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February 21, 2025



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

One Month Into the New Administration

Anyone who was hoping the pace of action in Washington might slow down a bit by the end of the first month of the Trump Administration must have been disappointed this week. As nomination hearings continue, so too does the rollout of new Executive Orders (EO). Arguably the most significant one this week, titled "Ensuring Accountability for All Agencies," was released on Tuesday. The EO seeks to consolidate power in the executive branch by mandating regular reviews of agency operations, performance, and implementation of their programs. Supporters argue that the order will lead to more efficient government operations, while opponents contend that the order could increase bureaucratic red tape, potentially politicizing agency functions and reducing the ability of agencies to effectively perform their duties. It is widely expected that the EO will be subject to litigation, and we'll be keeping an eye out for new developments that may impact agencies with roles in emergency management.

In Congress, things remain fairly chaotic, with tension between both Democrats and Republicans and between Senate and House Republicans. The Senate has begun debating a \$340 billion "skinny" budget resolution, which would allocate funds for defense and border security, including a border wall. The resolution, led by Senator Graham (R-SC), aims to advance President Trump's legislative priorities, including tax cuts and changes to federal energy policy. While Senate GOP leaders advocate for this narrower resolution, House Republicans prefer a single bill that more comprehensively addresses Trump's agenda.

President Trump unexpectedly interjected his preferences during a recent interview (after previously refusing to take sides) in which he stated his support for the House's one-bill approach. House Majority Leader Scalise (R-LA) said House GOP leaders will put their resolution on the floor next week. Scalise also noted that the committees will have the full month of March to work through the policy details for the reconciliation package and that the House will seek to pass the package in April. Despite Trump's interview comments, Senate Republicans plan to continue pushing forward with their budget resolution, though it's being viewed as a backup plan at this point.

The continued impasse over the FY25 budget—and the resulting risk of a government shutdown—adds to the chaos. House and Senate appropriators remain divided over spending levels, among other issues. This disagreement centers on President Trump's potential to impound appropriated funds, with Democrats pushing for firm limitations. GOP efforts to extend the 2017 tax cuts are also complicating negotiations. With a deadline of March 14 for a potential shutdown, both parties are scrambling to reach a compromise, but very significant hurdles remain. Shocking, right?

Finally, I also wanted to shout out NEMA's Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) team for all their hard work in recent days. As Kentucky faces overwhelming flooding, our EMAC team diligently coordinated EMAC operations to facilitate interstate mutual aid from across the nation.

[Upcoming Congressional Hearings...](#)

Emerging Global Threats: Putting America's National Security First

Senate Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Tuesday, February 25; 10:00 AM (ET)

[More News from the Nation's Capital...](#)

FEMA RESCINDS FEDERAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STANDARD

Late last week, President Trump issued [Executive Order \(EO\) 14148: Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions](#), which revoked [EO 13690: Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input](#). While FEMA considers further amending its regulations at 44 CFR Part 9, the agency must pause implementation of the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS). FEMA must not consider any action as subject to the FFRMS pursuant to 44 CFR 9.7(c)(1). Rather, FEMA must rely only on 44 CFR 9.7(c)(2) to determine whether a proposed action is in the floodplain.

The rule in question was one of the Biden administration's efforts to address growing disaster costs. FFRMS states that when public buildings in a flood zone are damaged/destroyed, those structures must be rebuilt in a way that prevents future flood damage if they are to qualify for FEMA funding. In some cases, the standards also apply to private homes repaired or rebuilt in a flood plain.

CISA AND PARTNERS RELEASE ADVISORY ON GHOST (CRING) RANSOMWARE

On Wednesday, CISA—in partnership with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC)—released a joint Cybersecurity Advisory, [#StopRansomware: Ghost \(Cring\) Ransomware](#). This advisory provides network defenders with indicators of compromise, tactics, techniques, and procedures, and detection methods associated with Ghost ransomware activity identified through FBI investigations.

Ghost actors conduct these widespread attacks targeting and compromising organizations with outdated versions of software and firmware on their internet facing services. These malicious ransomware actors are known to use publicly available code to exploit Common Vulnerabilities and Exposures where available patches have not been applied to gain access to internet facing servers.

CISA encourages network defenders to review this advisory and apply the recommended mitigations. See [#StopRansomware](#) and the [#StopRansomware Guide](#) for additional guidance on ransomware protection, detection, and response. Visit CISA's [Cross-Sector Cybersecurity Performance Goals](#) for more information on the CPGs, including added recommended baseline protections.

REGISTER FOR FEMA'S FEBRUARY BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY CALL

Join FEMA for the February Business and Industry Call from **3:00-4:00 PM (ET) on Tuesday, February 25**. Collaboration among governments, businesses, and industry partners is essential for effectively addressing the needs of disaster survivors. These entities are key in providing resources and support to communities through procurement opportunities. This month's webinar will focus on emergency procurement and contracting, nationally and locally, in advance of disaster response.

Join FEMA's expert speakers as they provide overviews of procurement and contracting resources and share insights on navigating opportunities with federal and local contract vehicles. Register today by visiting [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#). For more information, visit the [February Business and Industry Call event page](#).

FEMA's Office of Business, Industry and Infrastructure Integration hosts monthly business and industry calls to update members of the National Business Emergency Operations Center, business and industry organizations, and FEMA partners on the tools available during all stages of the disaster lifecycle. Each month features different topics presented by FEMA experts, other interagency partners, and business and industry organizations.

FEMA ACCEPTING NATIONAL YOUTH PREPAREDNESS COUNCIL APPLICATIONS

FEMA is accepting applications for the Youth Preparedness Council (YPC) until **March 3, 2025**. The Youth Preparedness Council brings teens together from across the nation who are interested and engaged in community preparedness. Council members are selected based on their dedication to public service, their efforts to make 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 with each other to develop projects that promote preparedness on a local and national scale. Members also engage with leaders within FEMA, the federal government and national nonprofit organizations.

Youth 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 **Monday, March 3**. New council members will be announced by June. To access the application materials, read about the current council members, and for more information about the Youth Preparedness Council, visit the [Youth Preparedness Council page](#).

[Other News from DC and Around the Country...](#)

The Hill: [House to Vote on Budget Resolution Next Week, Scalise Says](#)

Scientific American: [FEMA Firings Hit Agency Already Suffering Staffing Shortages](#)

Washington Post: [FEMA is Losing Scores of Employees. What Does That Mean for Disaster Recovery?](#)

The Hill: [Trump Backs House GOP Reconciliation Bill Over Senate Version](#)

UPI: [FEMA's Flood Insurance Program to Borrow Billions to Pay 2024 Post-Hurricane Claims](#)

The Guardian: [I Signed Up for Disaster Training in LA. I Had No Idea I'd Need It So Soon](#)

Homeland Security News Wire: [What It Takes to Regrow a Community After Wildfire](#)

E&E News: [Panel Schedules Vote on Disaster Relief, Worker Relocation Bills](#)

Politico: [Trump's Acting FEMA Leader Undercuts President's Claims About Disaster Money](#)

The Hill: [Democratic Senators Ask for Details on DOGE Access to Disaster Victims' Data](#)

AP News: [FEMA Funding to New York City to Assist Migrants is Misrepresented](#)

HSToday: [Trump Nominates Sean Cairncross as National Cyber Director](#)

Route Fifty: [Building Cyber Resilience: A Roadmap for State CIOs in 2025](#)

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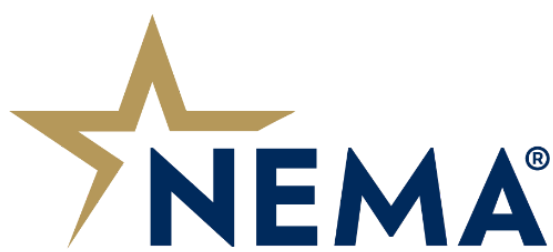
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