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## THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON: Fight for the Filibuster

We are well underway in the New Year and the Omicron spike is reaching new highs. We saw our first 1 million plus new case day, grocery store shelves are emptying again, and testing lines are looking like Black Friday lines (pre-COVID, of course). The Supreme Court blocked President Biden's vaccine and testing mandate for federal employees. Safe to say, everyone has their hands full as we as a nation grapple to contain and understand this new COVID-19 variant.

This week's focus on the Hill, however, circled around the filibuster and potential changes to the Senate rules by the majority Democrats. President Biden came out in full support of changing the rules in order to pass voting rights legislation, a high priority for the administration and Democratic leadership. A hiccup developed towards the end of the week with Senator Sinema (D-AZ) saying that she would not support the rule changes, leaving President Biden unsure if this agenda item will be completed.

Conversation in the House and Senate Appropriations Committee have begun surrounding an omnibus spending bill. It is early in the process, but there was some discourse around a yearlong continuing resolution and what impacts that would have on spending levels and earmarked projects.

### Hearings the Week of January 17, 2022

[Ensuring Equitable Delivery of Disaster Benefits to Vulnerable Communities and Peoples: An Examination of GAO's Findings of the CDBG Program](#)

House Committee on Financial Services  
Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 10:00 am

[Using Budget Principles to Prepare for Future Pandemics and Other Disasters](#)

House Rules Committee  
Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 10:00 am

[Securing Our Energy Infrastructure: Legislation To Enhance Pipeline Reliability](#)

House Committee on Energy & Commerce  
Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 10:00 am

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

### CHDS & Partners to Host Stunting the Surge COVID-19 Webinar

NEMA is cohosting a webinar with the Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS), along with other partners, on *Stunting the Surge: What Leaders Need to Know for 2022 Pandemic Planning*. The webinar is scheduled to be on January 25, 2022 and will highlight the latest updates on COVID-19's Omicron variant and discuss planning considerations for local and state leaders as they prepare their communities for 2022 and the next phase of Nation's pandemic response. Speakers include:

- Admiral Rachel L. Levine, MD, Assistant Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Barbara Mahon, MD, MPH, COVID-19 Emergency Response Incident Manager, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Dawn O'Connell, Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

If you are interested in attending, registration, speaker bios, and more information can be found on the [webinar's page](#).

### House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Hold Hearing on WRDA

On Wednesday, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held a full committee hearing to discuss the 2022 Water Resources Development Act. Michael Connor, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works and Scott Spellmon, Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of the Corps of Engineers, both testified in front of the committee on water resource projects around the country. In the hearing, it was mentioned that Civil Works is working on a new federal credit program to invest in safety projects of non-federal dams. Rep. Gonzalez-Colon (R-PR) heavily supports this program. Assistant Secretary Connor stated that the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) gives resources for non-federal dams, but they need to go through rule-making and the public process. He is hoping to finalize midway through the year to late fall.

Additionally, Rep. Johnson (D-TX) wanted to make a focus on hurricane prevention/mitigation rather than clean up. Assistant Secretary Connor explained that this was something outside the authority of Civil Works, but they are working within their authority to develop new models.

Generally, Chairwoman Napolitano (D-CA) asked about priorities, to which Connor said that WRDA priorities were on reports from last November, the stated FY22 priorities, enhanced resilience and environmental justice, helping disadvantaged communities, doing their part in the supply chain, and working with tribal communities.

The full hearing and written testimonies can be found on the [Committee website](#).

### FEMA Publishes More Data on New Flood Insurance Rating Methodology

On Tuesday, FEMA released additional information on the agency's new equitable flood insurance rate pricing methods. The new methodology, Risk Rating 2.0, now considers the cost to rebuild, a foundational aspect that ensures rates are equitable for all policyholders. Under the old system, policyholders with lower to moderate value homes with less flood risk subsidized the premiums of policyholders with higher valued homes and higher risk. Adding the cost to rebuild levels the playing field as all premiums now equitably reflect a single property's unique flood risk.

You can click [here](#) for more information on the new insurance rating price method.

### FEMA Announces Reinsurance Program to Manage Future Flood Risk in 2022

Last week, FEMA announced its 2022 traditional reinsurance placement for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), continuing its risk management practice against catastrophic flood losses. The amount, \$1.064 billion, will be available for the rest of the year through 28 private reinsurance companies. This reinsurance program will allow for costs over \$4 billion in a single flood event to be covered by FEMA. The agreement is structured to cover:

- 4.163% of losses between \$4 billion and \$6 billion.
- 26.565% of losses between \$6 billion and \$8 billion.
- 22.453% of losses between \$8 billion and \$10 billion.

Click [here](#) for the full press release.

### CISA, FBI, & NSA Release Cybersecurity Advisory on Russian Cyber Threats to U.S. Critical Infrastructure

On Tuesday, DHS released a new cybersecurity advisory on cybersecurity threats. The release, [Understanding and Mitigating Russian State-Sponsored Cyber Threats to U.S. Critical Infrastructure](#), advises a heightened awareness of the cybersecurity threat that Russian state-sponsored actors provide to critical infrastructure across the country. Additionally, the advisory provides an overview of Russian state-sponsored cyber operations; commonly observed tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs); detection actions; incident response guidance; and mitigations.

This overview is intended to help the cybersecurity community reduce the risk presented by these threats. To see the full advisory and get notifications on future advisories, go to CISA's [National Cyber Awareness System](#) website.

### DHS Announces Climate Change Professionals Program

In a press release on Wednesday, DHS announced a new Climate Change Professional Program which is aimed at recruiting recent graduates and current federal employees to support the Department's growing focus on adapting to climate change and improving resilience. This new program comes as a new activity born from DHS's Climate Change Action Group, founded last year.

This two-year program will be run by the DHS Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer and provide participants with hands-on opportunities to contribute to new initiatives that have the potential to help DHS adapt to climate change and improve resilience. Upon successful completion of the program, participants will receive a Climate Change Professional accreditation from the Association of Climate Change Officers and be eligible for permanent, full-time positions at DHS.

Interested applicants can view the first job postings for the Climate Change Professionals Program on the [DHS Hiring page](#).

*Other News from DC and Around the Country:*

Politico: [A Flood of Climate Aid is Coming from Washington. Will Those Who Need it Miss Out?](#)

MIT: [How Coastal Cities Can Build Climate Resilience as the Clock Ticks](#)

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