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March 14, 2025



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

Shutdown Suddenly Unlikely

If I sent out this newsletter yesterday morning, it would have focused on the significant likelihood that the current Continuing Resolution (CR) would expire and the federal government would enter an extended shutdown. Then, yesterday evening, Senate Minority Leader Schumer unexpectedly reversed course and announced that he planned to vote to advance the House GOP funding bill. This makes it very likely that there will be enough Democratic votes in the Senate to avoid a shutdown.

The House voted on Tuesday to pass the CR by a largely party-line vote of 217-213. This CR would fund the government until September 30, 2025. As discussed in previous newsletters, House Democrats did not support the bill because it lacked language restricting the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) from unilaterally cutting spending that has been Congressionally appropriated. The bill passed by the House would:

- Allow FEMA to begin the NOFO process for preparedness grants, funded at the reduced FY24 levels.
- Fund all other FEMA programs (e.g., training, exercises, etc.) at FY24 levels
- Provide an additional \$22.5 billion for the DRF, which should allow the fund to remain solvent through the fiscal year

To pass the Senate, the CR will need at least eight Democrats to vote in support of the bill. Some Senate Democrats criticize the legislation over spending cuts and suggest a shorter stopgap to allow more time for negotiations. Many vulnerable Senators are hesitant to oppose the bill, however, balancing their criticisms with the political risk of a government shutdown. After days of uncertainty, with just hours before the CR expires, Minority Leader Schumer's 180-degree change on supporting the bill has likely given Democrats enough cover to secure the necessary votes. While this has split the party--with many Senate Democrats still vocally opposed to passing the CR--Sen. Schumer's calculation seems to be that the impacts of shutting down the federal government would be worse than the alternative. A vote is scheduled for this afternoon, so it's possible this is all wrapped up before the 11:59 PM deadline.

In other news, NEMA is excited to be hosting our 2025 Mid-Year Forum in Washington, DC starting next week! We hope to see many of you there and look forward to the important discussions and briefings that we have planned.

Upcoming Congressional Hearings...

None - State/District Work Periods.

More News from the Nation's Capital...

DISASTER ASSISTANCE SIMPLIFICATION ACT REINTRODUCED IN SENATE

Late last week, Sen. Peters (D-MI) reintroduced the [Disaster Assistance Simplification Act](#) (S. 861) in the Senate, along with co-sponsors Sen. Tillis (R-NC), Sen. Paul (R-KY), and Sen. Lankford (R-OK). NEMA strongly supported this legislation in the 118th Congress and applauds its reintroduction.

The *Disaster Assistance Simplification Act* would require FEMA to establish a universal application across federal agencies for disaster survivors who are seeking federal assistance to recover. Currently, disaster survivors must complete complicated applications depending on which agency they need help from, which can be a highly burdensome and time-consuming process. The bill would allow FEMA to share information on disaster survivors with other federal agencies to streamline recovery efforts and reduce complexity for survivors. Additionally, the bill requires all information sharing between agencies to meet federal data security standards.

Lynn Budd, NEMA President and Director of the Wyoming Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, has commented that *"The Disaster Assistance Simplification Act is an urgently necessary step to help reduce the burden on disaster survivors as they apply for assistance. The National Emergency Management Association fully endorses the creation of a universal application for disaster aid. This initiative is a way for FEMA and other federal agencies to stay survivor-centric, and I applaud this common-sense and humane improvement. By allowing seamless interagency data sharing to increase efficiency, communication, and coordination, wait times for disbursement of desperately needed assistance to survivors should be reduced significantly. The universal application process allows for improved oversight, while simultaneously creating a more equitable, less burdensome process. For survivors already experiencing the most difficult and tragic moments in their lives, this is an entirely welcome improvement to disaster individual assistance."*

PRESIDENT TRUMP EXPECTED TO SIGN EXECUTIVE ORDER TO EMPOWER STATES AND LOCAL IN DISASTER RESPONSE AND ESTABLISH THE NATIONAL RESILIENCE STRATEGY

Based on recent reporting, President Trump is expected to sign an executive order (EO) that will increase the roles of states and local jurisdictions in preparing for and responding to disasters. While the EO has not yet been signed, reports have stated that the EO "restores state, local, and individual empowerment in disaster preparedness and response, and injects common sense into infrastructure prioritization and strategic investments through risk-informed decisions that make our infrastructure, communities, and economy more resilient to global and dynamic threats and hazards."

The EO is also expected to establish a National Resilience Strategy to outline a framework to advance the nation's resilience and identify risks to critical infrastructure and other related systems.

While initial reporting indicated that the President would sign the EO early this week, we have learned that it will now be delayed. The timeline for the release of the EO is still unclear—refer to future newsletters for updates and additional details.

HOMELAND SECURITY ADVISORY COUNCIL CHARTER RENEWED

On Tuesday, DHS [announced](#) that the Secretary of Homeland Security has determined that the renewal of the Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC) is necessary and in the public interest. This determination followed consultation with the Committee Management Secretariat, General Services Administration. The committee's charter is effective March 5, 2025 and expires March 5, 2027.

This charter renewed the HSAC as a discretionary committee, which shall operate in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. ch. 10. The HSAC was established in 2003 and provides nonpartisan and organizationally independent, strategic advice to the Secretary of Homeland Security on matters related to homeland security. Three amendments were made:

- Reduces the total membership from 40 to 35.
- Changes members terms to a three-year appointment, from one to three-year terms.
- Removes co-chairs to now reflect a Chair and Vice Chair.

FEMA WEBINAR: OFFICE OF BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE INTEGRATION

FEMA's Office of Business, Industry, and Infrastructure Integration has announced the next iteration of its Business and Industry webinar, scheduled for **March 25, 2025, at 3:00 PM (ET)**. This meeting is held to update National Emergency Management Operations Center (NBEOC) members, business and industry organizations, and FEMA partners on the initiatives and tools available during all stages of the disaster lifecycle.

This session will explore various technologies that businesses and emergency management professionals can leverage to improve preparedness and response efforts. Participants will hear from technology leaders and disaster experts on how technology can improve outcomes before, during, and after crises. The agenda includes the following:

- **FEMA's Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS):** Overview of IPAWS program, purpose, and capabilities, highlighting benefits and necessity of mass communication systems during disasters.
- **FEMA's Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool (RAPT):** Overview of the features, capabilities, and use cases for the Future RAPT tool.
- **U.S. Census Bureau's Center for Economic Studies (CES):** Overview of the OnTheMap for Emergency Management tool.

You can register for the webinar [here](#).

PRESIDENT TRUMP ESTABLISHES WHITE HOUSE TASK FORCE ON THE FIFA WORLD CUP 2026

Late last week, President Trump signed Executive Order (EO) 14234, titled ["Establishing the White House Task Force on the FIFA World Cup 2026"](#) outlining how the White House will support preparations through a coordinated government effort. The President is the Chair of the Task Force, and the Vice President as Vice Chair.

The Task Force will coordinate with executive departments and agencies to assist in the planning, organization, and execution of the events surrounding the 2025 FIFA Club World Cup and the 2026 FIFA World Cup. These agencies will provide information and assistance useful and necessary to the Task Force.

The EO notes that for administrative purposes, the Task Force will be housed in the Department of Homeland Security, which will provide funding and administrative support for the Task Force. Agencies within the Task Force will each provide a report to the Task Force regarding their respective planning and activities with respect to the 2026 FIFA World Cup. These reports will be submitted to the Executive Director of the Task Force no later than June 1, 2025. The Task Force will terminate on December 31, 2026, unless extended by the President.

Other News from DC and Around the Country...

HSToday: [Perspective: Future of FEMA](#)

The Hill: [House Republicans Pass Bill to Avert Government Shutdown](#)

Politico: [Democrats Should Back Away From Shutdown, Schumer Says](#)

Forbes: [How AI Is Helping To Improve the Management Of Crisis Situations](#)

WBAL TV: [Emmitsburg's National Fire Academy Becomes Casualty of Trump Administration's Funding Freezes](#)

NBC News: [How FEMA Cuts are Spreading Far Beyond Washington](#)

Fox News: [Trump to Sign Disaster Relief Order Putting States, Localities in the Driver's Seat of Catastrophe Response](#)

Detroit Free Press: [FEMA Funds on Hold Affect Michigan Disaster Relief Programs, State Official Says](#)

HSToday: [Perspective: FEMA Reform Council - Some Priorities](#)

CBS News: [FEMA's Emergency Food and Shelter Program Paused](#)

WFLA: ['Lessons Learned': Florida Lawmakers Look to Improve Emergency Response, Recovery Efforts](#)

LA Times: [Emergency Management Officials Not to Blame for West Altadena Alert Failures, Sources Say](#)

Drone Life: [Lessons from Hurricane Helene: How UAVs Supported Emergency Response in Western North Carolina](#)

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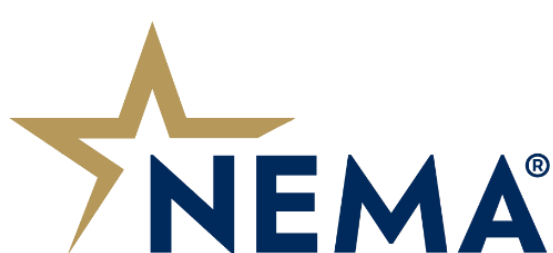
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