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Executive Insight Brief

January 27, 2023

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Aerospace & Defense

[Lockheed Martin ready with F-16s as Ukraine's allies revive debate over fighter jets \(Financial Times\)](#)

Lockheed Martin has said it stands ready to meet demand for its F-16 aircraft as some of Ukraine's closest European allies revive efforts to provide fighter jets to Kyiv. The decision by the US and Germany to send tanks to Ukraine has reignited discussions, which European defense officials cautioned were at an early stage. Frank St John, chief operating officer of Lockheed Martin, the largest US defense contractor, told the Financial Times that there was "a lot of conversation about third party transfer of F-16s" — whereby countries would re-export their US jets to Ukraine to defend its airspace. Lockheed is not directly involved in talks regarding the potential delivery of military aircraft to Kyiv. However, St John said the company was "going to be ramping production on F-16s in Greenville [South Carolina] to get to the place where we will be able to backfill pretty capably any countries that choose to do third-party transfers to help with the current conflict". The White House has rebuffed Ukrainian appeals for modern fighter jets such as the F-16 out of fear they could be used to strike Russian territory. The US government must approve sales, or transfers to third countries, of American-made fighter jets, which means European countries would need political support from the Biden administration.

['They need the parts': Aircraft shortage fuels boom for repair shops](#)

[With demand high in Ukraine, US Army ramps up artillery production \(Defense News\)](#)

The U.S. Army is rapidly moving to expand its domestic production capacity of 155mm artillery shells, according to the Army's acquisition chief, as Ukraine uses thousands daily fending off Russia. U.S. defense officials said last year Ukrainians expended roughly 3,000 rounds a day, while a Pentagon fact sheet issued this week said the U.S. government has already sent over 1 million 155mm rounds to the country. Prior to the war in Ukraine, the U.S. could build about 14,400 155mm artillery shells a month. But as Ukrainian forces burn through the ammunition for howitzers sent to the country, the U.S. is hoping to ramp up production to roughly 90,000 shells a month, according to a New York Times report this week. Army acquisition chief Doug Bush, in a Jan. 25 press conference, did not detail the Army's production goals, but said the Army wants to expand production at facilities that build the outside shell as well as those focused on packing explosives and producing fuzes and charges. Initial contracts to ramp up production awarded late last year are focused on manufacturing the metal body, which is the line that will take the longest to build up, Bush

said. The Army is working with General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Systems to expand production capacity at Scranton Army Ammunition Plant in Pennsylvania and a neighboring facility. GD OTS runs the government-owned facility. And the Army is under contract with the company to stand up another plant to do the same work in Garland, Texas, Bush added. The Army also awarded late last year a \$391 million contract to an Ontario-based company — IMT Defense — to make shell bodies.

[How Biden Reluctantly Agreed to Send Tanks to Ukraine](#)

[Defense Companies Secure Record Orders \(WSJ\)](#)

The two largest U.S. defense contractors said ongoing supply chain challenges are hampering efforts to deliver on record weapons orders, driven by the conflict in Ukraine and tackling China's military expansion. Lockheed Martin Corp. said worker shortages have hampered production, while the Pentagon has sped up purchases of weapons headed to Ukraine. Raytheon Technologies Corp. said it would be the end of the year or beyond before production of some materials returns to pre pandemic levels. The two companies have been the biggest beneficiaries of the \$27 billion in military equipment committed by the U.S. to Ukraine, in terms of contracts awarded, though so far only \$6.6 billion is under contract to industry. Executives have cited shortages of labor and components such as chips and rocket motors, as well as the need for more certainty that orders will follow if companies invest more to boost capacity. Lockheed Martin, which also makes F-35 combat jets, has said it would take two years to double production of Javelin anti tank missiles, co-produced with Raytheon, and Himars rocket launchers, both being widely used by Ukraine in its conflict with Russia.

Budget & Appropriations

[Lawmakers Seek Scrutiny of Farmland Purchases by Chinese, Other Foreign Buyers \(WSJ\)](#)

A bipartisan group of lawmakers is renewing a push to intensify oversight of foreign purchases of U.S. farmland, citing concerns over recent acquisitions by Chinese buyers. Legislation set to be introduced in both the House and Senate this week would beef up scrutiny of non-U.S. buyers of U.S. farmland, putting the agricultural sector squarely in the domain of the federal panel that reviews investments for national-security concerns. It would also add the agriculture secretary to the panel and make clear that its goal includes protecting the U.S. agricultural supply chain from foreign interference. "Over the past few

years, we've seen an alarming increase in foreign purchases of farmland and food companies, particularly by China," said Sen. Tommy Tuberville (R., Ala.), who is introducing the legislation in the Senate along with GOP Sens. Roger Marshall of Kansas, Cynthia Lummis of Wyoming, Mike Braun of Indiana, Kevin Cramer of North Dakota and Rick Scott of Florida. "That's why America's agriculture community needs to have a permanent seat at the table when our government vets foreign investment in our country." Rep. Ronny Jackson (R., Texas) is introducing the bill in the House, along with Democratic Reps. Abigail Spanberger of Virginia and Vicente Gonzalez of Texas, and more than two dozen other co-sponsors. The legislation would give the secretary of agriculture a seat on the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S., or Cfius. The panel is led by the Treasury secretary and its members include the heads of the departments of Justice, Homeland Security and Defense, among others. Lawmakers for years have sought to add the agriculture secretary to the panel. The legislation would designate the agricultural supply chain as critical infrastructure and critical technology, with the goal of making sure the panel has clear jurisdiction over farmland and related facilities. The bill stops short of preventing Chinese or other foreign companies from acquiring U.S. farmland, as some other legislation has sought.

[Ron Klain Exits the White House Stage Left](#)

[Top National Archives official agrees to speak with House Oversight Committee \(Washington Examiner\)](#)

House Oversight Committee staff will conduct a transcribed interview with the top lawyer for the National Archives and Records Administration on Tuesday, the first interview in the investigation of President Joe Biden's classified documents scandal. National Archives General Counsel Gary Stern will meet with committee staff Tuesday afternoon to provide testimony, a committee spokesperson told the Washington Examiner. Stern will likely face questions about how his agency handled the discovery of classified documents at Biden's private office in Washington, D.C., and personal home in Wilmington, Delaware. Oversight Chairman James Comer (R-KY) accused the National Archives of approaching the Biden case differently than it approached a similar discovery of classified documents among the records at former President Donald Trump's home. Last week, the National Archives informed the committee it would not provide any documents to lawmakers unless the Justice Department authorized the disclosure. The appointment of special counsel Robert Hur to oversee the Biden investigation has complicated lawmakers' efforts to get answers from the several federal agencies involved in the case. On Wednesday, Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines met with members of the Senate Intelligence Committee in a classified setting and refused to answer any questions about the Biden and Trump investigations, citing the involvement of special counsels in both cases.

[An RNC Remade by Trump Backs Away From His 2024 Campaign](#)

[Adam Schiff running for Senate in California, joining crowded 2024 primary \(NBC News\)](#)

Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., announced Thursday he's running for Senate in 2024, joining what's expected to be a crowded Democratic primary race for the seat held by Sen. Dianne Feinstein. "We're in the fight of our lives for the future of our country. Our democracy is under assault from MAGA extremists, who care only about gaining power and keeping it. And our economy is simply not working for millions of Americans, who are working harder than ever just to get by," Schiff said in a statement launching his campaign. Feinstein has not announced her plans, but already three prominent California Democrats have set their sights on replacing her: Schiff and Reps. Katie Porter and Barbara Lee. Schiff, 62, has served in the House since 2001 and just recently ended his tenure as the chair of the House Intelligence Committee during which he played a key role in the first impeachment of former President Donald Trump. He previously served as ranking member of the panel when Republicans held the House majority between 2015 and 2019. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., on Tuesday blocked Schiff and Rep. Eric Swalwell, D-Calif., from serving on the Intelligence Committee, making good on a promise he made last year. Porter, who's served in the House since 2019, launched a campaign for the same Senate seat earlier this month. A day later, Rep. Barbara Lee, D-Calif., told members of the Congressional Black Caucus that she also plans to run for Senate next year, adding her name to the list of contenders. Lee, 76, has served in the House since 1998 and previously served in both California's state Senate and state Assembly. She's currently the co-chair of the House Democratic Steering Committee. Feinstein, 89, still hasn't made her re-election intentions known yet, but a source with direct knowledge told NBC News that Schiff had previously met with the California senator to inform her of his intentions. Feinstein is expected to retire after her current term but has remained tight-lipped on her plans and has said she would not leave early. A spokesperson for Feinstein told the Los Angeles Times last month that she "has no plans to step down and will announce her plans for 2024 at the appropriate time."

Advanced Technologies

[FBI Disrupts 'Hive' Ransomware Group \(WSJ\)](#)

U.S. authorities seized the servers of the notorious Hive ransomware group after entering its networks and capturing keys to decrypt its software, the Justice Department said on Thursday, calling its effort a "21st-century cyber stakeout." The group linked to Hive

ransomware is widely seen by authorities and cybersecurity experts as one of the most prolific and dangerous cybercriminal actors in recent years. They have been linked to attacks on more than 1,500 victims including hospitals and schools—and have extorted more than \$100 million in ransom payments, the Justice Department said. In an operation that began in the summer in Tampa, Fla., FBI agents infiltrated Hive's network and used the access to identify victims and provide them keys with which to take back control of their networks, officials said. The effort blocked some \$130 million in demanded ransoms, department officials said. Officials didn't announce arrests Thursday but said their investigation was still under way. They declined to specify where the people behind the Hive ransomware were based. Experts have said the majority of criminal ransomware groups are based in eastern Europe, particularly in Russia and Russian-speaking countries. In coordinated operations on Wednesday, German and Dutch police also seized servers associated with the group. Hive's website was inaccessible Thursday, flashing a message stating it had been seized as part of a law-enforcement action.

[Head of Israeli Cyber Firm NSO Group Reaffirms Company Commitment to Spyware](#)

[Justice Department sues Google over dominance in online advertising \(Washington Post\)](#)

The Justice Department and eight state attorneys general on Tuesday brought an antitrust lawsuit against Google, setting up a high-stakes test of the Biden administration's commitment to dismantling concentration in Silicon Valley. The lawsuit, the second federal case pending against the search giant, alleges that the company's core ad business should be broken up because Google allegedly used its dominant position in the online ad industry to box out competitors. By neutralizing rivals and forcing publishers to use its products, Google was able to dictate the rules of the marketplace for online ads, the lawsuit says. The action poses a significant financial threat to the company, which has been slashing jobs during a pullback in advertising. The suit seeks to force Google to sell off much of its advertising technology products, which enable the buying, selling and placement of ads across Google Search, YouTube and millions of other websites. The company's advertising network brought in \$7.9 billion for the company in the third quarter of 2022, about the same as all of Google's revenue from YouTube. The lawsuit marks the Justice Department's first antitrust suit against a tech giant during the Biden administration, as a growing push to rein in the power of tech giants' founders. President Biden's decision to tap industry critics as top antitrust enforcers was widely viewed as the dawn of a Washington reckoning for Big Tech, but the last Congress did not pass new laws reining in Silicon Valley's power. Antitrust cases also take years to move through the courts, setting up a race against the clock for the administration.

[Commerce's draft space traffic management service goes beyond DoD's baseline](#)

[Pentagon updates guidance for development, fielding and employment of autonomous weapon systems \(Defense Scoop\)](#)

The Pentagon has provided updated guidance for Defense officials who will be responsible for overseeing the design, development, acquisition, testing, fielding and employment of autonomous weapon systems — and created a new working group to facilitate senior-level reviews of the technology. The move comes as the U.S. military is embracing artificial intelligence, unmanned platforms and other tech that could give weapon systems much more autonomy than those of previous eras. The updated DOD Directive 3000.09, “Autonomy in Weapon Systems,” was signed off by Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks and went into effect Wednesday. It’s the first major update since 2012. According to the updated directive, these kinds of technologies must be designed to allow commanders and operators to exercise “appropriate levels of human judgment” over the use of force. And they will be put through “rigorous” hardware and software verification and validation as well as “realistic” operational test and evaluation. With some exceptions, before autonomous weapons can enter formal development they must be approved by the undersecretary of defense for policy, undersecretary of defense for research and engineering, and the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Military Installations & Communities

[New U.S. Base on Guam Is Aimed at Deterring China \(WSJ\)](#)

The U.S. Marine Corps marked the opening of a new base on America’s westernmost Pacific island, as the Pentagon redirects its forces to counter China, which Washington has identified as a growing threat to U.S. security. The first new Marine base since 1952, it is still under construction. It will eventually house 5,000 Marines tasked in the short term with deterring and detecting threats in the region. Longer-term, the Guam base, about equidistant from Japan and Taiwan, is also slated to be a hub for Marines on Guam and across the Northern Mariana Islands to train for protecting Pacific islands, including vital sea lanes, in the event of an invasion. As U.S. concerns grow about China’s military power, and the threat to Taiwan, the base would prepare more Marines for potential conflict in the Western Pacific islands. Marines would be closer to the front lines of a potential conflict, available to quickly travel from island to island in small teams armed with anti ship missiles to detect, harass and destroy enemy vessels. The new base would also

reduce U.S. reliance on keeping large numbers of troops in Japan, where their presence has at times caused local resentment. If there is a conflict with China, the Marines would be among the first ground forces to respond. In the absence of conflict, troops in Guam could practice live-fire exercises, while those stationed in the Northern Mariana Islands could practice maneuvers and overland transfers, defense officials said.

[Soldiers Need to Check If Their Families Have Health Care After IT Snafu Kicked 25,000 Beneficiaries Off Tricare](#)

[Democrat Threatens to Hold Up Pentagon Nominees over Space Command HQ Decision \(Military.com\)](#)

A Colorado Democrat is threatening to hold up nominees for the Pentagon's top positions because Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin has declined to meet and discuss the decision to move U.S. Space Command headquarters from his home state to Alabama. U.S. Sen. Michael Bennet, D-Colo., voted against confirming Brendan Owens as assistant secretary of defense for energy and installations on Monday evening, as the Senate works to put President Joe Biden's nominees in place at the Pentagon. "The [Pentagon] has repeatedly ignored my request for a meeting with Secretary Austin about the Space Command basing decision," Bennet tweeted Monday. "For that reason, I voted against Brendan Owens' nomination tonight, and will consider holds on other Pentagon nominees until a meeting takes place." Fellow Colorado Democrat, Sen. John Hickenlooper, joined Bennet in opposing Owens. The two have been pushing for answers on the long-delayed decision on whether the headquarters for U.S. Space Command will remain in Colorado Springs, Colorado, or move to Huntsville, Alabama, a saga that has been drawn out since the waning days of President Donald Trump's administration.

[New 'black box' pilot program aims to reduce military rollover deaths](#)

[Abbott signs Texas-US military infrastructure agreement \(Jacksonville Progress\)](#)

The Texas Department of Transportation and the U.S. Military entered into an agreement Wednesday that would authorize TxDOT to complete roadway maintenance and repair projects as well as purchase bulk materials on military land. The 10-year Statewide Intergovernmental Support Agreement, or S-IGSA, will bolster infrastructure and transportation improvements on federal military property across the state. It is anticipated to decrease project lead time, reduce civilian staff burden and result in an estimated cost

savings of 25% to all participating military installations, officials said. “(This agreement) allows military departments to tap into the significant expertise of state agencies and local governments expertise that we don't necessarily have in house,” said Rachel Jacobson, assistant secretary to the United States Army Installation, Energy and Environment. “By partnering with state agencies such as Texas, it really helps us tremendously.” The S-IGSA is the largest agreement between a state and the U.S. military in the country, Gov. Greg Abbott said. Texas is the home of 15 military installations, many of which are the largest employers in their areas. Abbott, who signed the agreement, said that by working together the U.S. military and TxDOT will ensure that projects at Texas bases will be built faster and cheaper.

Homeland Security

[After promising to expand asylum, Biden moves to limit access amid record border arrivals \(CBS News\)](#)

During his second week in office, President Biden gave officials nine months to issue regulations that could make it easier for migrants fleeing gang or domestic violence to secure asylum, a policy that would signal a clear repudiation of Trump administration attempts to close off the U.S. asylum system. But two years later, amid record arrivals along the U.S.-Mexico border, the Biden administration has yet to issue the rules that could expand asylum eligibility. Instead, the administration finds itself expanding a Trump-era border policy that blocks certain migrants from requesting asylum and proposing limits on asylum eligibility. Since Mr. Biden commissioned the asylum eligibility rules in a February 2021 executive order; there have been disagreements within his administration over how generous the regulations should be. Some top administration officials have voiced concern about issuing rules that could make additional migrants eligible for asylum and make it more difficult to deport them while the administration is focused on reducing unlawful border crossings, the sources said. Despite Mr. Biden instructing his administration to issue them before November 2021, it's unclear when the regulations might be published. An administration official said the rules are designed to create uniform asylum eligibility standards and ensure "fairness and efficiency, not making it any easier or harder to get asylum." But advocates for asylum-seekers said the regulations could help certain migrants, including women fleeing gender-based violence, to win asylum amid decades of inconsistent court decisions on these cases. The delay in issuing the regulations illustrates a broader tension in the administration between Mr. Biden's lofty campaign promises to dismantle his predecessor's hardline asylum policies and the political and operational implications of an unprecedented migration crisis along the southern border.

[Department of Homeland Security, NYPD target meth suppliers in raids in Washington Heights and New Jersey](#)

[Oath Keepers Members Found Guilty of Seditious Conspiracy in Jan. 6 Riot \(WSJ\)](#)

A jury on Monday found four Oath Keepers members guilty of seditious conspiracy in connection with the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol, handing down the latest criminal convictions against the far-right group. The verdict from a Washington, D.C., federal jury came nearly two months after Oath Keepers founder Stewart Rhodes and another member of the militia group, Kelly Meggs, were found guilty of seditious conspiracy, a rarely used charge with a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. In that earlier trial, three other members of the Oath Keepers were found guilty of lesser charges. In the latest trial, federal prosecutors secured convictions against all four defendants—Edward Vallejo, Roberto Minuta, Joseph Hackett and David Moerschel—on the seditious-conspiracy charge. The jury also found them guilty of conspiring to obstruct an official proceeding and of conspiring to destroy federal property. The jury reached its verdict as five members of the Proud Boys, another far-right group, are facing trial on seditious conspiracy charges in Washington federal court. Earlier on Monday, another jury convicted an Arkansas man who posed for photographs with his feet on a desk in the office of then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi during the riot at the Capitol. For the Justice Department, the closely watched seditious-conspiracy trials have carried both legal and symbolic significance in the wave of hundreds of criminal prosecutions stemming from the assault on the Capitol. Prosecutors argued in both cases that the Capitol assault resulted in part from a deliberate plan to prevent the peaceful transfer of power from former President Donald Trump to President Biden following the 2020 election.

[Atlanta Riot Suspects Facing Domestic Terrorism Charges](#)

[Social media platforms face pressure to stop online drug dealers who target kids \(NPR\)](#)

Three years ago Amy Neville went to her son Alex's bedroom and found the 14-year-old lying dead on a bean bag chair. He had overdosed — Neville describes it as a "poisoning" — on fentanyl. "An amazing child who could do anything he set his mind to was gone," Neville testified Wednesday before a House panel in Washington, D.C. According to Neville, her son began experimenting with illicit opioids and other drugs while using the social media site Snapchat. "It was on Snapchat that Alex was able to visit with dealers and other users. It was on Snapchat that he set up a deal to get pills," she said. The dealer who sold fentanyl to Alex was never caught or prosecuted. Snapchat hasn't acknowledged

any role in his death. During testimony Wednesday, Neville said social media companies aren't being held accountable for putting children like Alex in danger. She and other witnesses called for changes to a provision of federal law known as Section 230. Supporters of Section 230 argue it has allowed tech companies to open platforms to a wide array of speech. They fear changes could lead to a flood of lawsuits, forcing companies to curb controversial topics. But critics at Wednesday's hearing said immunity from civil lawsuits has allowed social media companies to focus on profits that come from attracting and engaging young people, while neglecting safety.

Transportation & Infrastructure

[Joe Manchin to Introduce Bill to Delay EV Tax Credits \(WSJ\)](#)

Sen. Joe Manchin (D., W.Va.) said he would introduce legislation Wednesday that delays implementation of new tax credits for electric vehicles amid disagreements with the Treasury Department over how to implement the program, a component of the Inflation Reduction Act. The tax credits of up to \$7,500 per vehicle have come under fire from European and Asian allies who say rules aimed at spurring domestic production of vehicles and batteries are unfair to foreign manufacturers. Mr. Manchin's new bill follows a decision by the Treasury Department in December to delay the issuance of the rules on battery contents and minerals until March, while allowing the rest of the program to be implemented on Jan. 1. The bill directs the Treasury Department to stop issuing tax credits for vehicles that don't comply with battery requirements. With strong support from Democratic lawmakers for the IRA, however, Mr. Manchin's bill faces an uphill battle. A Democratic Senate aide said there was currently no co-sponsor for the bill and that he hasn't reached out to other Democratic members of Congress. Mr. Manchin, an author of the legislation, has been critical of the stance of the Treasury Department, which is tasked with writing details for implementing the program.

[Airbus to Hire 13,000 Workers as Delivery Delays Rise](#)

[Transportation Department probe will look at whether Southwest over-scheduled flights \(NBC News\)](#)

The Transportation Department is in the initial phases of an investigation into Southwest Airlines' travel meltdown, and it will look at whether executives overscheduled flights, a spokesperson said. Southwest canceled thousands of flights, slashing around two-thirds of its daily schedule, for days as it struggled to recover from winter weather even as other

airlines managed. Passengers were stranded and scrambled to find other ways to get home. The Transportation Department is “probing whether Southwest executives engaged in unrealistic scheduling of flights which under federal law is considered an unfair and deceptive practice,” the spokesperson said. Southwest said in a statement Wednesday that it was prepared, but there was a massive winter storm. It said it will continue to cooperate with all inquiries. The Transportation Department said it was also ensuring Southwest was providing refunds and reimbursements to passengers. The cancellations, which came after the Christmas holiday, infuriated passengers. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg called them unacceptable and said his department would look at its scheduling system. Southwest canceled an estimated 11,000 flights in the week after Christmas, and it has pinned the cost of the fiasco at upward of \$800 million. Southwest has called its performance unacceptable and apologized. CEO Bob Jordan said this month that the company is budgeted to spend \$1 billion on “investments, upgrades, and maintenance of our IT systems.”

[737 MAX Crash Victims’ Families Seek Monitor for Boeing](#)

[EU lines up 70 projects to rival China’s Belt and Road infrastructure spending \(Politico\)](#)

The European Union’s riposte to China’s web of trade and infrastructure projects spanning the globe is finally getting real. Europe’s flagship Global Gateway projects seek to offer developing countries an alternative to China’s strategic largesse in the Belt and Road Initiative, through which Beijing projects its power along strategic trade routes via port developments, energy schemes and telecoms networks. The first projects of EU’s Global Gateway include a digital cable under the Black Sea; a submarine optical fiber cable to connect the Mediterranean and Northern African countries, and a dam and hydroelectric plant in Cameroon. Those are just some of the 70 projects that the EU is prioritizing this year under the Global Gateway, according to a document obtained by Politico. The Global Gateway aims to mobilize up to €300 billion in public and private funds by 2027 to finance EU infrastructure projects abroad. By comparison, China has invested nearly \$2.3 trillion into nearly 4,000 overseas investment and construction projects since 2005 — giving Beijing a big head start just as the EU launches its effort to extend its economic reach. The West has faced repeated criticism that its efforts to challenge the Belt and Road are too fragmented and slow. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told a meeting of EU foreign ministers last month that the bloc needed to raise its game and deliver visible results on the ground. That meeting led to the selection of the first batch of projects. Some of the Global Gateway projects are low-hanging fruit, with concrete steps in prospect this year such as starting construction work, signing a memorandum of understanding or lining up financing. Meanwhile, the EU will start laying the groundwork for other projects in the next coming years.

Biotechnology & Healthcare

[Big pharma groups rejoin battle with governments on drug prices \(Financial Times\)](#)

If there was some sort of a truce on drug prices between big pharma and politicians during the coronavirus pandemic, it ended last week in spectacular fashion. US groups Eli Lilly and AbbVie pulled out of the strictest price regime in Europe — after NHS spending on branded drugs in 2022 handed the industry £3.3bn in clawback costs, about 26.5 per cent of UK sales. Drugmakers are also considering whether to withdraw from an agreement with the French government, according to one person familiar with the discussions. The pharma industry had hoped its role in creating vaccines and drugs that helped lift lockdowns would prove its economic value to politicians, who have often accused it of putting profits before patients. But Thomas Cueni, director-general of the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations, said governments had gone from appreciating rapid innovation during the pandemic, to needing to “squeeze” drugmakers because of financial pressure elsewhere. The industry was frustrated, he said, about the mismatch between politicians trying to attract investment and the much tougher commercial environment. Each side has reason to negotiate hard. The pandemic has put healthcare systems under pressure to use their budgets to clear patient backlogs, while inflation has increased their costs almost everywhere. In the pharmaceutical industry, companies are for the first time facing restrictions on pricing in the US, their largest market. From next year, the federal government will, for the first time, have the power to negotiate prices for some of the most expensive treatments purchased by Medicare, the taxpayer-funded healthcare scheme for retirees.

[Emailing Your Doctor May Carry a Fee](#)

[Artificial intelligence could save healthcare industry \\$360B a year \(Healthcare Dive\)](#)

The buzz around AI has increased as the ChatGPT model takes the internet by storm. It's no different in healthcare. The ChatGPT AI tool has passed the U.S. medical licensing exam, authored a number of scientific papers and is being used to appeal insurance denials, hinting at real-world applications for the algorithms. However, actual adoption of AI-based tools in the healthcare industry is low, despite research suggesting benefits of the tech. In the new paper, researchers estimate that broader adoption of AI could lead to savings between 5% and 10% in healthcare spending, or roughly \$200 billion to \$360 billion a year. The estimates are based on AI use cases employing current technologies that are attainable within the next five years, without sacrificing quality or access. For

hospitals, the cost savings come mostly from improved clinical operations, quality and safety — like optimizing operating rooms, or detecting adverse events. The benefits are similar for physician groups, which could leverage AI for continuity of care, like referral management. Health insurers would see savings from use cases that improve claims management, like automating prior authorization, along with healthcare and provider relationship management, including preventing readmissions and provider directory management. Based on the AI-driven use cases, private payers could save roughly 7% to 9% of their total costs, amounting to \$80 billion to \$110 billion in annual savings within the next five years. Physician groups could save 3% to 8% of costs, amounting to between \$20 billion and \$60 billion in savings. Meanwhile, hospitals could see savings between 4% to 11%, or between \$60 billion and \$120 billion each year, the report estimates.

[A Dilemma for Governments: How to Pay for Million-Dollar Therapies](#)

[U.S. raises 'grave concerns' over Mexico's agricultural biotech policy \(Reuters\)](#)

U.S. officials raised "grave concerns" over Mexico's agricultural biotechnology policies in meetings with their Mexican counterparts on Monday, the office of U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai said. "We made it clear today that if this issue is not resolved, we will consider all options, including taking formal steps to enforce our rights under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement," the USTR office said in a statement. U.S. agriculture and trade officials traveled to Mexico to discuss Mexico's approach to agricultural biotech products.

Climate & Development

[EV Hype Overshadows Public Transit as a Climate Fix \(Bloomberg\)](#)

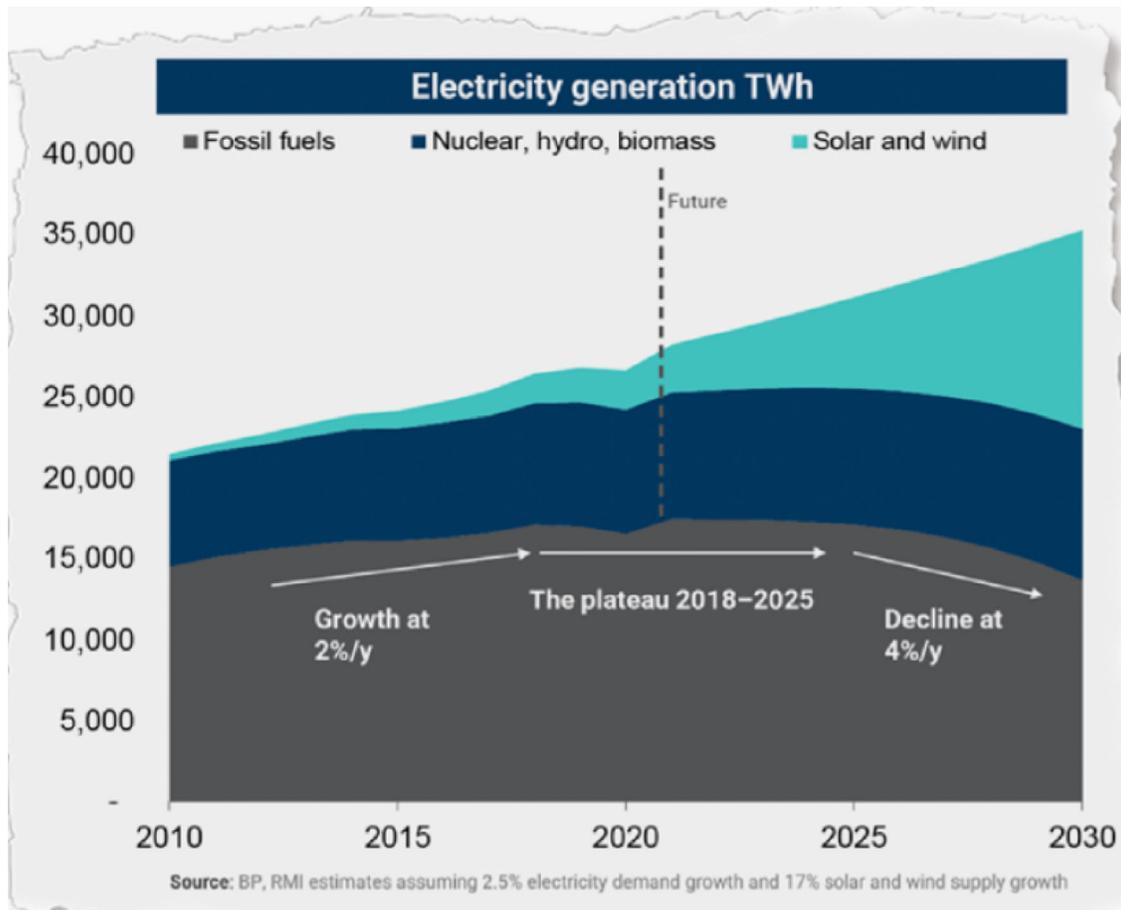
President Joe Biden has fought for tax breaks for EV buyers, urged carmakers to convert their fleets and secured billions of dollars to wire a coast-to-coast network of charging stations. In 2021, he even slipped behind the wheel of an electric Jeep Wrangler and took a spin around the White House with news cameras whirring. But while climate activists have cheered the high-profile commitment of Biden — as well as a slew of governors, mayors and automakers across the country — to shift the nation to non-polluting vehicles and halve US carbon emissions by 2030, many have been frustrated by the comparative lack of attention paid to convincing Americans to use a more powerful tool against climate change: leaving their cars at home and using public transportation. "There is no way to meet our climate targets without a huge investment in public transportation," Keya

Chatterjee, executive director of the US Climate Action Network, said. “There has just been a much larger push around the expansion of electric vehicles, which is incredibly important, but it’s only serving people who can afford a pretty big upfront investment.”

[When Will We Hit Peak Fossil Fuels? Maybe We Already Have](#)

[Outdated EPA Standards Allow Oil Refineries to Pollute Waterways \(Inside Climate News\)](#)

Neighbors of refineries can see the glowing flares and visible plumes of air pollution rising into the sky. But water pollution often happens at ground level, or below, out of sight for both local residents and environmental regulators. In a new report, the nonprofit Environmental Integrity Project tallied toxic discharges of unregulated pollutants self-reported by refineries and found that seven of the nation’s 10 worst polluters of total dissolved solids operated along the Texas coast. “Oil refineries are major sources of water pollution that have largely escaped public notice and accountability,” said Eric Schaeffer, the nonprofit’s executive director. “Texas is an industry state. I’m not surprised to see such big discharges.” Schaeffer, a former enforcement director at the Environmental Protection Agency, said federal pollution standards dating to the 1980s allow refineries to dump liquid waste into public waterways. The organization analyzed unregulated discharges that the EPA does not address in its rules for refineries. According to the EIP report, federal law regulates just 10 pollutants from refineries’ liquid discharge through standards last updated in 1985. EIP called on the EPA to update its rules and reduce water contamination from the refinery sector.



[Climate Change May Usher in a New Era of Trade Wars](#)

[Big winners from Biden's climate law: Republicans who voted against it \(Politico\)](#)

They didn't vote for it, they don't like it and they're working to undermine it — but Republicans are reaping the benefits of Democrats' climate law. In the five months since the Inflation Reduction Act became law, companies have announced tens of billions of dollars in renewable energy, battery and electric vehicle projects that will benefit from incentives in President Joe Biden's signature law, aimed at expanding domestic manufacturing in clean energy and reducing dependence on Chinese imports. In fact, roughly two-thirds of the major projects are in districts whose Republican lawmakers opposed the Inflation Reduction Act, according to a POLITICO analysis of major green energy manufacturing announcements made since the bill's enactment. The dynamic has prompted a tricky balancing act for the GOP: Tout the jobs and economic benefits coming

to their states and districts, but not the bill that helped create them. The results are also potentially awkward for Democrats who expended political capital and more than a year of wrangling to enact the bill, only to see Republican lawmakers and governors sharing in the jobs and positive headlines it's creating — although Democrats say they also see longer-term benefits for the nation in building GOP support for alternatives to fossil fuels.

Next Week's Hearings

Armed Service Committees

House: None Listed

Senate: None Listed

Appropriation Committees

House: None Listed

Senate: None Listed

Homeland Security Committees

House: None Listed

Senate: None Listed

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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Division of Animal & Food Industry Services

Office of Veterinary Services

P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, Virginia 23218

Phone: 804-692-4001 Fax: 804-371-2380 Hearing Impaired: 800-828-1120

www.vdacs.virginia.gov

Joseph W. Guthrie
Commissioner

LETTER OF NOTIFICATION

January 17, 2023

To: Mary Bunting, City Manager, City of Hampton
22 Lincoln Street, Hampton, VA 23669

J. Randall Wheeler, City Manager, City of Poquoson
500 City Hall Avenue, Poquoson, VA 23662

Cynthia Rohlf, City Manager, City of Newport News
2400 Washington Avenue, Newport News, VA 23607

Neil Morgan, County Administrator, York County
P.O. Box 532, Yorktown, VA 23690

On November 21, 2022, I inspected the **Newport News Public Animal Shelter**, which is also the public animal shelter for Hampton, Poquoson, and York County. This inspection was conducted in order to evaluate compliance with the Virginia Comprehensive Animal Care laws, as well as pursuant regulations and directives. Please find attached the **Animal Shelter Inspection Summary** and the **Animal Shelter Inspection Form** (a copy of which was left on site at the conclusion of the inspection). This inspection report is being issued to you as the representatives of the local governing bodies as referenced in Virginia Code section §3.2-6546. The result of this inspection is as follows:

There were no significant findings of noncompliance.

There were findings of non-critical violation.

A description of the findings is included on the attached "**Animal Shelter Inspection Summary**". Failure to correct the violation(s) may result in referral of this case for enforcement action. You may submit a written response to this inspection, providing an update on actions taken or planned in order to achieve compliance, for consideration in the process of future inspections, enforcement, and civil penalty assessment. *In accordance with the Office of Veterinary Services Civil Penalty Matrix, these violations are regarded as "first non-critical violation" (the first cited non-critical noncompliance with the Code of Virginia or Virginia Administrative Code found upon an animal shelter inspection by a State Veterinarian's representative within the preceding five calendar years). The Civil Penalty Matrix can be found online at: <https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/pdf/Civil-Penalty-Matrix.pdf>*

There were findings of critical violation and/or repeat non-critical violation. This case has been referred for determination of civil penalty assessment. You will be issued a notification package by the State Veterinarian's Representative handling your case, which will include further details and instructions.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at 804-692-4001 or sherry.helsel@vdacs.virginia.gov.

Respectfully,

Sherry Helsel, LVT
Animal Care Inspector Senior



**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE AND
CONSUMER SERVICES**

**DIVISION OF ANIMAL & FOOD INDUSTRY SERVICES
OFFICE OF VETERINARY SERVICES – ANIMAL CARE
P.O. BOX 1163
RICHMOND, VA 23218
804-692-4001**

ANIMAL SHELTER INSPECTION SUMMARY

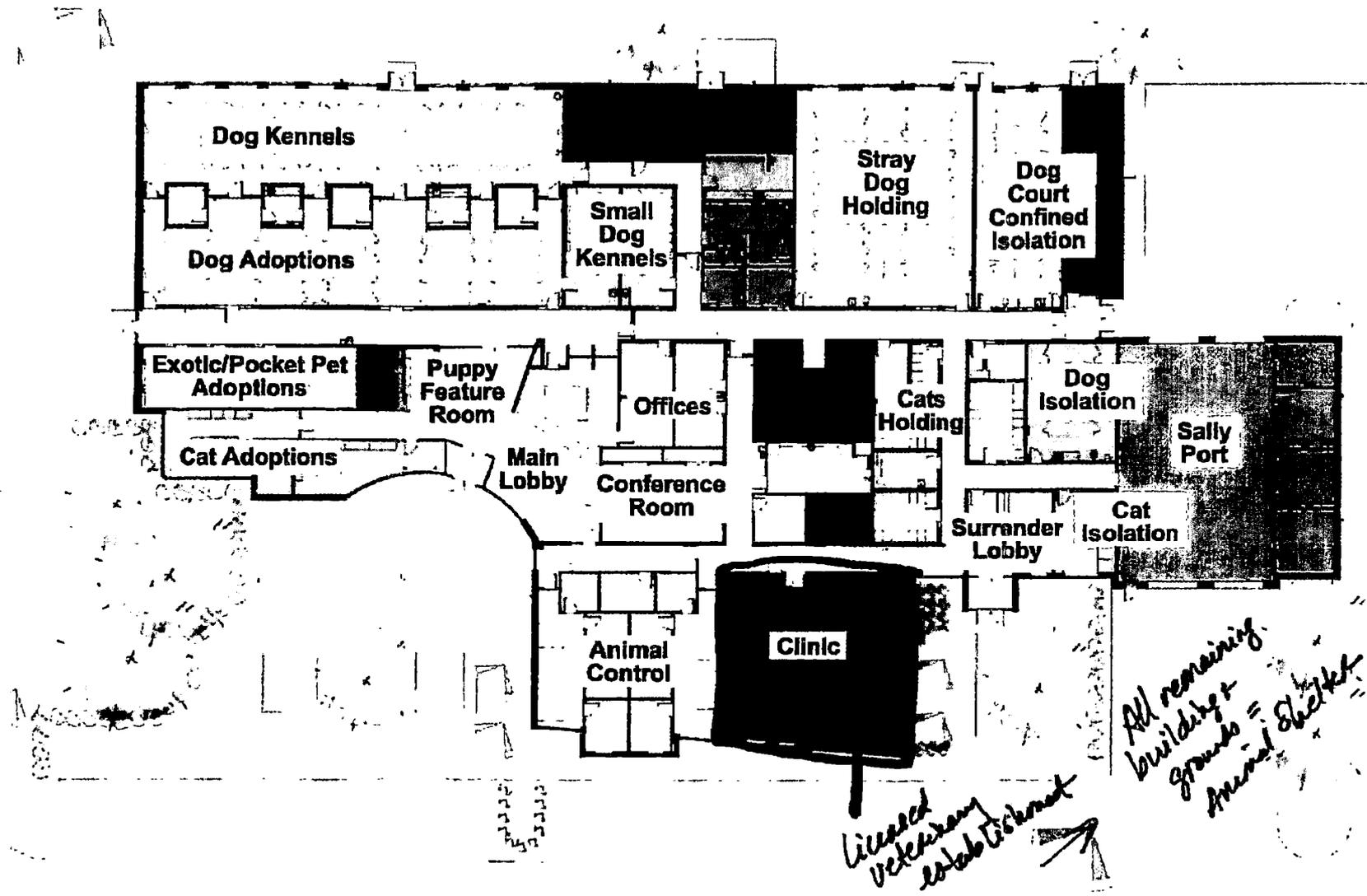
Facility Name/ID: Newport News Public Animal Shelter		Unannounced Inspection	
		Date: 11/21/22	
Facility Physical Address: 5843 Jefferson Avenue Newport News, VA 23605		Facility Mailing Address: 5843 Jefferson Avenue Newport News, VA 23605	
Facility Telephone Number: 757-933-8900		Facility Email Address: pras-reunite@nnva.gov	
Type of Facility: Public Animal Shelter	Owned By: Local Governing Body	Operated By: Local Governing Body	
Facility Designation: Designated Portion of Building – Schematic Attached		Weekly Hours of Public Access: Monday – Sunday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	
Contractual Agreements: Jointly owned by Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, and York County. Operated by City of Newport News.			
Facility Supervisor: Roger Iles		Facility Supervisor Email Address: riles@nnva.gov	
Number of Dogs on Site: 150	Number of Cats on Site: 171	Number of Other Companion Animals on Site: 27	
Responsible Authority Name, Title, and Address:			
Mary Bunting, City Manager, City of Hampton 22 Lincoln Street, Hampton, VA 23669		J. Randall Wheeler, City Manager, City of Poquoson 500 City Hall Avenue, Poquoson, VA 23662	
Cynthia Rohlf, City Manager, City of Newport News 2400 Washington Avenue, Newport News, VA 23607		Neil Morgan, County Administrator, York County P.O. Box 532, Yorktown, VA 23690	

NARRATIVE SUMMARY (if applicable):

INSPECTION FINDINGS

There were no significant findings of noncompliance. No violations were cited.

State Veterinarian's Representative	
Name: Sherry Helsel, LVT	Signature:
Title: Animal Care Inspector Senior	Date: 1/17/23



Peninsula Regional Animal Shelter

5843 Jefferson Avenue, Newport News, VA 23605



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE AND
CONSUMER SERVICES

DIVISION OF ANIMAL & FOOD INDUSTRY SERVICES
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P.O. BOX 1163
RICHMOND, VA 23218
804-692-4001

ANIMAL SHELTER INSPECTION FORM

Facility Name/ID: *Newport News
Public Animal Shelter*

Date: *11/21/22*

Time: *7:00p*

Elements of Inspection

- 1) Animals on premises. Inspected Not Inspected – Explain:
- 2) Animal enclosures. Inspected Not Inspected – Explain:
- 3) Areas of facility. Inspected Not Inspected – Explain:
- 4) Methods of animal euthanasia. Inspected Not Inspected – Explain:
- 5) Other (specify or indicate "N/A"): *N/A*

Results of Inspection

No Violations Cited

Violations Cited (Details of the violations will be provided in an Inspection Summary and included in the Inspection Report and mailed to the responsible authority. The Inspection Report will also include information regarding questions or submission of a response upon receipt of the report.)

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3.2-6503 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-20 (A) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-30 (C) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-150-120 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3.2-6546 (B) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-20 (B) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-40 (A) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-150-130 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3.2-6546 (C) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-20 (C) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-40 (B) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-150-140 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3.2-6546 (D) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-20 (D) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-40 (C) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3.2-6557 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-20 (E) | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-40 (D) | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3.2-6574 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-30 (A) | | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3.2-6575 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 VAC 5-111-30 (B) | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

Reference Materials Provided

- Virginia Administrative Code, Title 2, Agency 5, Chapter 111 "Public and Private Animal Shelters"
- Virginia Administrative Code, Title 2, Agency 5, Chapter 150 "Rules and Regulations Governing the Transportation of Companion Animals"
- VDACS Guidance Document "Guidelines Governing the Veterinary Protocols Required by Virginia Administrative Code 2 VAC-5-111-30"
- Division Administrative Directive 79-1 "Methods Prescribed or Approved for Animal Euthanasia and Competency Certification Requirements"
- VDACS Form "Animal Custody Record"
- Virginia Animal Shelter Civil Penalty Matrix – Guidelines for Enforcement
- Other (Specify):

State Veterinarian's Representative

Name: *Sherry Helzel LVT*

Signature: *Sherry Helzel*

REVIEWED WITH: Printed Name *Amy Burnup*

Signature *[Signature]*

Date *11/21/22*