



December 17, 2021



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON: That is a Next Year Problem

Congress is sharing the festive cheer and provided their annual gift to the military department this week. After a weeklong negotiation, the Senate has finally passed the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) authorizing over \$768 billion in spending and policy for the Pentagon. This is \$25 billion more than President Biden requested in his proposed budget, though he is still expected to sign the legislation.

The government will continue its trend of avoiding default as Congress passed on Wednesday, and President Biden signed on Thursday, legislation that increases the country's debt limit by \$2.5 trillion. This increase is estimated to keep the checkbooks in line and punt the issue till after 2022 midterm elections.

While these pieces of legislations check off priorities from the Congressional checklist, there is still no agreement or action on the major aspects of the reconciliation package (aka, "Build Back Better") - an issue that Senate leadership appear to be conceding to next year.

This week CISA released two documents, one expresses concerns on [Critical Infrastructure worker and National Critical Function Performance](#) and the second on [cognitive decline among caregivers](#).

This will be our last edition of the Ready Nation – Policy of 2021. Us at NEMA want to wish you a safe and joyful holiday season and a happy New Year as we look to the start of 2022!

Hearings the Week of December 20, 2021

Congress is out of session until January 3, 2022.

More News from the Nation's Capital...

Senate Committee Holds Hearing on Community Development Block Grant

On Wednesday, the Senate Committee on Banking held a hearing on the Community Development Block Grant- Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program. The hearing was a discussion on [S. 2471](#), which would permanently authorize the CDBG-DR program which is vital in providing aid to people impacted by disaster. Of the witnesses testifying before the Committee was past NEMA President Mike Sprayberry. Discussion in the meeting surrounded how the program can reduce red tape and delays in providing aid to who need it most. The Committee also discussed how permanent authorization would provide some predictability to states when considering funding opportunities after disasters. There was some concern on continuing to fund a program that had a very similar goal and responsibility as FEMA as well as fraud within the program.

To watch the entire hearing, please check out the Senate Committee on Banking [website](#).

GAO Release Report on Actions Needed to Identify and Address Potential Recovery Barriers

On Wednesday, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report on actions that need to be taken to reduce barriers to recovery from disasters. Members of Congress asked GAO to report on the impact of federal disaster recovery programs on various societal groups. GAO found that there is a lack of available data on equitable recovery has made it difficult to draw complete conclusions about the direct impact of Federal programs on recovery outcomes.

The GAO found that disaster recovery programs may help some communities more than others. For example, small towns and rural communities may lack the resources for full disaster recovery services compared to cities with significant tax revenue. Similarly, tribal nations may not have the resources to stand up and maintain an emergency management department.

The GAO has recommended the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Small Business Administration (SBA) lead an interagency effort to collect and analyze this much-need data and implement routine processes to address participation barriers and reduce disparate outcomes.

To read the full report, click [here](#). For highlights of the report click [here](#).

CISA Holds Inaugural Meeting of New Cybersecurity Advisory Committee

Last week, CISA held its first meeting for newly appointed members of the Agency's Cybersecurity Advisory Committee. Included in these new members was NEMA's own Alicia Tate-Nadeau (IL). Members discussed Committee objectives and initiatives, received a classified threat briefing, elected Committee leadership, and established subcommittees to focus on key objectives. The five subcommittees were on:

- Transforming the Cyber Workforce
- Turning the Corner on Cyber Hygiene
- Igniting the Hacker Community
- Protecting Critical Infrastructure from Mis- Dis- and Mal-information
- Building Resilience and Reducing Systemic Risk to Critical Infrastructure

CISA Director Jen Easterly additionally asked for the establishment of a CIO/CISO council to ensure CISA gains the insight of information security officers across public and private organizations.

For further information on the first meeting, the Committee, and the subcommittees, you can find the original press release [here](#) and additional information on CISA's [website](#).

DHS Leaders, National Cyber Director Meet with Silicon Valley Leaders on Cybersecurity Priorities

Secretary of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro N. Mayorkas, National Cyber Director Chris Inglis, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Director Jen Easterly, and DHS Under Secretary for Policy Rob Silvers met Monday with industry leaders in technology, business, and cybersecurity to discuss how the federal government and the private sector can better and more proactively partner to tackle the most pressing cybersecurity challenges.

These discussions included strengthening operational collaboration and defining metrics of success. The discussion, which was rooted in a comprehensive analysis of the evolving threat environment, focused on what government and industry can do together to build global cybersecurity resilience.

FEMA Now Accepting Abstracts for 2022 Workshop

FEMA is now accepting abstracts for its next annual hazard mitigation partners workshop, "Building Whole Community Resilience: Partners, Capability and Capacity." The workshop will focus on building mitigation champions, driving community resiliency, providing technical assistance for grant programs and supporting overall mitigation. Specific topic areas for discussion at the workshop include: Future conditions, including climate change and adaptation. Nature based solutions. Equity in hazard mitigation planning and projects. Building codes and standards. Capacity and capability building.

To submit an abstract for consideration: Email the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance Division, fema-2022hmworkshop@fema.dhs.gov. In the subject line, put, "2022 HM Partners Workshop Abstract Submission."

Abstracts may be submitted until Friday, January 14, 2022. FEMA will host the workshop May 2-5. The workshop offers both Hazard Mitigation Assistance and Floodplain Management tracks.

Other News from DC and Around the Country:

The Verge: [FCC Proposes New Rules to Make Emergency Alerts More Accessible for People Hard of Hearing](#)

Governing (Opinion): [A Year to Focus on 3 Crucial Cybersecurity Issues](#)

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