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May 2, 2025



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

Clarity on the Council...And Another Executive Order

Finally—after months of speculation—the White House has released the names of those selected to serve on the FEMA Review Council. While the Council is a bit behind the schedule set by the Executive Order that established the body and has not yet held its first public meeting, this week's announcement provides some much needed clarity. We were pleased to see that the Council has significant representation from the emergency management community, including two current State Directors, Kevin Guthrie (FL) and Nim Kidd (TX). The Council also includes former State EM Director Mark Cooper (former LA) and FEMA Region IX Administrator Bob Fenton. The other appointed members include:

- Co-Chair: Kristi Noem, Secretary of Homeland Security
- Co-Chair: Pete Hegseth, Secretary of Defense
- Greg Abbott, Governor, State of Texas
- Phil Bryant, Former Governor, State of Mississippi
- Jane Castor, Mayor, City of Tampa, FL
- Rosie Cordero-Stutz, Sheriff, Miami-Dade County
- Evan Greenberg, CEO, Chubb Limited
- Michael Whatley, Chairman, Republican National Committee
- Glenn Youngkin, Governor, Commonwealth of Virginia

NEMA remains committed to serve as a resource for the Council, and we're eager to offer the expertise, best practices, and recommendations of our members.

Additionally—and unsurprisingly given the trend of President Trump's first 100 days in office—another executive order was signed this week. While not directly targeted at emergency management, the executive order, entitled "Protecting American Communities from Criminal Aliens," is very likely to impact emergency management grants. The order directs the federal government to formally identify a list of "sanctuary jurisdictions," to enable OMB to identify federal funding (including grants) "for suspension or termination, as appropriate." Refer to the updates below for more information on the executive order, which is certain to add another layer of complexity for states and local governments currently awaiting federal grants and other assistance.

Lastly, the reconciliation process continues to take up much of Congress' attention. The House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) and House Committee on Homeland Security—the House committees with primary jurisdiction over DHS/FEMA—have both released their respective budget reconciliation proposals. While the House T&I proposal currently does not include FEMA-related provisions, the House Homeland Security Committee's proposal includes provisions related to the State Homeland Security Grant Program. For more information on the relevant reconciliation budget proposals—including the committees' markups of their budget proposals—refer to the update below.

Upcoming Congressional Hearings...

[Oversight Hearing – U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#)
House Committee on Appropriations | Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Tuesday, May 6; 10:00 AM (ET)

[Oversight Hearing – The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency](#)
House Committee on Appropriations | Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Thursday, May 8; 9:00 AM (ET)

[Oversight Hearing – The Federal Emergency Management Agency](#)
House Committee on Appropriations | Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Wednesday, May 7; 2:00 PM (ET)

More News from the Nation's Capital...

PRESIDENT TRUMP SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER RELATED TO "SANCTUARY JURISDICTIONS"

On Monday, President Trump signed an executive order entitled "Protecting American Communities from Criminal Aliens." This orders the following actions that are likely to have significant impacts on emergency management grants and other federal assistance:

1. Directs the Attorney General and Secretary of Homeland Security to public a list of states and jurisdictions that "obstruct the enforcement of federal immigration laws (sanctuary jurisdictions)" within 30 days.
2. Immediately following the creation of the list, the Secretary of DHS will notify each jurisdiction.
3. Directs the Office of Management and Budget to "identify appropriate Federal funds to sanctuary jurisdictions, including grants and contracts, for suspension or termination, as appropriate."
4. For those jurisdictions who remain in violation, the Attorney General and Secretary of DHS "shall pursue all necessary legal remedies and enforcement measures to these violations and bring such jurisdictions into compliance with the laws of the United States."

While it has been previously speculated that the presence of "sanctuary jurisdictions" was already impacting FEMA's review and release of grant funding, this seems to be an attempt to codify a term that had no official definition and to develop a formal list of jurisdictions that meet the definition. The full text of the EO can be found [here](#).

HOUSE HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE AND HOUSE T&I COMMITTEE RELEASE BUDGET RECONCILIATION PROPOSALS

Earlier this week, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) and House Committee on Homeland Security released their respective budget reconciliation proposals. As noted above, while the House T&I proposal does not include FEMA-related provisions. On Wednesday, House T&I [held their markup](#) of the budget proposal, which was advanced out of committee.

Conversely, the House Homeland Security Committee's proposal *does* include provisions related to FEMA and emergency management. Among the FY25 funding allocations include the following:

- \$300 million for reimbursement of extraordinary law enforcement costs for presidential residence protection (managed by FEMA).
- State Homeland Security Grant Program: 1) \$500 million for unmanned aircraft threat mitigation; 2) \$625 million for 2026 FIFA World Cup security planning; 3) \$1 billion for 2028 Olympics security planning; 4) \$450 million for Operation Stonegarden border security grants.

The House Homeland Security Committee [held their markup](#) on Tuesday, where it advanced their reconciliation package.

Once all committees have approved their reconciliation packages, the House Budget Committee will assemble the committee's proposals into a single reconciliation package.

FEMA-OMB MEMO RELEASED ON FEMA'S ROLE IN DISASTERS

Recently, a memo from FEMA to OMB recommending actions to "rebalance" FEMA's role in disasters [became public](#). The memo identifies short, medium, and long-term actions to reduce federal costs and concentrate FEMA's efforts on large-scale disasters. The memo may also shed some light on recent disaster declaration decisions by the White House. Examples of short-term actions from the memo include:

- Increasing the Public Assistance (PA) declaration threshold by only considering major disaster declaration requests authorizing PA that are greater than four times the per capita indicator (currently \$1.89).
- Not automatically approving the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) when declarations authorize Individual Assistance (IA) or PA.
- Not approving federal cost share increases above 75%.
- Limiting the types of recreational facilities eligible for PA funding under Category G to those critical for life and property preservation or protection.
- Denying major disaster declarations for snowstorms.

Refer to the memo for information on the medium and long-term reform concepts. While informative, the memo points to a clear need for greater transparency on the planned actions and NEMA will convey this message.

GAO REPORT ON CISA SLTT CYBERSECURITY GRANT PROGRAM

On Tuesday, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) [released a report related to the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program](#). To help address cybersecurity risks and threats to these essential services, DHS implemented a cybersecurity program under the State and Local Cybersecurity Improvement Act. The act includes a provision in statute for GAO to review DHS's grant program. This report (1) identifies, categorizes, and describes the projects funded by the grant program, (2) examines the extent to which DHS's grant program review process met the requirements of the act, (3) examines the extent to which selected applicants met the requirements, and (4) describes selected state and territory officials' views on the program.

GAO identified and summarized approved cybersecurity projects under the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program. GAO analyzed requirements for FEMA and CISA in administering the grant program. GAO also selected a nongeneralizable random sample of seven state and territory grant applicants from various regions of the country to examine the extent to which applicants met eligibility requirements. GAO interviewed selected officials from seven states and two territories who agreed to provide their views on the program.

The report found that as of August 1, 2024, DHS provided about \$172 million in grants to 33 states and territories. The grants are funding 839 state and local cybersecurity projects that align with core cybersecurity functions as defined by the National Institute of Standards and Technology. The projects include developing cybersecurity policy, hiring cybersecurity contractors, upgrading equipment, and implementing multi-factor authentication. Such projects are essential to identifying risks, protecting systems, detecting events, and responding to and recovering from incidents.

Selected state and territory officials had positive feedback about the grant program, such as FEMA's willingness to make improvements to the application process. Officials also noted challenges, including sustaining cybersecurity projects after the grant program ends. For example, officials from three states emphasized the importance of reauthorizing the program. However, officials from other states said that they plan to use other federal grant programs or state and local-level funds to continue funding cybersecurity projects.

NTIA ANNOUNCES RECRUITMENT OF FIRST RESPONDER NETWORK AUTHORITY BOARD MEMBERS

On Thursday, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) [issued a notice](#) to initiate the annual process of seeking expressions of interest from individuals who would like to serve on the Board of the First Responder Network Authority. The term for one of the twelve non-permanent members of the FirstNet Authority Board will be available for appointment or reappointment in 2025. Additionally, one of the 12 non-permanent members of the FirstNet Authority Board resigned prior to the end of their term. The Secretary of Commerce will appoint an individual to complete that Board member's three-year term through September 2027. This Notice will apply for any other vacancies that may occur in 2025.

To be considered for the calendar year 2025 appointments, expressions of interest must be electronically transmitted on or before **June 2, 2025**. Applicants should submit expressions of interest as described below to Michael Dame, Associate Administrator, Office of Public Safety Communications, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, by email to FirstNetBoardApplicant@ntia.doc.gov.

The *Middle-Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012* requires each Board member to have experience or expertise in at least one of the following substantive areas: public safety, network, technical, and/or financial. Additionally, the composition of the FirstNet Authority Board must satisfy the other requirements specified in the Act, including that: (i) at least three members have served as public safety professionals; (ii) at least three members represent the collective interests of states, localities, tribes, and territories; and (iii) its members reflect geographic and regional, as well as rural and urban, representation.

FEMA'S NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM INTELLIGENCE AND INVESTIGATIONS FUNCTION GUIDANCE UPDATED

FEMA has announced that local, state, tribal and territorial emergency managers can now use FEMA's updated [National Incident Management System \(NIMS\) Intelligence/Investigations Function Guidance](#) to gather, analyze and share information to prepare for and respond to emergencies. NIMS enables organizations from across the nation to work together during incidents of all kinds and sizes. Implementing NIMS nationwide is a fundamental part of building our national preparedness.

The NIMS Intelligence/Investigations Function Guidance supports emergency response and recovery operations by providing procedures for gathering, analyzing and sharing information. It updates the initial guidance, published in 2013, with recommendations from law enforcement stakeholders and experts from various jurisdictional levels, gathered over the past two years by FEMA's National Integration Center and its Law Enforcement Working Group partners.

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

CEPR: [Innovative Disaster Preparedness Program Axed by FEMA](#)

Politico: [FEMA Cleared of Punishing Pro-Trump Hurricane Victims](#)

Newsweek (Opinion): [DOGE Cuts Devastate Our Natural Disaster Preparedness](#)

E&E News: [Trump Names 13 Officials to FEMA Review Council](#)

ABC News: [Loss of FEMA Program Spells Disaster for Hundreds of Communities and Their Projects](#)

Maryland Matters: ['Perfect Storm': Emergency Officials Brace for hurricane Season Amid FEMA Cuts](#)

NACo: [Counties Scramble After FEMA Scraps Disaster Mitigation Funds](#)

HS Today: [Emergency Management Is Not Broken – The Investment Is](#)

Chicago Tribune: [Gov. JB Pritzker Taps Cook County Official to Run State Emergency Management Agency](#)

Stateline: [Trump Denies Disaster Aid, Tells States to Do More](#)

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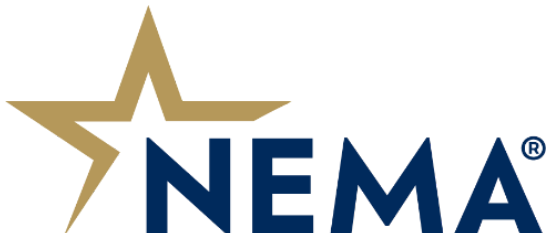
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