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April 28, 2023



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON: Dude, Where's my Supp?

Remember the lead-up to the big high school dance? Waiting for just the right time to ask that special someone to go with you? As experience since taught us, you'd best get to asking Tammy quick, or you run the risk of that kid from Geometry (George!) swooping in and asking her out and she says "yes" before you even get the chance!?

Not that any bitterness remains of that high school experience, but a similar situation is playing out in the halls of Congress these days. Rumored to be released last week, the administration has still not submitted an estimated \$18 billion supplemental request to refill the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF). If they're waiting for debt ceiling talks to progress, Geometry George is waiting in the wings to wreak havoc.

This week, four House Republicans joined the entirety of the Democratic Caucus in voting against the GOP leadership's "Limit, Save, Grow Act" debt ceiling deal. It wasn't enough to scuttle the bill but signaled troubled waters ahead for any increase of the debt ceiling. Overall, the GOP position remains one of reducing spending levels to 2022 levels and rescinding unobligated funds appropriated during COVID. With the White House and Democrats remaining united on a "clean" increase to the debt ceiling, there can be no easy solution. Mix in the weakening DRF, and DC seems to be making that summertime fiscal cliff an even bigger drop.

Hopefully, this will soon join the fate of those high school traumas, be over soon, and we'll all be better for it in the end. But in the meantime, it's bound to be messy and make for several awkward interactions at our lockers....I mean, negotiating tables.

Hearings the Week of April 24, 2023

[Reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program](#)

Senate Committee on Banking
Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at 10:00am ET

[Improving Access to Federal Grants for Underserved Communities](#)

Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at 10:00am ET

More News from the Nation's Capital...

NEMA Leadership Meets with FEMA on COVID Supplies Disposition

Yesterday, NEMA leadership met with FEMA officials to discuss the development of frequently asked questions on COVID Supplies Disposition. FEMA is still working on the document and looking for resolution to some issues, particularly those with 2CFR implications. They seem to remain aware of the value in this document being timely and the May 11 end of the incident period looms.

Early indications in the process point to FEMA trying to remain as flexible as possible on use and tracking of supplies. NEMA leadership stressed the importance of eligibility so long as the purchase was reasonable and appropriate and shying away for states and applicants to track the details of every purchase. Additionally, real property remains an area that has 2 CFR implications that FEMA is trying to work around, but that will likely take longer to address than the rest of the issue areas. Overall, FEMA seems poised to stress flexibility, understanding, and streamlining the close-out process, all of which NEMA leadership appreciated.

NOFO for Regions Impacted by Natural Disasters

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is now accepting applications through the [FY2023 Disaster Supplemental Funding Notice of Funding Opportunity](#). The awards are designed to support those regions impacted by Hurricanes Ian and Fiona, wildfires, flooding and other natural disasters. The awards made under this NOFO are designed to address economic challenges in those areas where a Presidential declaration of a major disaster has been issued. Funding will help communities devise and implement long-term economic recovery strategies through a variety of construction and non-construction projects. Eligible applicants include Tribal nations, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities, district organizations of an [Economic Development District](#) (EDD), and state, county or city subdivisions engaged in economic or infrastructure activities. Individuals and for-profit entities are not eligible for funding under this NOFO. For more information, visit EDA's [Disaster Recovery Program](#).

DHS Announces Effort to Tackle Artificial Intelligence

During his "State of Homeland Security Address" last week, DHS Secretary Mayorkas announced the creation of a task force to tackle issues related to artificial intelligence. The Task Force will drive specific applications of AI to advance critical homeland security missions including:

- Integrate AI into our efforts to enhance the integrity of our supply chains and the broader trade environment. We will seek to deploy AI to more ably screen cargo, identify the importation of goods produced with forced labor, and manage risk;
- Leverage AI to counter the flow of fentanyl into the United States. We will explore using this technology to better detect fentanyl shipments, identify and interdict the flow of precursor chemicals around the world, and target for disruption key nodes in the criminal networks;
- Apply AI to digital forensic tools to help identify, locate, and rescue victims of online child sexual exploitation and abuse, and to identify and apprehend the perpetrators of this heinous crime; and
- Working with partners in government, industry, and academia, assess the impact of AI on our ability to secure critical infrastructure.

The Task Force is due to report to Mayorkas regularly on its work and AI efforts across the Department. Within 60 days, the group will deliver a concept of operations and milestones for advancing the four priority initiatives outlined above.

Other News from DC and Around the Country:

The Hill: [Bringing Climate Risk Home, One Property at a Time](#)

The Hill (opinion): [Climate Change is a Growing Threat to Household Financial Security](#)

Roll Call: [Promise or Peril? AI May Offer Both to Congressional Staffers](#)

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