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## THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON: The Final Push

With the smolder from the fireworks dwindling, the past two weeks in D.C. have been a flurry of activity, all with an eye toward getting enough work done to justify a month off. No, not the NEMA-DC staff, but rather the Members of Congress and their staffs. Just a few days remain in the valuable legislative days of July during which time Congress has been frantically pushing Appropriations bills, finalizing the National Defense Authorization Act, and fighting back the "senior-itis" of August Recess.

The most entertaining action has come out of the House where despite promising movement on Appropriations bills, disagreement abounds over final spending limits and who will agree to what. For example, the House Freedom Caucus has agreed to move forward with the FY 24 Agriculture and Military Construction Appropriations bills next week. The caucus was promised, however, cuts to get the topline allocation to \$1.47T for all bills without rescissions and accounting gimmicks. Most prognosticators do not see this as being possible without slashing foreign food aid programs and military construction projects.

Furthermore, recent reports have indicated that there is a battle brewing among House Republicans over supporting a Continuing Resolution or a government shutdown. News outlets reported this week that appropriators are in denial of a shutdown but it's on the horizon. House Approps Chair Kay Granger (R--TX) has insisted there will not be a shutdown. But there are members of the committee that are not backing off and this is creating unrest.

Finally, questions abound about funding for the Disaster Relief Fund. The tactic this week seems to be, "the administration isn't asking for it, so we're not doing anything." This has led to the consummate DC conundrum of "is someone an evil genius with a perfect plan, or bungling their way to try and skate by the deadline?" It's interesting how often that question is raised, but with dwindling DRF funds, ongoing flooding in Vermont, and Congress prepping to leave town for a month, this is a dangerous game of chicken.

### Hearings Next Week

Wednesday, July 26

9:30am; Senate Budget

[Examining the Fiscal Impacts of Climate Change](#)

10:00am; House Judiciary

[Oversight of the Department of Homeland Security](#)

11:00am; Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

[Examine Governing AI Through Acquisition and Procurement](#)

2:00pm; House Homeland Security

[The Real Cost of an Open Border: How Americans are Paying the Price](#)

Thursday, July 27

2:00pm; House Select Committee on the Coronavirus Pandemic

[Because I Said So: Examining the Science & Impact of Vaccine Mandates](#)

More News from the Nation's Capital...

### FEMA SEEKS NOMINEES FOR NAC SUBCOMMITTEES

FEMA recently published in the Federal Register two requests for nominations to the National Advisory Council. These are not permanent positions, but rather temporary subcommittee assignments. If you are interested, the notice, additional information, and requirements for serving can be found at the following links:

- [Subcommittee on Animal Wellness](#)
- [Subcommittee on Preliminary Damage Assessments](#)

### FEMA SEEKS FEEDBACK ON BRIC

FEMA recently announced an opportunity for stakeholders to share their thoughts and experiences with following the initial launch of BRIC. This BRIC 2023 Stakeholder Engagement effort builds on the Stakeholder Feedback Summary in March 2020 that helped inform the design of the current program. FEMA's goal is to learn from stakeholders what works well and where improvements are needed to help reduce barriers for access to BRIC funding for state, local, tribal and territorial governments.

This effort aims to identify successes and opportunities for reducing barriers to access BRIC funding for state, local, tribal and territorial partners. There are multiple ways that stakeholder feedback will be collected. The deadline for all submissions is August 16, 2023. FEMA will conduct an in-depth analysis of all feedback received and publish a summary report with the findings in 2024. FEMA developed a new survey that will help streamline the collection of a range of perspectives from stakeholders. The survey asks participants about their experiences with all aspects of the BRIC grant program — from project development to submitting grant applications — to help enable FEMA to better meet stakeholder needs in the future. The survey covers a wide range of topics related to the application process, including direct technical assistance; capability and capacity building; risk reduction; partnership opportunities; and equitable outcomes. Responses are anonymous. The survey tool can be found [here](#).

### SCIENCE FOUNDATION SEEKS STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The U.S. National Science Foundation continues to seek public input in response to a Request for Information to gather insights for the development of an investment roadmap for its Directorate for Technology, Innovation and Partnerships (TIP) in accordance with the "CHIPS and Science Act" of 2022. NSF seeks feedback from individuals and organizations across all sectors — industry, academia, nonprofits, government, venture capital, civil society and others — on prioritizing and focusing TIP investments to advance U.S. technological competitiveness and address societal and economic needs as well as workforce gaps through use-inspired and translational research, public and private partnerships, and crosscutting investments. The comment period will remain open until July 27, 2023. Comments received will help inform the development of a strategic roadmap for the TIP directorate. Share Your Input [here](#).

Critical technology focus areas include:

- Artificial intelligence, machine learning, autonomy and related advances.
- High-performance computing, semiconductors, and advanced computer hardware and software.
- Quantum information science and technology.
- Robotics, automation and advanced manufacturing.
- Natural and anthropogenic disaster prevention or mitigation.
- Advanced communications technology and immersive technology.
- Biotechnology, medical technology, genomics and synthetic biology.
- Data storage, data management, distributed ledger technologies and cybersecurity, including biometrics.
- Advanced energy and industrial efficiency technologies, such as batteries and advanced nuclear technologies, including but not limited to for the purposes of electric generation.
- Advanced materials science, including composite 2D materials, other next-generation materials and related manufacturing technologies.

Societal, national and geostrategic challenge areas include:

- U.S. national security.
- U.S. manufacturing and industrial productivity.
- U.S. workforce development and skills gaps.

Other News from DC and Around the Country:

Brookings: [U.S. Needs New System for Declaring Disasters](#)

GovExec: [FEMA Disaster Relief Faces August Shortfall](#)

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