



October 8, 2021



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON: Until Debt Do Us Part

With the passage of the continuing resolution (CR) last week, which maintains current funding levels through December 3, the spotlight turned to the next fiscal crisis: the debt ceiling. On September 28, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen announced that the country would default if there was no debt ceiling increase and created a fast-approaching deadline of October 18 for lawmakers to resolve the issue. Early Thursday morning, Senate leadership announced that they have reached an agreement to raise the debt ceiling by \$480 billion. It's no accident this amount coincides with the expiring CR. The Senate proceeded to vote on the increase and the House is due to follow suit sometime next week.

With one fiscal crisis temporarily resolved, Congress will again focus on the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure and \$3.5 trillion "Build Back Better" spending packages. Debate continues over the size and timing of these packages, and despite House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) imposing an October 31 deadline, progress may not be seen until it's once again time to also discuss the expiring CR.

Hearings the Week of October 4, 2021

[Domestic Violent Extremist Groups and the Recruitment of Veterans](#)

House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Wednesday, October 13, 2021 at 10:00am ET

[Beyond I. Robot: Ethics, Artificial Intelligence, and the Digital Age](#)

Task Force on Artificial Intelligence
Wednesday, October 13, 2021 at 12:00pm ET

[The Future of Forecasting: Building a Weather-Ready Nation on All Fronts](#)

House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Thursday, October 14, 2021 at 11:00am ET

More News from the Nation's Capital...

House Committee on Homeland Security Hold Subcommittee Hearing on Emergency Communication

On Thursday, the House Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery held a hearing analyzing the effects the sub-optimal emergency communication network had on the September 11 terrorist attacks and other major disasters in the last 20 years. Witnesses included members of local Sheriff offices and Chris Rodriguez, Director of the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency in Washington D.C. Highlights of the hearing included a focus on continued investment in the emergency communication infrastructure, with goals of expanding and upgrading 9-1-1 systems to the Next Generation 9-1-1 software and more reliable network coverage. These investments, as discussed, will work towards closing the inequality of emergency communication services for more rural areas of the country. Another focus of the hearing was the important role that FirstNet plays in the advancement of emergency communication and allowing reliable interoperable communication across first responders when handling disasters.

You can watch the full hearing, as well as access the Chairs' opening statements, [here](#).

FirstNet Authority Public Safety Team Offers Tips for Emergency Management Use of FirstNet

Recently, the First Responders Network Authority's Emergency Management Community of Practice released their [Emergency Management Resource Guide](#) with the intent to be a resource for FirstNet users for quick reference in a mobile environment. The guide provides an overview of FirstNet features, functions, and capabilities, including FirstNet network deployables, FirstNet apps and devices, and the Uplift Request Tool. It also highlights the FirstNet Authority's engagement programs, which help public safety entities with pre-planning, training and exercises, and post-incident reviews. The guide helps emergency managers and other public safety officials learn how to integrate broadband into daily operations to enhance emergency response and preparedness.

To access this resource and learn more about FirstNet for emergency management and how the FirstNet Authority can support your agency, visit their site [here](#).

House Homeland Security Committee Introduces Cyber Incident Reporting Legislation

Last Friday, the House Committee on Homeland Security introduced the Cyber Incident Reporting for Critical Infrastructure Act of 2021. The language was also included as an amendment to the House version of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2022. This bipartisan legislation would require the DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) to establish requirements and procedures for covered critical infrastructure owners and operators to report covered cybersecurity incidents to a new Cyber Incident Review Office, to be established within CISA.

The text of the legislation can be found [here](#), and a summary of the amendment can be found [here](#).

The full press release by the House Committee on Homeland Security can be found [here](#).

Secretary Mayorkas Announces Plans to Require Cybersecurity Chiefs for Air and Rail Travel

On Wednesday, Reuters reported that DHS Secretary Mayorkas announced the Transportation Security Administration will introduce regulations that compel the most important U.S. railroad and airport operators to improve their cybersecurity procedures. The upcoming changes will make it mandatory for "higher-risk" rail transit companies and "critical" U.S. airport and aircraft operators to do three things: name a chief cyber official, disclose hacks to the government and draft recovery plans for if an attack were to occur. The article states these regulations will go into effect before the end of 2021.

You can read the full article [here](#).

Other News from DC and Around the Country:

Politico: [Frank Collins to Step Down as NIH Director by Years' End](#)
US News: [Helping Hospitals Get Disaster-Ready](#)

nemaweb.org



Copyright NEMA 2021. All rights reserved.