



August 19, 2022



## THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON: The Doldrums of Recess

In the wake of Senate HSGAC mark-up earlier this month, all legislatively focused emergency management eyes turned to H.R. 5689, Resilient America. Among other things, the bill increases the BRIC set-aside from six percent to nine percent, creates a carve-out for building code enforcement, makes allowances for non-profit organizations within BRIC, and a couple allowances for wildfires. Given concerns by states about even more-stringent building code language, NEMA spent this week actively negotiating with other stakeholders to chart a path forward. The bill's future is suspect given some other dynamics, but we will continue pressing on.

As August Recess drags on, staff is clearly looking toward precious few legislative days between now and the mid-terms and end of the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress. It's been a busy couple years to say the least! Throughout the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress (2021-22), NEMA has:

- Reviewed and summarized for membership every Presidential Budget request, House and Senate Appropriations bills, and final conference agreements.
- Provided expert witness testimony to **four** House and/or Senate committee hearings on issues such as mitigation and resilience, the state of national preparedness, wildfires, and general recommendations to FEMA.
- Participated in a House roundtable on disaster housing.
- Reviewed and/or commented on **38** different pieces of draft or introduced legislation
- Actively supported legislation such as bills raising the small project threshold, allowing for management cost rollover, requiring FEMA PA staff to be adequately cross-trained, create Community Disaster Resilience Zones, raising the cost-share on COVID declarations, and requiring the administration to award HMGP on COVID declarations.
- Regularly join with other associations such as the BuildStrong Coalition, IAEM, BCEM, ASFPM, International Code Council, U.S. Chamber, and others to move priorities.

We'll continue on a few remaining priorities between now and December with the hope of putting a few more checks in the "win" column!

### Hearings the Week of August 22, 2022

No hearings.

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

#### FEMA Announces Office of Disability Integration and Coordination Director

This week, Sherman Gillums, Jr. was appointed as the Director of FEMA's Office of Disability Integration and Coordination. The office serves to ensure the agency's commitment to equity and inclusion of people with disabilities before, during and after disasters. In his role, Gillums will provide program and policy guidance to the administrator while leading the workforce in supporting equitable access of programs and services for people with disabilities.

Gillums most recently served as chief strategy and operations officer with the National Alliance on Mental Illness. He oversaw the organization's efforts to provide timely access to mental healthcare for underserved communities and foster an understanding of mental illness. Gillums also served in leadership positions with the Paralyzed Veterans and AMVETS, two of the nation's largest congressionally chartered veteran's service organizations.

#### OIG Finds Need to Increase Cybersecurity Information Sharing

On Wednesday, DHS OIG released a report, *Additional Progress Needed to Improve Information Sharing under the Cybersecurity Act of 2015*, which identified information and data sharing shortcomings under the Act and provided recommendations. The report reviews CISA's progress on meeting the requirements on Federal Government actions to share cyber threat information for 2019 and 2020 – which is required by law every 2 years.

The report made four recommendations to CISA – complete system upgrades, hire needed staff, encourage compliance with information sharing agreements and develop a formal reporting process with quality controls. The Agency concurred with all four recommendations. The full report can be found [here](#).

#### FEMA Release First Ever National Tribal Strategy

On Thursday, FEMA released their first ever National Tribal Strategy in order to better address its responsibilities to federally recognized tribal nations when responding to and preparing for disasters affecting tribal lands.

Through this new strategy, FEMA will initiate a national study on tribal emergency management capacity and capabilities, develop a comprehensive FEMA Guide of programs, develop tribal-specific technical assistance resources, regularly convene an annual meeting of national and regional tribal liaisons and expand training opportunities for tribal nations, and other related objectives.

The full strategy and press release can be found on the [FEMA website](#).

#### Droughts Hit Majority of the Country Hard

This past week has seen the U.S. Drought Monitor increase its drought level of the northeast to extreme drought – highlighting the severity of this dry season across the country as a whole. Large part of the Southwest and West are seeing extreme and exceptional drought, having severe impacts on those regions.

The U.S. Drought Monitor provides interactive tools and updates on drought conditions across the country and territories – which can be found [here](#).

#### DHS Announce FY22 Preparedness Grant Allocations

On Wednesday, DHS announced their allocations of \$550 million for seven Fiscal Year 2022 competitive preparedness grant programs. These allocations, together with the almost \$1.5 billion in non-competitive grant funding announced earlier this year, total more than \$2 billion in FY 2022 to help prepare our nation against man-made threats and natural disasters. The grant programs provide funding to state, local, tribal and sustain territorial governments, nonprofit agencies and the private sector to build and sustain capabilities to prevent, protect against, respond to and recover from acts of terrorism and other disasters.

The full press release and allocations can be found [here](#).

*Other News from DC and Around the Country:*

CNN: ['We thought we were safe': Kentucky Disaster Shows How US is Ill-Prepared and Under-Insured for Devastating Floods](#)

HSToday: [Former FEMA Administrator Pete Gaynor Discusses Building a More Resilient Nation](#)

Government Technology: [Women, Girls Recruited for Emergency Management Program](#)

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