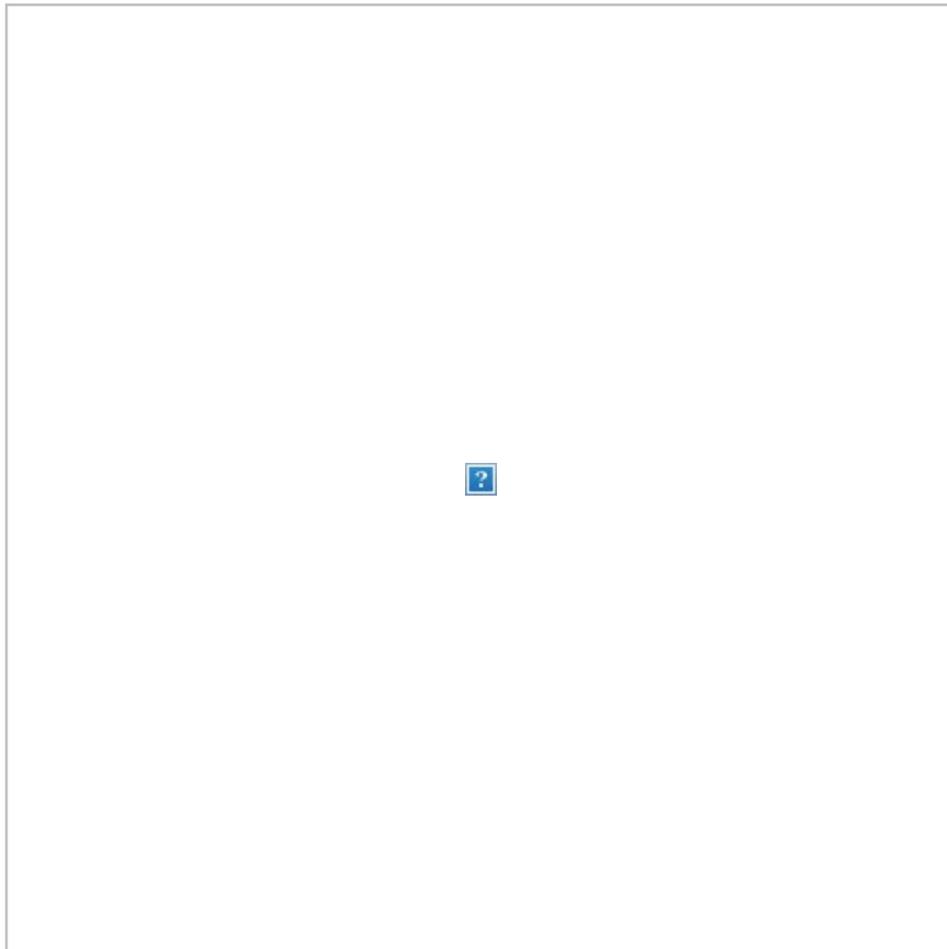
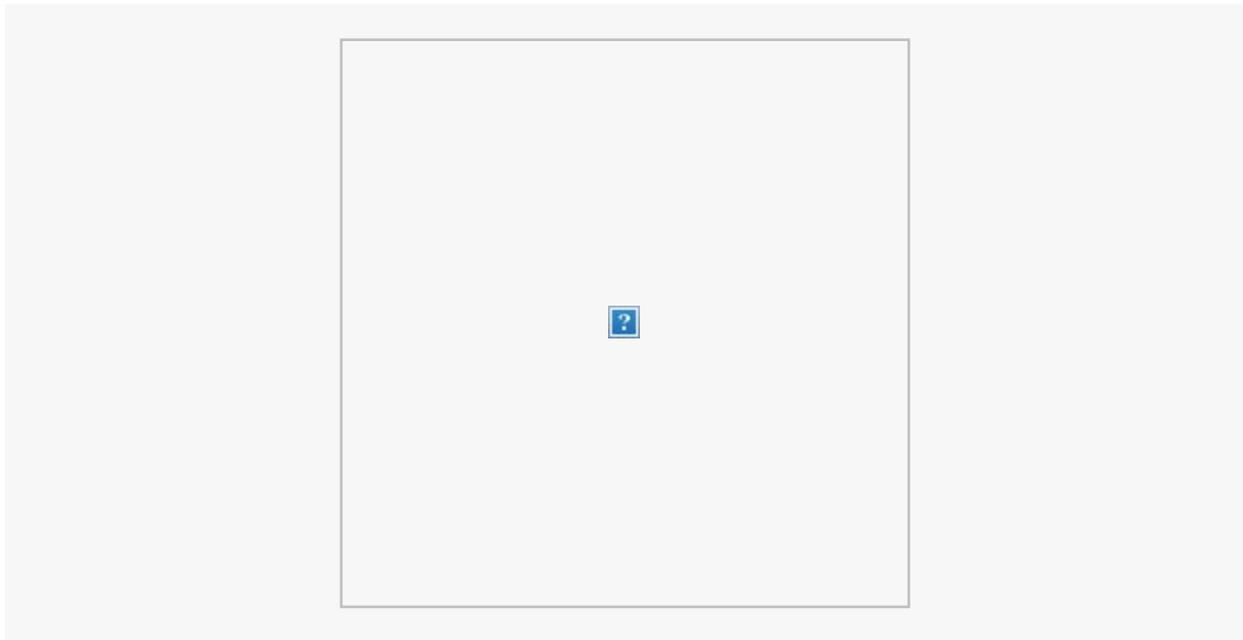


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May 10, 2024

Headlines - Aerospace & Defense - Budget & Economy - Advanced Tech - Military Installations & Communities - Homeland Security - Transportation & Infrastructure - Biotech & Healthcare - Climate & Development

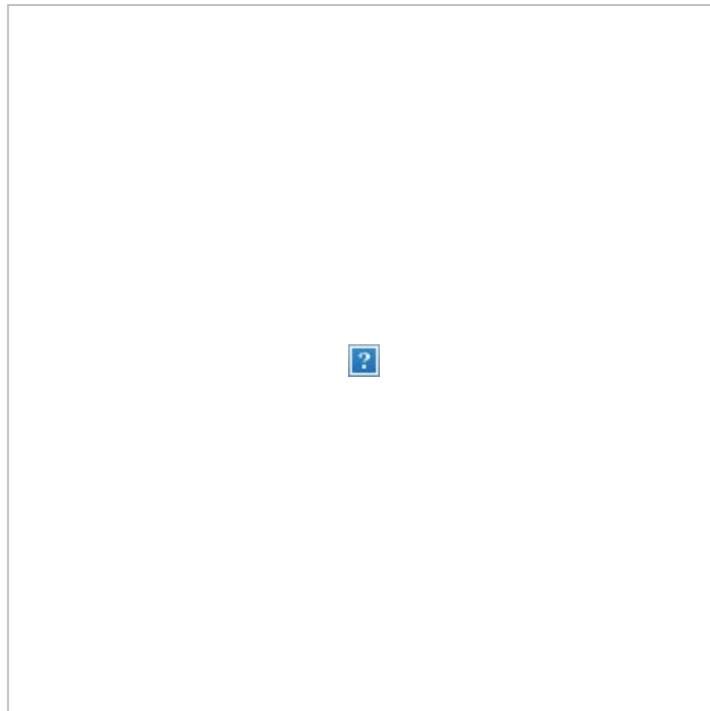
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Notable Headlines

- [No shortage of House members who are vulnerable this year](#)
- [Arizona doctors want repealed abortion law to immediately take effect](#)
- [Columbia University graduation ceremonies begin today after main commencement canceled](#)
- [The DNC Is Preparing for the Worst in Chicago — Without the Help of the City's Mayor](#)
- [An angry Trump gathers allies to push against Stormy Daniels](#)

Worth reading: [Strapped down, blindfolded, held in diapers: Israeli whistleblowers detail abuse of Palestinians in shadowy detention center](#)

View From The Hill



The incessant drama that has plagued the 118th Congress continued this week, as Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA) [triggered](#) her Motion to Vacate (MTV) measure on the House Floor, forcing a vote on whether to oust House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA). Republican House leadership moved immediately to a vote to table the motion, dispensing easily with the MTV as most House Democrats and all but eleven House Republicans

voted to protect Johnson. The final tally was 359-43. With the MTV having been triggered for the second time within a year, and House Republicans regularly being blocked by their own colleagues on moving legislation, sentiment is [building](#) throughout the House for rules changes that would make it harder to oust the speaker and penalize Members who throw up roadblocks for leadership. It remains to be seen whether House Republican leadership will move to make such changes, however.

Legislatively, Congress is struggling to pass reauthorizing legislation for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) by the end of this week when the current reauthorization expires. The trouble mostly lies in the Senate, where controversy around whether to allow for votes on amendments unrelated to the FAA is stalling consideration, as Senators seek to notch wins for individual policy priorities on a must-pass bill in an election year. The House [sent](#) a fresh, short-term extension of existing authorities to the Senate as a backup, should it be needed.

Congressional reactions were [mixed](#) after President Biden announced that the United States was pausing lethal arms deliveries to Israel in an attempt to influence Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's planned military operation in Rafah in Gaza. Amidst widespread demonstrations across the U.S., particularly on college campuses, the Biden Administration is concerned about the significant civilian casualties an Israeli offensive in Rafah would likely inflict. Many Democrats expressed support for the pause, though not [all](#), while Republicans almost universally [condemned](#) the pause as a sign of diminishing support for Israel inside the White House.

The Senate Appropriations Committee [held](#) its annual budget hearing with Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin on Wednesday, with committee leaders on both sides of the aisle arguing that the President's fiscal year 2025 budget request for the Department of Defense was insufficient and in need of notable increases.

Representative Henry Cuellar (D-TX) was [indicted](#) on federal corruption charges this week, with the Department of Justice alleging the congressman and his wife took nearly \$600,000 in bribes from an Azerbaijani-controlled oil company and a Mexican bank via a shell company and, in-turn, promoted legislation and pressure federal officials to benefit the company and bank. While the Texas congressman has stepped down from his position as Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Committee Homeland Security Subcommittee, he maintains his innocence and is rebuffing calls to resign.

Aerospace & Defense

[Biden concerned over Boeing firefighters' lockout \(Reuters\)](#)

Nothing appears to be going Boeing's way recently. On top of safety concerns from the panel blowout earlier in the year, they are now dealing with a labor dispute. Boeing has locked out its unionized firefighters which has caused President Biden to express concern. This concern has increased the pressure on Boeing to resolve the dispute and get agreement on a contract. Biden has been supportive of unions in many labor disputes this year including when he joined the United Auto Workers picket line in September 2023. It is possible that Biden could get involved in the dispute and work to try and get the two sides to come to a contact that benefits everyone. Boeing is also in contract negotiations with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers who represent the "over 30,000 workers who build Boeing's 737 MAX jets."

[Russian forces attack Ukraine's Kharkiv region opening new front](#)

[Israel due to get billions of dollars more in US weapons despite Biden pause \(Reuters\)](#)

Billions of dollars worth of weapons remain in the pipeline for Israel, despite the “delay of one shipment of bombs and a review of others by President Biden’s administration, concerned their use in an assault could wreak more devastation of Palestinian civilians.” It is thought that Israel is planning a major invasion of Rafah and that they might use the weapons provided by the US in that attack. Even though the delay of the bomb shipment which is estimated to be tens of millions of dollars, there is still plenty of military equipment scheduled to go to Israel. They include, “joint direct attack munitions, tank rounds, mortars and armored tactical vehicles.”

Budget & Economy

[Biden touts new \\$3.3 billion Microsoft data center at failed Foxconn site Trump backed \(CNBC\)](#)

In 2017, Taiwan electronics manufacturer Foxconn announced a \$10 billion investment in southeastern Wisconsin. Then President Trump made that statement not realizing the company would drastically scale that back. Fast forward to 2024 with President Biden announcing plans by Microsoft to build a “\$3.3 billion data center...that will create thousands of jobs in the presidential election battleground state.” The White House said the investment Microsoft is making would create 2,300 union construction jobs and around 2,000 permanent jobs in the long run. This comes as Biden tries to sway voters in the vital state of Wisconsin and prove he is fostering an environment that creates jobs and encourages investments.

[Top Biden aide highlights upcoming tax showdown with GOP over 2017 cuts that are due to expire](#)

[Weekly jobless claims jump to 231,000, the highest since August \(CNBC\)](#)

Filings for unemployment have reached their highest levels since August 2023. This may indicate that the labor market is changing. The 231,000 claims is up by 22,000 in comparison to the last period. Although hiring in April was light, other months have had strong reports. Continuous claims numbers are also increasing by 17,000 for a total of 1.78 million. According to the chief economist at FWDBONDS, Christopher Rupkey, “weekly jobless claims are one of the timeliest indicators of when the economy is starting to undergo serious deterioration, and the magnitude of new layoffs this week looks worrisome.” The Federal Reserve will be watching the hobs numbers closely as they continue in their efforts to bring down inflation.

Advanced Technologies

[US special forces want longer reach for rockets, snipers, robots \(DefenseNews\)](#)

Special operators are pushing for more firepower in their small teams, asking industry for a “lighter shoulder-fired rocket, a long-range sniper rifle, and both land and air-based weaponized drones.” Lt. Col. Tosh Lancaster told an audience at the Special Operations Force Week conference that US Special Operations Command plans to publish a request for information covering a “Javelin light” by late fiscal 2024 or early fiscal 2025. According to a Pentagon test report from 2023, RTX and Lockheed Martin are working together on a Javelin modernization program that will “lighten the systems’ command unit and upgrade its missile.” Special operators are also seeking an extreme long range sniper rifle that could strike targets at 2,500 meters or further. The new rifle would replace the M107 and Mk15 rifles that have ranges of 2,000 meters and 1,800 meters, respectively.

[US Army sends HIMARS rocket launcher island hopping in the Philippines](#)

[UIC researchers advance technologies to power unmanned vehicles \(UIC today\)](#)

A new collaborative agreement worth \$6 million between the US Army Research Laboratory and engineers from the University of Illinois-Chicago will “develop fuels and technologies for sustainable aviation and autonomous vehicles.” The funding advances two projects that were started in 2020 to improve recharging and fuel-sensor technology. The first project aims to adapt a fuel-sensor system to work with an emerging class of sustainable aviation fuels. The second will continue to develop a system that “recharges unmanned aerial vehicles in the field without the need for human involvement.”

Military Installations & Communities

[VA not complying with law on suicide prevention training for police officers, Senator alleges \(Military.com\)](#)

Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS) alleged that “fewer than one-third of Department of Veterans Affairs police officers completed legally mandated crisis intervention and suicide prevention training last year.” After a whistleblower complaint, Moran pressed the VA for specifics and was told between January 2023 and March 2024 only 1,297 out of 4,505 armed VA officers completed the annual training which is a compliance rate of 29%. The training requirements were mandated via a 2020 law known as the COMPACT Act. Moran demanded VA Secretary McDonough to explain “the department’s lack of compliance with the law and to provide a plan to guarantee the department’s compliance going forward.” A VA spokesman did not comment specifically on the allegations made by Moran but said officials would be responding directly to the senator.

[Storied Marine Corps Jet to Make Final Appearance at Cherry Point Air Show as Service Transitions to F-35](#)

[Military World Games tease \\$3 billion in revenue for North Carolina. Will Pentagon agree to host? \(Military.com\)](#)

Senator Ted Budd (R-NC) received a commitment from the Department of Defense that would consider supporting North Carolina's bid to host the 2027 Military World Summer Games in Charlotte. Hosting the games would bring in an estimated \$3 billion in revenue to North Carolina. In April, Budd, Sen. Thom Tillis and 12 of North Carolina's US Representatives "sent a letter to Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin asking for help in luring the military games to the state." The 2027 games are down to South Africa or the United States, but Budd mentioned "it is a requirement to have the Department of Defense sign off with their support to win the bid." Ashish Vazirani, Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness confirmed he had received the lawmakers' letter and is starting to review it with his team.

Homeland Security

[Homeland Security proposes change to asylum-seeking process \(ABC\)](#)

The Department of Homeland Security is proposing a change to the asylum-seeking process that would allow asylum officers "to determine earlier in the process whether an asylum-seeker is a national security risk and therefore ineligible to stay in the United States." In the current process, that determination is made further down the line. The change would allow the determination to be made during the initial screening phase "over a number of reasons including terrorism, national security or criminal bar." This proposal would not go into effect immediately as it needs to go through a public comment period and review before its implementation. DHS said the change would only impact a small portion of asylum seekers who have a "serious criminal history or who are linked to terrorist activity."

[Exclusive: Homeland Security ramping up 'with intensity' to respond to election threats](#)

[Ohio SWAT team sold fake body armor imported from China as Homeland Security probes \(NY Post\)](#)

The Department of Homeland Security is launching an investigation after it was discovered that a police department in Ohio had bought counterfeit body armor made in China for its SWAT unit. The fake body armor that was purchased did not meet standards set by the National Institute of Justice which is a part of the Department of Justice and among other tasks establishes minimum performance standards for body armor. The National Institute of Justice conducts testing and sponsors research to continuously improve body armor. The Akron Police Department will need to replace 40 pieces which will cost \$1,300 per

plate, for a total of \$52,000. The selling of fake Chinese made body armor is nothing new in the United States with multiple individuals in the past several years pleading guilty to selling low-quality ballistic protective equipment.

Transportation & Infrastructure

[Suburban backlash threatens country's biggest transit systems \(Politico\)](#)

As mass transit systems across the country are getting closer to solving their post-pandemic budget issues, the suburbs continue to stand in their way. Federal relief money is running out in cities like New York, Washington, and Philadelphia meaning “long-looming fiscal cliffs are at hand, prompting talk of massive fare hikes, devastating service cuts and new taxes or fees.” However, historic tensions between urban and suburban wants are competing as fixes for these systems are dependent on approval from elected officials who “live outside the central business districts most transportation systems were designed to serve. Janno Lieber, head of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority, has voiced displeasure at suburban politicians who are “standing up for drivers while doing little to help the vast majority of commuters who use the MTA to get to work.” The tensions have existed long before the pandemic and it comes down to the fact that “mass public transportation systems cannot support themselves and need a mix of subsidies to keep fares affordable.”

[Autonomous car company Glydways to bring driverless public transit to East Contra Costa](#)

[Biden touts his 4 major infrastructure and clean energy laws. Voters doubt they're working \(Politico\)](#)

President Biden has pursued a vigorous domestic agenda in his first term in office. However, according to a new poll many voters “don’t know very much about Biden’s major domestic spending initiatives.” Of the four laws passed in 2021 or 2022, only the Inflation Reduction Act received a majority of poll respondents who “said they’d heard ‘a lot’ or even ‘some’ about it.” When in office, Trump took no major action on legislation on the topic of infrastructure even though he campaigned on the subject heavily. It appears voters do not know this because some are giving Trump “almost as much credit as Biden for advancing infrastructure spending.” Biden has begun to put his domestic achievements in the forefront of his campaign, but his messages aren’t resonating. His campaign message on infrastructure, climate change amongst other things is working with Democrats, but not so much for everyone else. In politics perception is reality, and until Biden can get swing voters to recognize his domestic achievements he risks losing them at the ballot box in November.

Biotechnology & Healthcare

[Bankrupt Steward Health puts its hospitals up for sale, discloses \\$9 billion in debt \(Reuters\)](#)

The now bankrupt Steward Health Care has put all of its “31 US hospitals up for sale, hoping to finalize transactions by the end of the summer to address its \$9 billion in total liabilities.” Steward hopes none of the hospitals will close, but that ownership will change hands. The privately-owned company closed a hospital in Massachusetts earlier this year and state officials have “criticized Steward’s management and its former private equity owners for making short-sighted financial decisions that undermined patients’ care.” In particular, officials are going after a series of transactions where Steward sold off its real estate portfolio “which saddled them with long-term rent costs at its hospitals.” In court documents Steward’s \$9 billion in liabilities includes, “\$1.2 billion in loans, \$6.6 billion in long-term rent obligations, nearly \$1 billion in unpaid bills from medical vendors and suppliers, and \$290 million in unpaid employee wages and benefits.”

[Cyberattack disrupts operations at major US health care network](#)

[Biden campaign goes after Trump on health care in \\$14 million ad boost \(NBC\)](#)

The Biden camp is hitting Trump on healthcare as the general election rolls on. Most Americans tend to trust democrats on healthcare more in comparison to their republican counterparts. This generally has to do with the passage of the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) under a democratic Congress and president. Republicans when they controlled the Congress and White House attempted to repeal Obamacare, although their attempt was unsuccessful. Biden’s campaign is putting in a \$14 million ad buy “targeting minority groups through TV, digital and radio later this month.” Trump has renewed his attacks on Obamacare and the Biden camp believes that is an advantage to the sitting president as Obamacare has only grown in popularity. Biden has also been active in the healthcare space by capping the price of insulin for seniors at \$35 a month.

Climate & Development

[World’s oceans suffer from record-breaking year of heat \(BBC\)](#)

According to the EU’s Copernicus Climate Service, the world’s oceans have broken temperature records every single day over the past year. Warming gasses are mostly to blame for the warming of the earth, but El Nino, the natural weather event, has also helped warm the world’s oceans. The warmer oceans have “hit marine life hard and driven a new wave of coral bleaching.” For years, oceans have been a big savior to the world. They absorb “around a quarter of the carbon dioxide that humans produce, they also soak up around 90% of the excess heat.” Beginning in March 2023, the average surface temperature of global oceans shot further over the long-term norm and hit record highs this past August. Due to the oceans getting so hot, coral has begun to turn white and die.

[Trump promised to scrap climate laws if US oil bosses donated \\$1billion – report](#)

[Vermont passes bill to charge fossil fuel companies for damage from climate change \(NBC\)](#)

In a first of its kind in the US, Vermont lawmakers are looking to make fossil fuel companies pay for damage “from weather disasters fueled by climate change.” Lawmakers modeled after the Environmental Protection Agency’s superfund program “which requires the companies responsible for environmental contamination to either clean sites up themselves or reimburse the government for the costs of work to do so.” Vermont is calling their fund the Climate Superfund Act and would mandate big oil and other companies that produce high emissions to pay for damage caused by global warming. The amounts the companies will owe will be determined “based on calculations of the degree to which climate change contributed to extreme weather in Vermont, and how much money those weather disasters cost the state.” Other states have pursued similar legislation, but have not been successful in getting it passed in their legislatures. Industry is already pushing back with the American Petroleum Institute said in a letter the bill “violates equal protection and due process rights by holding companies responsible for the actions of society at large.”

Next Week's Hearings

Armed Service Committee:

House: None

Senate:

- 5/15, 4:00 PM - Army modernization in review of the Defense Authorization request for FY2025 and Future Years Defense Program
- 5/16, 9:30 AM - Department of the Navy Defense Authorization Request for FY 2025 and Future Years Defense Program

Appropriations Committee:

House:

- 5/15, 10:00 AM - Federal Trade Commission FY2025 Request
- 5/16, 10:00 AM - Federal Communications Commission FY2025 Request

Senate:

- 5/15, 10:00 AM - Indian Country FY2025 Request
- 5/15, 10:00 AM - US Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation FY2025 Request
- 5/15, 10:00 AM - Review of Select DOD Acquisition Programs

- 5/15, 2:00 PM - Examining the roles of the US International Development Finance Corporation, Export-Import Bank of the US, and Millennium Challenge Corporation
- 5/15, 2:30 PM - Department of Commerce FY2025 Request
- 5/15, 2:30 PM - Library of Congress and the Architect of the Capitol FY2025 Request

Homeland Security Committee:

House:

- 5/15, 10:00 AM - How Congress can support state and local law enforcement

Senate:

- 5/15, 10:00 AM - Business Meeting
- 5/15, 2:45 PM - Examining the findings and recommendations of GAO's 2024 report on opportunities to reduce fragmentation, overlap, and duplication and achieve financial benefits



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