure projects;
- projects that mitigate risk to one or more lifelines;
- projects that incorporate nature-based solutions; and
- the adoption and enforcement of modern building codes.

Expect a series of webinars starting August 18 to prepare everyone for the opening of the FMA and BRIC application period. This will include three NOFO overview webinars, a NOFO webinar for prospective tribal applicants, and two of common grant application errors and how to avoid them. A link to register will be available soon, and registration for the webinars will be required.

This summer FEMA hosted the five-part BRIC Summer Engagement Series, which brought FEMA Subject Matter Experts and partners together one day a week to discuss key elements of the newly developed BRIC program. These sessions were geared towards leaders in states, local communities, tribes and territories, as well as private sector entities, private non-profit organizations, and individuals interested in learning more about the grant program. [Watch the video recordings](#) and [download copies of the presentations](#) from the sessions, as they become available for additional information on BRIC.

View the [Hazard Mitigation Assistance NOFOs here](#).

NWS Webinar on Managing Operational Risk and Supply Chain in COVID-19

The National Weather Service (NWS) is hosting a second installment of their NWS Partner webinar series. The series will focus on Enterprise topics in relation to the adjustments and responses to the ongoing COVID pandemic. This next webinar, scheduled for August 11 at 2:00pm EDT, will focus on managing operational risk and the supply chain. Panelists are John Murphy, Chief Operating Officer, National Weather Service; Anthony Bush, Director, Civil Space and Weather, Raytheon; and Alicia Wasula, President, Shade Tree Meteorology. [Register for the webinar here](#).

Additional upcoming webinars will focus on [research and undergraduate learning](#) (August 18, 2:00pm EDT) and [themes and trends for the workforce](#) (August 25, 2:00pm EDT). The topics focused on during these webinars stem from conversations had during a partner webinar in May.

Provide Feedback on Mitigation Plan Review Guides

FEMA is updating both the State and Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Review Guides this year. These Plan Review Guides are the FEMA's official interpretation of Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Section 201.4-7, which outlines requirements for State and Local hazard mitigation plans.

The current policies are available to read on FEMA's website:

- [State Mitigation Plan Review Guide](#) (March 2015)
- [Local Mitigation Plan Review Guide](#) (October 2011) / [Guía de Revisión del Plan Local de Mitigación](#) (Octubre 2011)

FEMA has an online presentation providing a high-level overview of State and Local Hazard Mitigation Planning guidance, and it includes information on how you can provide feedback on existing policies. You can provide ideas and feedback on either guidance can send them to fema-mitplan-guide-updates@fema.dhs.gov through Friday, August 14, 2020.

House Committee Holds Hearing on 2020 Election Security

The House Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Innovation hosted a virtual hearing on ensuring the 2020 general election is secure, safe, and auditable.

Amid concerns of impacts caused by COVID-19 that may exacerbate election challenges for in-person voting, the hearing considered needs associated with expanded mail-in voting, misinformation, and funding.

Witnesses were David Levine, Elections Integrity Fellow, Alliance for Securing Democracy German Marshall Fund of the United States; Sylvia Albert, Director of Voting and Elections, Common Cause; Ms. Amber McReynolds, Chief Executive Officer, National Vote at Home Institute; and John Gilligan, President and Chief Executive Officer, Center for Internet Security, Inc., which is a regular partner of NEMA's in the area of cybersecurity.

Witnesses highlighted the need to support election infrastructure modifications due to COVID-19, the administration of additional mail-in voting, a lack of poll workers, and the need to collaborate with state and local election officials.

View the [webcast, witness list, and testimony here](#).

Other News from DC and Around the Country:

[NEMA List of Recently Released Federal Resources](#)

Route Fifty: [Seven States Band Together to Purchase Rapid-Result Covid Tests](#)

EE News: [Harris, Ocasio-Cortez Introduce Climate Equity Bill](#)

HS Today: [Devastating Beirut Port Blast Originated with Ammonium Nitrate Cargo, Says Government](#)

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