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## THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON: Off to a Slow Start

We are about a month and a half in to the new congressional session and most who have been watching would say that it has been a sluggish legislative start. With the debt ceiling debate, split chambers, and seemingly little room for compromise, we are likely watching the normal for the next few months. NEMA staff is hopeful that our legislative priorities stand positive outlooks at progressing through the process as they did last session.

NEMA Staff and state directors met this week with House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee staff this week to continue an ongoing discussion on some of NEMA's legislative priorities. Specifically, the conversation revolved around reforms to Individual Assistance, a universal disaster application, and the roll over of management costs from one disaster to the next. These issues may sound familiar as they were passed by one chamber last session, but did not have enough time to complete the process before the session ended.

### Hearings the Week of February 20, 2023

No hearings this week, district work period.

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

### Wildland Fire Commission Releases Strategy to Meet Aerial Firefighting Needs

On Tuesday, The Biden administration's Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission released a [report](#), outlining a strategy to meet aerial firefighting equipment needs through 2030. As climate change fuels longer and more intense wildfire seasons, aerial assets bring unique response capabilities to wildland fire suppression. The report reexamines existing approaches to aviation fleet procurement, mobilization, composition and quantity to set aviation management on a new trajectory for the next decade and beyond.

The Commission, created by President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and announced in December 2021, was charged with making recommendations to improve federal policies related to the mitigation, suppression and management of wildland fires in the United States, and the rehabilitation of land in the United States devastated by wildland fires.

The Commission's work builds on existing interagency federal efforts, such as the Wildland Fire Leadership Council and the White House Wildfire Resilience Interagency Working Group, and will continue to pursue an all-of-government approach to wildfire risk reduction and resilience.

### COVID-19 Incident Period Ends May 11

Last week, FEMA announced that all COVID-19 incident periods will close on May 11. This follows the Biden-Harris Administration's determination regarding the end of the Public Health Emergency and National Emergency declarations.

FEMA published a [Federal Register Notice](#) providing a 90-day advance notice to government partners and stakeholders that eligibility of work and reimbursable costs will end on May 11.

### National Cyber Director Chris Inglis Steps Down

This week, the National Cyber Director Chris Inglis announced he was stepping down from his role in the Office of the National Cyber Director. Inglis was appointed by President Biden back in April 2021 when the office was first stood up. This announcement comes while we wait for the release of the Office's national cyber strategy.

More information on this announcement can be found [here](#).

### New Data Gives NOAA More Extensive Picture of Global Climate

Recently, NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI) updated its current [global climate dataset](#) to provide more information about the Earth's climate, while also extending the planet's observed temperature record by 30 years.

The update to NCEI's current NOAA Global Temperature dataset — one of the most visible and widely used datasets to assess global climate — will make its debut in the upcoming January 2023 global climate report to be released on February 14, 2023. This new global climate dataset will expand upon and replace the current one that has been used since 2019.

There are two major additions in this update:

- More data for the Arctic region are included, as well as new scientific methods for monitoring climate in other locations with limited climate data.
- Using improved methodology to analyze NCEI's archival land and ocean observations, 30 more years will be added to the world's current climate record, which will now extend to 1850.

*Other News from DC and Around the Country:*

HSToday: [Breakthrough Alert Messaging for a Mobile Public](#)

NPR: [The earthquake in Turkey and Syria offers lessons and reminders for disaster response](#)

Route Fifty: [Federal Grant Requirements Make it Hard for Rural Communities to Prepare for Climate Change](#)

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