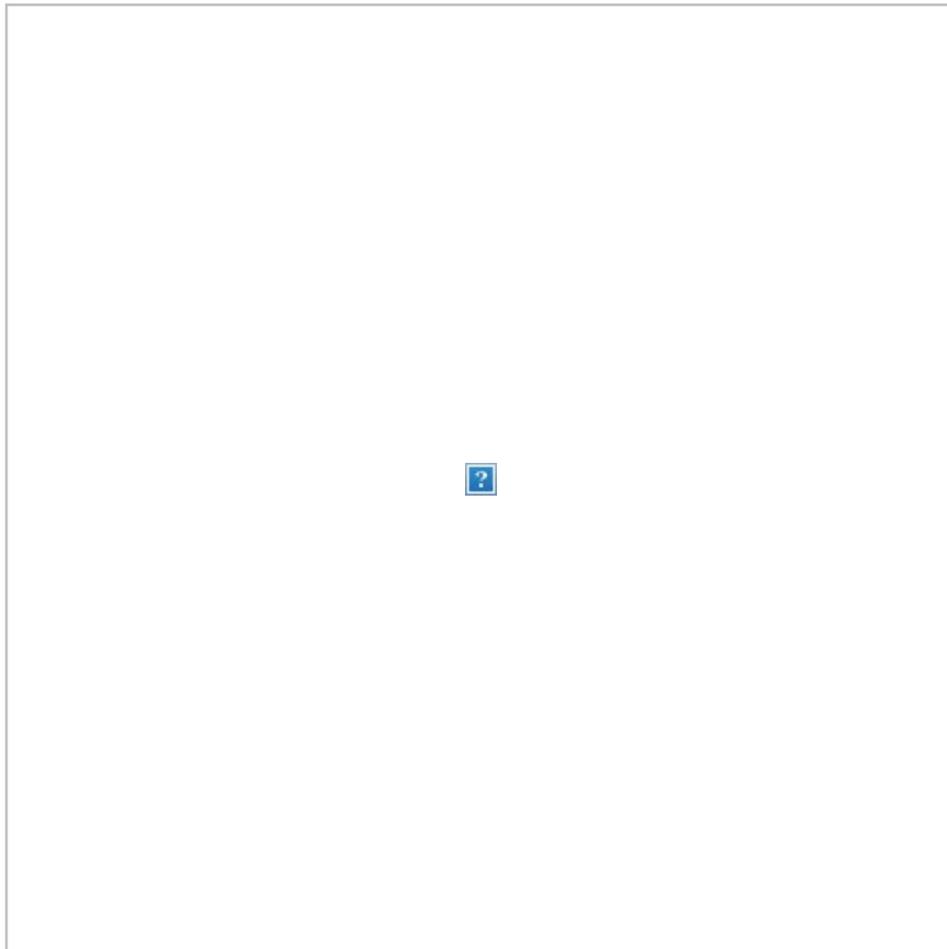
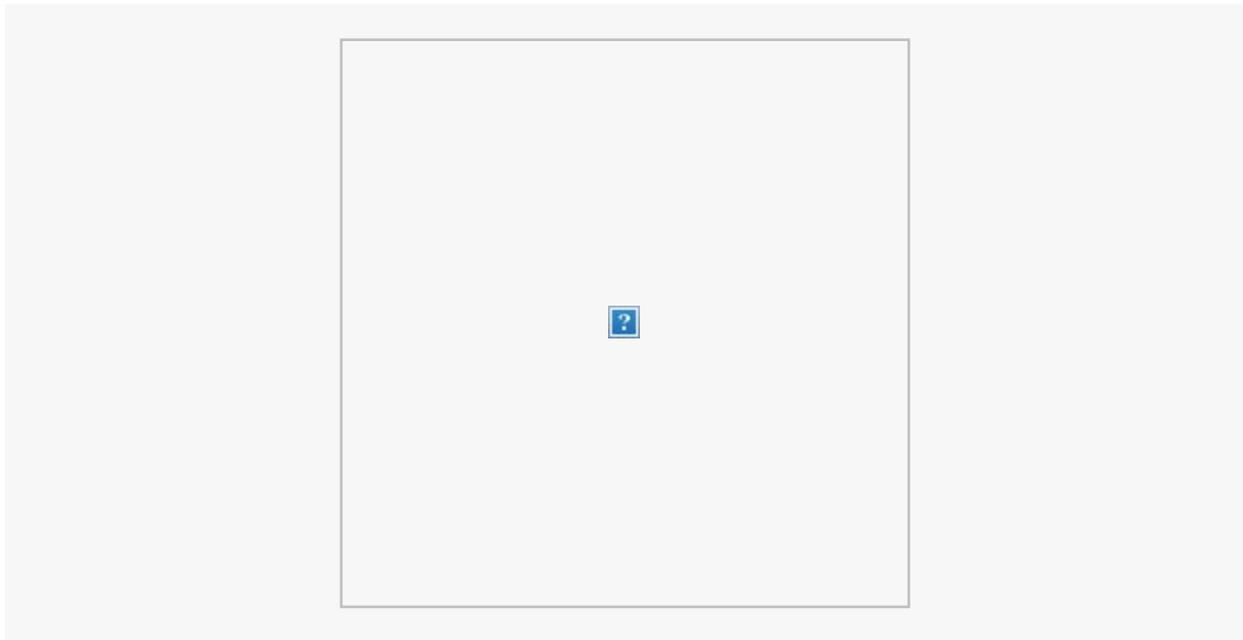


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**Date:** Friday, May 24, 2024 7:59:41 AM

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May 24, 2024

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

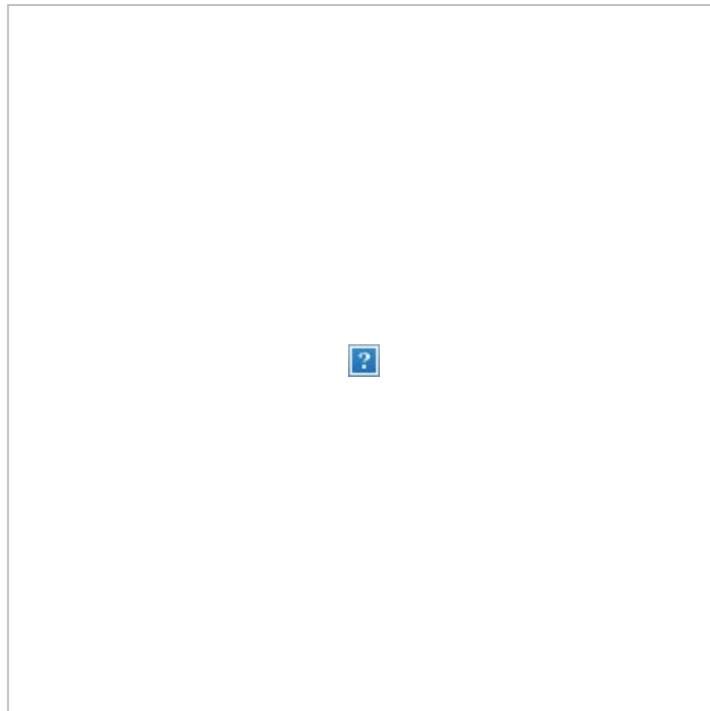
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## Notable Headlines

- [Haley says she will vote for Trump, calls Biden 'a catastrophe'](#)
- [Deadly Marine Osprey crash triggers wrongful death lawsuit against Bell Textron, Boeing, Rolls-Royce](#)
- [Homeland Security has collected DNA data from 1.5 million immigrants in four years, researchers find](#)
- [Military's handling of abuse at daycares under increasing pressure from Congress, Inspector General](#)
- [China holds military drills around Taiwan as 'strong punishment'](#)

Worth reading: [China's Sea Power Leaves U.S. Adrift](#)

## View From The Hill



Congress was very busy leading up to the Memorial Day Recess, with action happening across several major pieces of legislation. First, the House Armed Services Committee (HASC) [passed](#) its version of this year's National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which sets policy and authorizes programs within the Department of Defense (DoD). The markup for the bill lasted all day Wednesday, with lawmakers on the defense panel ultimately

voting 57-1 to advance the \$883.7 billion bill to the full House. This year's NDAA is entitled the "Service Member Quality of Life Improvement and National Defense Authorization Act," reflecting the committee's focus on rolling in recently-released recommendations from its quality of life task force, including a boost in junior enlisted pay and programs to assist with childcare, mental health, and spousal employment resources. HASC also opted to gut the delayed Constellation class frigate program and add \$1 billion for another Virginia class submarine, while also requiring the Navy to have 100% of ship design completed before work begins on new lead ships. The committee's version of the bill also preserves the authority of state governors over Air National Guard units with space-focused missions. The Senate NDAA bill is expected to be marked up next month, and it remains to be seen how closely the House Appropriations Committee sticks to budget numbers authorized in the NDAA bill.

Also in the House, the Agriculture Committee [passed](#) its \$1.5 trillion farm bill, which sets agriculture policy, as well as crop and food subsidies, amidst Democratic opposition to proposed cuts to federal food and nutrition assistance programs. In a notable bipartisan vote, 71 Democrats [joined](#) all but three Republicans to pass legislation out of the House that would establish a regulatory framework for the burgeoning cryptocurrency industry. As for government funding, House Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) [laid](#) out an ambitious plan to pass all twelve of the fiscal year 2025 appropriations bills out of the House by the start of the August Recess. With a razor thin Republican majority and top Democrats already expressing concerns over the initial bills under committee consideration this week, most in Washington are skeptical such rapid progress can be made. The Appropriations Committee did [consider](#) and pass its FY 2025 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs bill this week, with additional markups slated for next week.

Over in the Senate, Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) [sought](#) to put the screws to his GOP colleagues by putting a bipartisan border security bill back up for a vote, though it failed by a greater margin than the first time with less support by both Republicans and Democrats. The Senate [voted](#) to confirm Melissa Dalton to be the Under Secretary of the Air Force on Thursday, setting her up to be the Air Force's second highest-ranking civilian leader. The upper chamber also [confirmed](#) President Biden's 200<sup>th</sup> judicial nomination, eclipsing the pace of judicial confirmation of his predecessor, former President Trump, by about a month. That said, the former president maintains the greatest impact on the federal judiciary when measuring by Supreme Court and appellate court appointments.

Senator Rick Scott (R-FL) [announced](#) his intention to run for the top leadership position in the Senate GOP this week, as current Republican Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) prepares to step down at the end of this year. Scott, a Trump loyalist, joins Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and John Thune (R-SD).

## Aerospace & Defense

### [US preparing \\$275 million weapons package for Ukraine, officials say \(Reuters\)](#)

The US is preparing a \$275 million military aid package for Ukraine officials said Thursday. The package includes "155mm artillery shells, precision aerial munitions, and ground vehicles." Russia has hammered the city of Kharkiv and launched a ground invasion into the north of the surrounding region earlier this month. Kyiv has said they have stalled the Russian offensive. The package will utilize the President Drawdown Authority which "allows the president to transfer articles and services from US stocks without specific

congressional approval during an emergency.” The \$95 billion aid bill that Congress authorized last month authorized \$60.8 billion worth of aid to Ukraine, including \$8 billion worth of presidential drawdown authority terms. The package includes munitions, as well as vehicles that are “designed to recover disabled tanks and other heavy equipment from the battlefield.” The inclusion of these vehicles is an indication the US expects attacks and equipment losses to continue.

### [‘They’ve grown back’: How Russia surprised the West and rebuilt its force](#)

#### [Poland and Greece urge EU to create common air shield, says Polish PM \(Reuters\)](#)

The Prime Ministers of Poland and Greece sent a letter to the European Commission on Thursday “urging the creation of a Europe-wide air defense system.” An air defense system has become a priority for Poland, which shares a border with Ukraine and has seen missiles enter its airspace. The Polish PM said if the European Commission is to move forward with the air defense system they need to stop competing and start cooperating, including on joint investments in the defense industry. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission spoke positively about the letter from the Prime Ministers saying, “We need less fragmentation and common projects like an air defense shield.” The Polish PM, Donald Tusk is looking for a united Europe that “pursues a common defense policy” because a united Europe will be able to prevent war.

## Budget & Economy

#### [HASC greenlights draft NDAA, sends \\$883B bill to full House \(Breaking Defense\)](#)

The House Armed Services Committee (HASC) late Wednesday evening advanced its version of a key annual defense policy bill that abides by congressionally mandated budget caps but shifts billions in proposed funding for top programs like submarines and fighter jets. House authorizers approved the draft \$883.7 billion fiscal 2025 National Defense Authorization Act, including \$849.8 billion for the Pentagon, in a near-unanimous 57-1 vote. The bill now heads to the full House, where all members of the lower chamber can vote on the legislation. Authorizers’ dollar amounts are largely suggestions, as appropriators control the federal government’s purse strings. Still, the committee has purview over key policy fights. Many of the provisions approved today were previewed by the committee, such as an increase to the Navy’s submarine buy and cut to fighter jet procurement. Throughout the marathon session that kicked off Wednesday morning and ended unusually early just after 10 pm, lawmakers frequently engaged in culture war battles. For example, the committee ultimately approved an amendment preventing considerations of minimizing climate change in acquisitions, while there were lengthy debates over measures like banning considerations of race in service academy appointments and military promotions.

### [World Economic Forum founder Klaus Schwab to step back from executive role](#)

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### [Justice Department sues to break up Live Nation, parent of Ticketmaster \(CNBC\)](#)

The Justice Department is suing another company for alleged antitrust violations. In March of this year the Justice Department went after Apple and now have their sights set on Live Nation. Live Nation, is the parent of Ticketmaster and for those who have ever attended a ticketed event almost anywhere have most likely dealt with the site. They gained notoriety after a very public botched rollout for tickets to Taylor Swift's Eras Tour. This lawsuit follows a DOJ investigation that was launched in 2022. In a statement Attorney General Merrick Garland said, "We allege that Live Nation relies on unlawful, anticompetitive conduct to exercise its monopolistic control over the live events industry in the US. The result is that fans pay more in fees, artists have fewer opportunities to play concerts, smaller promoters get squeezed out, and venues have fewer real choices for ticketing services." While many who will read this news are not lawyers, many will agree with Garland's assessment. Shares of Live Nation fell more than 7% following the announcement of the lawsuit, which had 30 states joining on.

## Advanced Technologies

### [Samsung's HBM chips failing Nvidia tests due to heat and power consumptions woes, sources say \(Reuters\)](#)

Samsung's latest high bandwidth memory chips have yet to pass Nvidia's tests for use in the US firm's AI processors due to heat and power consumption problems. The problems are affecting the HBM3 chips "which are the fourth-generation HBM standard currently most used in graphics processing units (GPU) for artificial intelligence, as well as fifth-generation HBM3E chips that Samsung are bringing to market this year." Satisfying Nvidia's standards is key to future growth for HBM manufacturers since Nvidia commands 80% of the global GPU market for AI applications. Samsung has been trying since last year to pass the tests with a recent failure coming last month. While it is not immediately clear if the issues can be easily fixed, there are concerns that this setback for Samsung will put them farther behind rivals SK Hynix and Micron Technology.

### [Scarlett Johansson's AI row has echoes of Silicon Valley's bad old days](#)

### [White House pushes tech industry to shut down market for sexually abusive AI deepfakes \(AP\)](#)

President Biden's administration is pushing the tech industry and financial institutions to "shut down a growing market of abusive sexual images made with artificial intelligence." Generative AI tools have made it substantially easier to transform an individual's likeness into a sexually explicit deepfake which can be shared across a variety of platforms. For the people who fall victim to these deepfakes, there is little they can do to stop it. Since there is no federal legislation on this area, the White House put out a call this week looking for "voluntary cooperation from companies." These companies would "commit to a set of specific measures" with officials hoping the private sector can "curb the creation, spread, and monetization of the nonconsensual AI images." These deepfakes have become one of the first real harms of generative AI and until the federal government passes legislation, it

will most likely be up to companies to be the industry's policemen.

## Military Installations & Communities

### [Documents Show \\$43.5 Million in PACT Act Bonuses Plus Pay Raises for VA Human Resources Staff \(Military.com\)](#)

The Department of Veterans Affairs paid \$43.5 million in bonuses to more than 6,500 human resources specialists last year under allowances stipulated in the PACT Act, an amount the department's chief human capital officer described as "significant." Documents obtained by [Military.com](#) through a Freedom of Information Act request show the department paid an average of \$6,598.13 in critical skills incentives, or CSIs, to 6,517 human resources specialists in the Veterans Health and Veterans Benefits Administrations through June 2023 in addition to salary increases under PACT Act provisions. The bonuses were authorized under the legislation, which expanded health care and benefits to thousands of veterans sickened by environmental toxins. But the large amount concerned some employees at VA headquarters in Washington, D.C., after VA officials awarded large bonuses to hundreds of VA executives last year.

### [More than 200 free Memorial Day observances and events across the country](#)

### [U.S. Border Patrol Celebrates 100th Anniversary \(HST\)](#)

The U.S. Border Patrol is marking its centennial year with a series of public events in El Paso, Texas, to honor a century of dedication to protecting the nation's borders. "This year, the United States Border Patrol reaches its centennial year: a rare milestone marking our ability to overcome every challenge, endure every hardship, and win every battle along the way," said U.S. Border Patrol Chief Jason Owens. "It is an homage to our collective resilience across a difficult journey through time. On this important occasion, we recognize, honor, and thank the tens of thousands who have selflessly donned the Border Patrol uniform or stood beside those who have." For 100 years, Border Patrol agents have been entrusted with the mission of securing the American people through vigilant border and national security efforts. While laws, threats, and challenges have evolved, the Border Patrol's core values of vigilance, service to country, and integrity have remained steadfast. From mid-May to early June, the U.S. Border Patrol will commemorate this milestone with events nationwide, with El Paso, Texas, as the central location.

## Homeland Security

### [US 'concerned' by Israel's isolation, Biden national security adviser says](#)

The US is concerned about Israel's growing diplomatic isolation among countries that have traditionally supported it, Joe Biden's national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, said on Wednesday. Sullivan's remarks, at a White House briefing, followed the announcement by Ireland, Spain and Norway that they will next week formally recognise a Palestinian state. They also came amid efforts by the Biden administration and Congress to coordinate a response to a decision by the international criminal court (ICC) to seek an arrest warrant

for Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, over Israeli actions in Gaza. Asked if he was concerned about Israel's diplomatic isolation, Sullivan – who is due to visit the country in the coming days – answered affirmatively. “I think it's a fair question,” he said. “As a country that stands strong in defense of Israel in international forums like the United Nations, we certainly have seen a growing chorus of voices, including voices that had previously been in support of Israel, drift in another direction. That is of concern to us because we do not believe that that contributes to Israel's long-term security or vitality ... So that's something we have discussed with the Israeli government.”

## [Foreign Purchase of U.S. Ammo Maker Sparks National-Security Battle](#)

### [DHS warns of threats to election posed by artificial intelligence \(ABC\)](#)

According to a new federal assessment the threat posed by artificial intelligence programs “is real and creates a serious challenge going into the 2024 election.” The analysis was done by the Department of Homeland Security and outlined how with less than six months before election day, “next-generation technologies meant to fuel advancement also offer opportunities for misuse that could threaten the democratic system's bedrock of elections.” They report on the AI tools that would likely provide both domestic and foreign threats with prime opportunities for interference. This could come in the form of aggravating emergent events, disrupting election processes, or attacking election infrastructure. Some forms of interference have already occurred via cyber-enabled hack-and-leak campaigns, voice spoofing, or online disinformation campaigns. The abilities of generative AI can be used “to confuse voters by creating or sharing deepfaked pictures and videos.”

## Transportation & Infrastructure

### [Buttigieg calls out Boebert over infrastructure post \(The Hill\)](#)

Transportation Sec. Pete Buttigieg called out Rep. Lauren Boebert (R-Colo.) on Wednesday for taking credit for securing federal funding for a bridge in her district when, in fact, she voted against the bipartisan infrastructure bill that funded the project. “Great meeting with Glenwood Springs City Councilor and former Mayor Jonathan Godes,” Boebert posted on X, attaching a photo with the city councilor. “We have secured over \$51.4 million for the South Bridge,” Boebert continued, saying she “was thrilled to hear about nearly \$30 million in costs savings in addition and that my support has helped make this project a reality.” Buttigieg fired back and pressed Boebert to elaborate on her support. “Congresswoman, in what way do you believe that your support helped this project?” Buttigieg said on X Wednesday, reposting Boebert's original post. “We chose it because it's a good project, and funded it using President Biden's infrastructure package, which you voted against,” he added.

## [U.S. Department of Transportation awards more than \\$63M to 99 communities for safer roads](#)

### [New Cars in California Could Alert Drivers to Speeding \(Transport Topics\)](#)

California could eventually join the European Union in requiring all new cars to alert drivers when they break the speed limit, a proposal aimed at reducing traffic deaths that would likely impact motorists across the country should it become law. The federal government sets safety standards for vehicles nationwide, which is why most cars now beep at drivers if their seat belt isn't fastened. A bill in the California Legislature — which passed its first vote in the state Senate on May 21 — would go further by requiring all new cars sold in the state by 2032 to beep at drivers when they exceed the speed limit by at least 10 mph. "Research has shown that this does have an impact in getting people to slow down, particularly since some people don't realize how fast that their car is going," said state Sen. Scott Wiener, a Democrat from San Francisco and the bill's author.

## Biotechnology & Healthcare

### [How noncompete ban could shake up health care landscape \(The Hill\)](#)

The Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) vote to ban noncompete agreements is set to have an outsized impact on the health care sector, empowering clinicians and raising anxiety among private practices who worry it will compound staffing problems. The FTC voted 3-2 last month to ban all current and future agreements preventing workers from going to competitors or starting a competing business after they leave a job. The rule is set to go into effect on Sep. 4, though the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has already sued to stop it. Shortly before the rule came out, FTC Chair Lina Khan told reporters that of the 26,000 comments her agency received on the proposed rule, "a pretty significant chunk were from health care workers in particular." "Even for workers who, you know, make a decent living, their view was that at the point of signing these contracts, they did not actually have bargaining power," she said. In its announcement, the FTC said eliminating noncompete clauses is expected to lower health care costs by \$194 billion over the next 10 years.

### [Wyden pushes for CMS to crack down on broker misbehavior](#)

### [Sanofi partners with OpenAI, Formation Bio on AI-driven drug development \(Reuters\)](#)

French drugmaker Sanofi opens new tab on Tuesday announced it is collaborating with artificial intelligence company OpenAI and Formation Bio to boost its drug development projects through the use of Artificial Intelligence. Sanofi said in a statement that the partnership with OpenAI will allow it to access proprietary data to develop AI models for its biopharma models, while Formation Bio will provide additional engineering resources. Major drugmakers are using artificial intelligence to find patients for clinical trials quickly, or to reduce the number of people needed to test medicines, both accelerating drug development and potentially saving millions of dollars.

## Climate & Development

### [Farm bill proposal 'robs Peter to pay Paul,' Agriculture secretary says \(The Hill\)](#)

The House Agriculture committee is trying to fund its farm bill proposals with "counterfeit money," Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack told reporters Wednesday morning. Vilsack spoke after a range of groups from across the political spectrum criticized House

Republicans' proposed farm bill, which seeks to direct tens of billions to subsidies for farmers of peanuts, rice and cotton. House Agriculture Committee Chair Glenn Thompson (R-Pa.) told reporters these increases — which he said were necessary to make up for rising costs of inputs like fuel and fertilizer — would be paid for by freezing increases to food aid, and by cuts to the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), which allows administrations to make emergency loans. But Vilsack noted that the Congressional Budget Office has found these cuts — which are deeply unpopular among Democrats — fall well short of what is needed to pay for Thompson's proposed increases. Thompson's camp disputes these findings, and The Hill has reached out for further clarification.

### [New NASA Mission Tracks Microscopic Organisms in the Ocean and Tiny Particles in the Air to Monitor Climate Change](#)

#### [Democrats refer Big Oil probe findings to the Justice Department \(The Hill\)](#)

House and Senate Democrats are referring the results of their probe into alleged climate disinformation by the oil industry to the Justice Department. “We are making a formal referral to Attorney General [Merrick] Garland to commence a proper inquiry into whether charges should be brought and what charges should be brought,” Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) told reporters. Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-Md.) said specifically that they want the Justice Department to “investigate big oil for its decades long disinformation campaign to mislead the American public about the climate effects of fossil fuels and to obstruct meaningful action on climate change.” The pair invoked the department's 1999 suit against major tobacco companies — noting that this was a civil suit under an anti-racketeering law. The referral follows the Democrats' release of a report last month in which they accused the industry of “deception, disinformation, and doublespeak” based on internal industry documents. Oil companies have denied wrongdoing.

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## Next Week's Hearings

#### **Armed Service Committee:**

House: NONE

Senate: NONE

#### **Appropriations Committee:**

House: NONE

Senate: NONE

#### **Homeland Security Committee:**

House: NONE

Senate: NONE



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