



June 25, 2021



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

Happy Infrastructure Week

The concept of “infrastructure week” has been a running joke around Washington for the past several years, given that something inevitably seemed to go wrong for the Administration that week or Congressional negotiations would fall apart.

This week, though, has been a successful one for infrastructure. President Biden has agreed to the bipartisan framework discussed in last week’s *Ready Nation: Policy*. That said, the President has also pledged not to sign the legislation if a package related to the national social safety net is not passed. Given Republican wariness surrounding additional spending on these priorities, the road to be tread is still full of potholes (that would hopefully be metaphorically fixed by some infrastructure spending!).

If you need a refresher on the framework, more [information is available here](#). NEMA is keeping an eye on what \$47.2 billion in “resiliency” spending will entail. The legislative text will likely be released following the two-week Fourth of July recess.

Please note – Ready Nation: Policy will not be sent out next week. Please enjoy the Fourth of July holiday safely and without overheating! Barring any significant updates, you can expect to see us in your inboxes again July 9.

Hearings the Week of June 28, 2021

[Examining FEMA's Readiness to Meet its Mission](#)

House Committee on Homeland Security
Tuesday, June 29, 9:30am ET

[The State of Federal Wildland Fire Science: Examining Opportunities for Further Research & Coordination](#)

House Committee on Science, Space, & Technology
Tuesday, June 29, 10:00am ET

More News from the Nation's Capital...

Administrator Criswell Testifies on FEMA Priorities for FY22 and Beyond

FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell testified before Congress for the first time since her nomination process this week. She testified before the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee’s Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management. The focus of the hearing was *FEMA’s Priorities for FY22 and Beyond: Coordinating Mission, Vision, and Budget*. FEMA’s priorities for the coming year are supporting its workforce and its readiness (including a 14 percent increase in Stafford Act employees), integrating equity into all aspects of the agency’s work, and addressing climate change through risk reduction (including \$1 billion for BRIC).

Representatives were concerned about the level of rejection rates for Individual Assistance applicants but expressed a desire to support FEMA’s budget requests to ensure it is able to effectively carry out its mission. [Watch the hearing and read Administrator Criswell’s testimony here](#).

The Administrator will testify before House Homeland Security on Tuesday regarding FEMA’s mission readiness.

House Appropriations Releases Community Project Funding List

Earlier this year the Appropriations Committees are worked through an agreement on restoring earmarks (now being dubbed “Community Project Funding.”). This rebirth of the old earmark process will come with transparency protections, including publicly posting all projects that any member requests. This week the House Appropriations Committee released the list of projects by subcommittee that will be included in the FY22 appropriations bills. This does not mean that any specific project will survive the appropriations process, just that it has been included in the bills at this time.

The list of included is available by subcommittee and if you scroll farther down the page all projects requested are available by Member of Congress. [View here](#).

Batten Down the Hatches, a Continuing Resolution is Expected

Although it’s only June and the House Appropriations Committee has markups for FY22 appropriations on its agenda, the Senate’s ranking member on Appropriations, Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL), has already publicly voiced his expectations that December will be spent (as usual) trying to fund the government. Any markups on FY22 appropriations with forward momentum will need accompanying deals on military and non-defense spending on the Senate side. At the present time, Senators are not expecting the House’s military spending proposals to be sufficient for any kind of deal. Lawmakers are also still assessing the Administration’s budget that came out last month and talks on these issues have barely begun.

Looks like it’s not even fall, and Appropriations’ own Punxsutawney Phil is predicting a long winter. See [more from Politico here](#).

Other News from DC and Around the Country:

GovExec: [FEMA Seeks More Staff as it Rests Beleaguered Employees Ahead of Busy Season](#)

Washington Post: [FEMA Pressed on Historically High Rejection Rates for Disaster Survivors](#)

New York Times: [Wildfires Threaten Urban Water Supplies, Long After the Flames are Out](#)

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