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January 20, 2023



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON: Raise the Roof!

We want to preface you now, prepare for a few months of ceiling talk – debt ceiling that is. With the new Congressional session underway, the next few months are starting to take shape. NEMA staff understands that the first contentious piece of negotiation will come in the form of the debt ceiling, and how it should be handled. Currently, both sides are claiming they will not budge on this, but someone has to blink eventually.

NEMA leadership is currently ironing out our 2023 legislative priorities as well. This document represents our benchmarks on Capitol Hill, and something we have been able to successfully achieve with the partnerships we have developed on the Hill. Just last session, NEMA was the following successes:

- Reviewed and summarized for membership every executive budget request, House and Senate appropriation bills, and final conference agreements;
- Provided expert witness testimony to four House and/or Senate committee hearings;
- Participated in a House roundtable on disaster housing;
- Reviewed and/or commented on 38 different pieces of draft or introduced legislation;
- Actively supported legislation such as bills raising the small project threshold, allowing for management cost rollover, requiring FEMA PA staff to be adequately cross-trained, create Community Disaster Resilience Zones, raising the cost-share on COVID declarations, and requiring the administration to award HMGP on COVID declarations; and
- Regularly join with other association such as the BuildStrong Coalition, IAEM, BCEM, ASFPM, International Code Council, U.S. Chamber, and others to move priorities.

We are excited to continue our lasting partnerships and forge new ones as NEMA looks to continue the successes of the 117th into the 118th.

Hearings the Week of January 23, 2023

No relevant hearings this week.

More News from the Nation's Capital...

House T&I Chairman Rep. Graves Announces Republican Committee Roster

On Tuesday, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Rep. Sam Graves (R – MO) announced which of his caucus colleagues would be representing on the Committee with him. The full list of members can be found in the [press release](#). It is important to note that, for State Directors with members from their state sitting on this committee, NEMA staff and leadership will be frequently calling on you for assistance if a representative from your state sits on a subcommittee within emergency management jurisdiction. Those subcommittees are likely to be formed the first week of February, so stay tuned!

FEMA to Begin to Accept Revolving Loan Fund Program Applications

Soon, FEMA will begin to accept applications for the Safeguarding Tomorrow Revolving Loan Fund program – which was born out of the STORM Act last year. FEMA plans to begin accepting applications beginning February 1, 2023 and have it open till April 28, 2023, so make sure to get your paperwork submitted. Loans will be available to help local governments satisfy non-federal cost share requirements under FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs, update building codes adoption and enforcement and make zoning and land use changes.

As a short notice, FEMA will be hosting a webinar for applicants of this program today, January 20, 2023, at 2pm ET. Interested parties can [register here](#). More information on the loan program can be found on the [FEMA website](#).

FEMA Releases Policy to Simplify PA Program to Support Rapid Recovery

Recently, FEMA released a policy that will simplify the Public Assistance (PA) program to help communities recover more quickly after Presidentially declared events. As the name implies, the PA Simplified Procedures Policy simplifies procedures and streamlines documentation requirements for applicants under the Public Assistance program. This policy release follows the August 2022 announcement to increase the threshold for PA small projects to \$1 million.

The policy simplifies procedures, reduces the administrative burdens, supports equitable delivery of assistance to underserved communities and enables communities to recover more quickly after Presidentially declared events. The policy defines FEMA's requirements for funding small projects, and it applies to all public assistance projects up to \$1 million from major disasters and emergencies declared on or after the date of issuance.

Webinar on Preventing Human Trafficking During Disasters This Month

The DHS Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, the DHS Office of Partnership and Engagement and FEMA are co-hosting a webinar to provide information and resources on adversely impacted communities after disasters and how to identify the risk factors that may lead to human trafficking.

The webinar will take place at 2 p.m. ET on January 26. Register [here](#) in advance to attend the webinar. Organizations featured to speak include:

All-Healers Mental Health Alliance.
University of Maryland School of Medicine.
Humanitarian Disaster Institute, Wheaton College.
San Jose State University.
U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

GAO Releases Cybersecurity Strategy Report

On Thursday, GAO released a on the difficulties in establishing comprehensive cybersecurity strategies. The report states that federal IT systems and our nation's critical infrastructure are at risk of attack from malicious actors, including those acting on behalf of other nations. Such attacks could result in serious harm to human safety, national security, the environment, and the economy. GAO recommends that the federal government should establish a comprehensive cybersecurity strategy, mitigate global supply chain risks, address the federal cybersecurity worker shortage, and ensure the security of emerging technologies.

To reach those ends, GAO has made 335 public recommendations in this area since 2010. Nearly 60% of those recommendations had not been implemented as of December 2022. This full report can be found [here](#).

Other News from DC and Around the Country:

HSToday Q&A: [CISA Infrastructure Security Leader Mussington on Recent Critical Infrastructure Threats](#)

Grist: [California's storms are almost over. Its reckoning with flood insurance is about to begin.](#)

HSToday (opinion): [COLUMN: Addressing the Homeland Security Threat from China](#)

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