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THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

Back in Business

Happy New Year! It's been a few weeks since the last newsletter and the 119th Congress has officially kicked off. As Washington slowly digs out from the recent snowstorm that impacted large portions of the country, we're ready to hit the ground running on our legislative priorities.

Late last week, Representative Mike Johnson (R – LA) was reelected as Speaker of the House—largely avoiding the drama we've seen in recent Speaker elections. The House has also adopted a rules package for the new Congress and announced the leadership for the Committees focused on emergency management. Representative Sam Graves (R – MO) will remain the Chair of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, with Representative Rick Larsen (D – WA) as the Ranking Member. Additionally, the House Homeland Security Committee will be led by Representative Mark Green (R – TN) with Bennie Thompson (D – MS) as Ranking Member. In the Senate, Senator Rand Paul (R – KY) is the Chair of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, with Senator Gary Peters (D – MI) as the Ranking Member.

As the 119th Congress takes shape, so is the incoming Trump Administration. Next week, Governor Kristi Noem's Senate confirmation hearing to head DHS is scheduled for Wednesday. Gov. Noem is expected to have a relatively smooth confirmation process. While there have been rumors about potential nominees for FEMA Administrator, nothing concrete has been announced. As the catastrophic fires continue to burn in Los Angeles, and the Southeastern US works to recover from Hurricanes Helene and Milton, whoever is nominated will have no shortage of challenges to face in the coming months.

Upcoming Congressional Hearings...

Nomination of Kristi Noem for Secretary of Homeland Security
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Wednesday, January 15; 9:00AM (Eastern)

Nomination of Eric Turner for Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Thursday, January 16; 10:00AM (Eastern)

More News from the Nation's Capital...

FEMA RELEASES PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND POLICY GUIDE – VERSION 5.0

On Monday, FEMA announced the release of Version 5.0 of the Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide (PAPPG). The PAPPG provides a comprehensive and streamlined guide for evaluating eligibility under the Public Assistance (PA) Program. It consolidates relevant policies into a single document, while also referencing external FEMA policies and resources to support stakeholders involved in the implementation of each step in the recovery process.

This updated version applies to incidents declared on or after January 6, 2025 and supersedes Version 4. Significant updates in this edition include policy changes related to Tribal Nations, resilience and mitigation, and adjustments based on Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) updates that took effect on October 1, 2024. Recognizing the urgency of implementing these changes, FEMA has prioritized this publication. Version 5.1 will introduce further updates, including additional wildfire policies, the remaining 2 C.F.R. changes, and expanded appendices, ensuring continued alignment with emerging needs and priorities in disaster recovery.

FEMA ANNOUNCES \$1.35 BILLION TO INCREASE CLIMATE RESILIENCE NATIONWIDE

On Monday, FEMA announced that the agency is making \$1.35 billion available for two grant programs designed to help communities enhance their resilience to the impacts of increasingly frequent and extreme weather events. The Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) annual grant program is making \$750 million available for projects that protect people and infrastructure from natural hazards and the effects of extreme weather events. The Flood Mitigation Assistance program is making \$600 million available for projects that mitigate flood risks facing homes and communities across the nation.

The funding offered through these programs can be used by communities to better understand disaster risk and vulnerability, conduct community-driven resilience and hazard mitigation planning, and design and implement transformational projects to make communities safer and more resilient. Reduced cost shares will remain in effect for certain entities. Non-federal cost share is typically 25%. However, disadvantaged communities and designated Community Disaster Resilience Zones may pay less for Flood Mitigation Assistance and BRIC.

FEMA will continue providing tailored technical support to communities and Tribal Nations that may not have the resources to begin climate resilience planning and project solution design on their own. Communities interested in submitting a request for assistance may do so from **Jan. 6, 2025**, through **April 18, 2025**. FEMA will publish a new form online to streamline and simplify the submission process.

The application period opens on **Jan. 6, 2025**. Eligible applicants must apply for funding using FEMA Grants Outcomes, FEMA's grants management system. Applications must be submitted in the portal no later than 3 p.m. ET on **April 18, 2025**. FEMA will not consider applications after this deadline. The application deadlines are for applicants only. Local governments should consult with their state, tribal, or territorial agencies to confirm deadlines to submit subapplications.

5X5: THE PUBLIC SAFETY INNOVATION SUMMIT COMES TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

5x5—the confirmation of a strong and clear signal—and the place to make your voice heard and drive public safety communications forward. This annual, three-day summit brings together leaders in public safety, academia, government, and industry.

This year, attendees will meet in Bellevue, Washington from **June 3-5** to:

- Network and share ideas with fellow leaders in the field.
- Try out the latest innovations in public safety communications technology.
- Explore research breakthroughs and new ideas for R&D.
- Interface with two federal agencies—the FirstNet Authority and NIST PSCR.

5x5 features keynotes, breakout sessions, deep dives, and live indoor and outdoor demonstrations highlighting cutting edge communications technology for public safety. Visit 5x5.FirstNet.gov to register before early bird pricing closes **January 17**. 5x5 is hosted by the First Responder Network Authority and the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Public Safety Communications Research Division.

FEMA SEEKS LEADERS FOR NATIONAL YOUTH PREPAREDNESS COUNCIL

FEMA announced that it is accepting applications for the National Youth Preparedness Council (YPC) until **March 3, 2025**. The YPC program brings teens interested and engaged in community preparedness together from across the nation. Council members are selected based on their dedication to public service, their efforts in making a difference in their communities, and their potential to expand their impact as national leaders for emergency preparedness. Students in grades 8 through 11 are eligible to apply.

During their one-year term, council members collaborate virtually to develop projects that promote preparedness on a local and national scale. Members also engage with leaders within FEMA, the federal government and national non-profit organizations. Teens interested in applying to the council must submit a completed application form and provide two letters of recommendation. All applications and supporting materials must be submitted no later than **March 3, 2025**. New council members will be announced by June 2025.

To access the application materials, read about the current council members, and for more information about the Council visit the Youth Preparedness Council website.

WEBINARS: FEMA EXERCISE SUPPORT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

FEMA's National Exercise Program provides state, local, Tribal Nation, and territorial jurisdictions with no-cost technical assistance for exercises designed to enhance preparedness and response capabilities. Exercise support is tailored to meet each jurisdiction's needs and assist with exercise planning, design, scenario development, conduct and evaluation. By participating in these exercises, jurisdictions can identify gaps in their emergency plans, improve coordination among responders and enhance community resilience.

The 2025 exercise support requests can be submitted through **March 3, 2025**. Support requests are open to all state, local, Tribal Nations, and territorial governments. New jurisdictions are strongly encouraged to apply, especially those from underserved jurisdictions. There is no associated cost share for selected jurisdictions for this exercise assistance.

To learn more, including how to request this technical assistance for exercises, FEMA will host a series of webinars and office hours in January and February to discuss the exercise support process. All webinars will offer the same content. To attend one of the webinars or office hours, register in advance by selecting the links below:

- **Session 1:** Tuesday, Jan. 14 at 2 p.m. ET: [Session #1 Registration](#)
- **Office Hours:** Thursday, Jan. 16 at 11 a.m. ET: [Office Hours Registration #1](#)
- **Session 2:** Thursday, Jan. 23, at 11 a.m. ET: [Session #2 Registration](#)
- **Office Hours:** Friday, Jan. 24 at 2 p.m. ET: [Office Hours Registration #2](#)
- **Session 3:** Wednesday, Jan. 29 at 4 p.m. ET: [Session #3 Registration](#)
- **Office Hours:** Thursday, Jan. 30 at 2 p.m. ET: [Office Hours Registration #3](#)
- **Session 4:** Monday, Feb. 3 at 11 a.m. ET: [Session #4 Registration](#)
- **Office Hours:** Wednesday, Feb. 5 at 11 a.m. ET: [Office Hours Registration #4](#)
- **Session 5:** Tuesday, Feb. 11 at 2 p.m. ET: [Session #5 Registration](#)
- **Office Hours:** Thursday, Feb. 13 at 4 p.m. ET: [Office Hours Registration #5](#)
- **Session 6:** Thursday, Feb. 20 at 11 a.m. ET: [Session #6 Registration](#)

- **Office Hours:** Friday, Feb. 21 at 11 a.m. ET: [Office Hours Registration #6](#)

Other News from DC and Around the Country...

HSToday: [Deanne Criswell Welcomes New Members to FEMA's National Advisory Council](#)

Route Fifty: [How Govs Can Strengthen Their Cyber Staff in the New Year](#)

Homeland Security News Wire: [Amidst Compounding Disasters, Resilient Housing Can Anchor Communities](#)

Security Week: [Critical Infrastructure Ransomware Attack Tracker Reaches 2,000 Incidents](#)

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