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June 6, 2025



THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON:

Looking Towards FY26

The FY26 appropriations process formally kicked off in the House this week with the first two bills (i.e., Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies; and Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies) being marked up in their respective subcommittees. On Monday, the Appropriations Homeland Security Subcommittee will hold the markup for the Homeland Security bill. While they aren't expected to deviate *significantly* from the President's budget proposal we updated you on last week, it's not out of the question that there will be some differences. On Thursday, the Homeland Security bill then moves to the full Appropriations Committee for their markup. You can expect updates from us next week once we review the text.

The FY26 appropriations process has been complicated somewhat by several factors. For example, in a House Appropriations hearing this week, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Russell Vought faced bipartisan criticism about the lack of full details in the recent Presidential budget request. While Director Vought stated that he believed the budget provided sufficient details to inform the appropriations process, the appropriators clearly felt differently. The process has also been complicated by the ongoing negotiations around the reconciliation bill that recently passed the House and faces an uphill battle in the Senate. As highlighted in recent newsletters, the bill has been the primary focus for Congressional Republicans as of late, taking up much of the oxygen in the room that might otherwise be spent on FY26 appropriations.

Upcoming Congressional Hearings...

Markup: Fiscal Year 2026 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill

House Committee on Appropriations | Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Monday, June 9; 6:00 PM (ET)

Budget Hearing: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

House Committee on Appropriations | Subcommittee on Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
Tuesday, June 10; 10:00 AM (ET)

Maintaining Election Operations in the Face of Natural Disasters

Committee on House Administration | Subcommittee on Elections
Tuesday, June 10; 2:00 PM (ET)

Reforms After the Storms: Conducting Oversight of SBA's Disaster Loan Program

Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
Wednesday, June 11; 2:30 PM (ET)

More News from the Nation's Capital...

FEMA PUBLISHES UPDATED NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS

This week, FEMA announced that the agency has updated three National Flood Insurance Program guidance documents to reflect an ongoing effort to deliver clear direction in an easy-to-understand format. Updates to the program's [Flood Insurance Manual](#), [Claims Manual](#), and [Standard Flood Insurance Policy Commentary](#) clarify existing instructions and guidance. They also provide new information to enhance program implementation.

The updated Flood Insurance Manual will apply to flood insurance policies issued on or after Oct. 1, 2025. The Claims Manual and the Standard Flood Insurance Policy Commentary will apply to flood insurance claims occurring during the 2025 hurricane season. These updates aim to clarify any existing guidance and offer new instructions to help improve the implementation of program interpretations and processes.

The three updated documents do not change flood insurance coverage or supersede the terms and conditions of the Standard Flood Insurance Policy. The guidance in the manuals reflects the National Flood Insurance Program's existing underwriting requirements, its current underwriting methodology, claims guidance and interpretation of the Standard Flood Insurance Policy related to claims handling.

NASEO HOLDS ANNUAL SEVERE SUMMER WEATHER ENERGY OUTLOOK

Late last week, the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO) hosted its [Severe Summer Weather Energy Outlook webinar](#). This annual event, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (U.S. DOE CESER) is designed to help states better understand the seasonal nature of energy markets and supply chains and prepare for potential impacts of extreme summer weather events, including hurricanes, severe storms, and wildfires. Attendees heard updates on notable severe weather trends and expectations, as well as insight into commodity market trends for the upcoming summer, with a particular emphasis on liquid fuels.

Featured speakers included:

- Jeff Currie, The Carlyle Group
- Matthew Rosencrans, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- Sunny Wescott, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- Tim Hess, Energy Information Administration (EIA)
- Suzanne Edwards, North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC)

PRESIDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCIES

Last week, we sent out our summary of the administration's FY26 budget proposal for DHS, which expanded on the "skinny" budget released several weeks ago. Our partners at the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) have developed a [similar summary for the federal agencies involved in public health](#).

The summary reflects the administration's current reorganization efforts, proposed funding levels, and various policy proposals. As a reminder, Congress has the authority to approve, reject, or modify the administration's budget recommendations as it works through the appropriations process. Pending authorization by Congress, the budget proposes the creation of the Administration for a Healthy America (AHA), which will combine the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences, and some programs from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In addition to detailing the planned federal reorganization, the summary outlines the White House's budget proposals for the CDC, FDA, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and other agencies.

CISA AND FBI RELEASE UPDATED RANSOMWARE GUIDANCE

On Wednesday, CISA, the FBI, and the Australian Signals Directorate's Australian Cyber Security Centre issued an [updated advisory on Play Ransomware](#), also known as Playcrypt. This advisory highlights new tactics, techniques, and procedures used by the Play ransomware group and provides updated indicators of compromise (IOCs) to enhance threat detection.

Since June 2022, Playcrypt has targeted diverse businesses and critical infrastructure across North America, South America, and Europe, becoming one of the most active ransomware groups in 2024. The FBI has identified approximately 900 entities allegedly exploited by these ransomware actors as of May 2025.

Highlights of the recommended mitigation actions described in the updated guidance include:

- Implementing multifactor authentication;
- Maintaining offline data backups;
- Developing and testing a recovery plan; and
- Keeping all operating systems, software, and firmware updated.

Other News from DC and Around the Country...

USA Today: [Joke or No Joke, FEMA Staff Confused, Concerned About Budget Cuts](#)

The Atlantic: [FEMA Is Not Prepared](#)

E&E News: [Chaos at FEMA, NOAA as Hurricane Season Starts](#)

Roll Call: [Homeland Security Posts, Then Deletes, Sanctuary Jurisdictions List](#)

Politico: ['Where's the Budget?': GOP Lawmakers Implore Vought to Send a Full Request](#)

Reuters: [FEMA Staff Baffled After Head Said He Was Unaware of US Hurricane Season, Sources Say](#)

FireRescue1: [Lawmakers Sound Alarm Over NWS, FEMA Staff Cuts as Hurricane Season Begins](#)

HS Today: [Communication Between FEMA and Local Jurisdictions Upended, Officials Say](#)

Federal News Network: [CISA At a Crossroads Amid Workforce Cuts, Paused Partnerships](#)

Industrial Cyber: [CISA's Internet Exposure Reduction Guidance Urges Action on Exposed and Misconfigured Critical Infrastructure](#)

E&E News: [Trump Seeks Record-High FEMA Funding After Vowing to Cut Agency](#)

Security Info Watch: [Focusing on Cyber Resilience Over Traditional Cybersecurity is Crucial for Protecting Critical Infrastructure](#)

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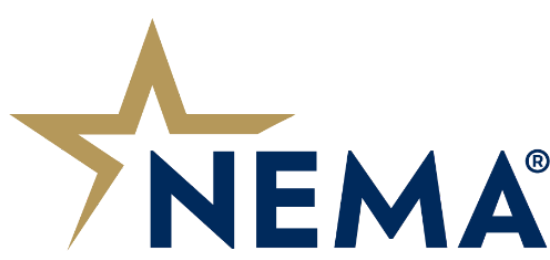


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**2025
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FORUM**
OCTOBER 9-12
CHEYENNE