



a collaborative environment to drive policy, innovate and advance emergency management

March 26, 2021



### THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

#### Spring Has Sprung

Spring has officially sprung in Washington, D.C. this week with the first cherry blossoms making their appearance around the city (peak bloom is expected early next week). It is with the optimism of a new season that the Biden administration is gearing up to announce a \$3-4 trillion infrastructure package next week. The package is expected to be split into two parts, with the first focusing on traditional infrastructure projects and the second focusing more on other domestic priorities (taking the view that human capital is part of infrastructure). The Biden administration is also expected to release their "skinny budget" proposal for FY2022 next week, with topline numbers for defense and domestic discretionary spending.

In the meantime, the Senate is now out of session until April 9. This week Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) outlined the Senate's spring and summer agenda, which is expected to focus on civil and voting rights, health and gun safety, and economic recovery. It is not expected that these efforts will pass with the 60 votes required, but are likely to tee up additional conversations about altering or nixing the filibuster.

NEMA's first virtual learning lab series concluded this week - thank you to our sponsors for hosting such great sessions and our participants for all their thoughtful engagement and discussion throughout the series. If you missed some sessions or would like to go back and re-listen, all of the webinars will be posted on our YouTube channel, [NEMAForyou](#), soon.

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

#### Nomination Hearing Held for FEMA Administrator-Designate Deanne Criswell

In topline news for emergency management this week, FEMA Administrator-designate Deanne Criswell underwent her confirmation hearing with the Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs (HSGAC). The hearing was collegial, with senators regularly referencing previous discussions they'd had with her privately. Senators were particularly focused on the importance of mitigation, ensuring that preparedness grant program priorities evolve with the threat picture, sustainable funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP), reducing FEMA's complexity, and COVID-19 vaccination. NEMA provided a letter of support for her nomination, [available here](#).

If and when her nomination is referred to the full Senate for consideration, there is no timeline yet as to when she would be officially confirmed. [View the hearing and read witness testimony here](#).

#### FEMA COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Policy Finalized

FEMA announced the policy for financial assistance for funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020 for deaths related to COVID-19 to help ease some of the financial stress caused by the pandemic. The assistance is limited to a maximum financial amount of \$9,000 per funeral and a maximum of \$35,500 per application (one applicant can apply for multiple deceased individuals). In April a dedicated 800 number will be established to assist individuals pursuing an application.

[The full policy is available here](#).

#### CHDS Webinar Series - Frameworks for Governing: 2021 and Beyond

The Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS), in partnership with NEMA, ASTHO, and IAEM, is hosting a two-part webinar series on how government roles, responsibilities, and authorities have evolved in recent years and what to expect in the near future.

Whose Pandemic is it Anyway? Response to the Next Public Health Crisis  
Wednesday, March 31, 2:00pm ET

Blurred Lines: Civil Protest, Uncivil Unrest and Government Response  
Wednesday, April 14, 2:00pm ET

[Register for one or both sessions here](#).

#### FEMA OFIA Releases Five Years of Advocacy Report

FEMA released the Five Years of Advocacy Report from the Office of the Flood Insurance Advocate (OFIA), intended to provide transparency and support ongoing improvements to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The report highlights made on installment plan options, condominium coverage, unnumbered A zones, hazard mitigation assistance grant qualification, and lender requirements.

[Read the report here](#).

*Other News from DC and Around the Country:*

E&E News: [FEMA Disaster-Mitigation Program Attracts Record Demand](#)  
Homeland Security Today: [Using CHIRP to Detect Post-Compromise Threat Activity in On-Premises Environments](#)  
GovTech: [COVID-19: After a Year of Study, Misinformation Persists](#)

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