

From: [Rick Dwyer](#)
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Subject: [EXTERNAL] Executive Insight Brief
Date: Friday, August 30, 2024 9:51:41 AM

Ladies & Gentlemen,
Below please find this week's edition of *Executive Insight Brief* from The Roosevelt Group. Hope you all have a great Labor Day weekend!

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August 30, 2024

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Homeland Security - Transportation & Infrastructure - Biotech & Healthcare - Climate & Development

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- [Foreign nationals charged with 'swatting' members of Congress](#)
- [Israel says it killed Islamic Jihad commander in battle at mosque, as West Bank raid](#)

[enters second day](#)

- [USDA chief admits 'mistakes' as food shortages hit tribal populations, low-income seniors](#)
- ['Unfairly attacked': Army defends employee involved in Trump campaign incident at Arlington](#)

Worth reading: [FBI still falling short in child sex abuse cases years after Larry Nassar scandal, watchdog finds](#)

Aerospace & Defense

[United Airlines flight attendants vote to authorize strike \(Reuters\)](#)

The Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) on Wednesday announced the flight attendants at United Airlines voted in favor of a strike authorization. This will be the first time since the 2005 bankruptcy negotiations that flight attendants at United voted to strike. The union said “over 90% of the flight attendants participated, with 99.9% of the votes in favor of strike authorization.” Over 28,000 United flight attendants have been negotiating for a “double-digit base pay increase and higher pay for time at work - including on-ground duties, retroactive pay, schedule flexibility, and work rule improvements.” As we head into Labor Day Weekend, Ken Diaz, president of the United Chapter at AFA reminded “what’s at stake if we don’t get this done.” While the strike is authorized, the flight attendants cannot walk off the job until they’re granted permission from the board after it determines “both parties are at a standstill and further negotiations would not be productive.”

[Slovakia to buy Israeli Barak MX air defense systems for \\$610M](#)

[Ukraine's F-16 jets intercept Russian missiles in apparent first \(DefenseNews\)](#)

Earlier this week, Russia fired dozens of missiles and drones across Ukraine including some that President Zelensky announced were shot down by Western-supplied F-16 fighter jets before they reached their targets. The missile and drone attacks killed at least five people, while destroying a hotel, homes and residential buildings, as well as critical infrastructure in multiple regions. Other cities suffered power outages which only amplified the sweltering summer heat. After the bombing raids, Ukraine’s military listed “Russian regions and occupied territories where the weapons were launched” which it does after these attacks occur. Zelensky and other top officials have repeatedly asked for the US to lift restrictions and let Ukraine “strike deep inside Russia to hit military infrastructure responsible for the war.” Kursk was listed as a source of Russia’s attack, where the head of the Ukrainian army said his troops have gained control of land roughly the size of Los Angeles. However, fighting in the region has “raised concerns about dangers to the Kursk nuclear power plant.” After the attacks, Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said, “the energy infrastructure has once again become the target of Russian terrorists” and echoed the call of Zelensky for the West to provide Ukraine with long-range weapons and permission to use them on targets inside Russia.

Budget & Economy

[US weekly jobless claims fall slightly \(Reuters\)](#)

Following a week that saw job creation numbers readjusted by the hundreds of thousands, the number of Americans filing new applications for jobless benefits slipped last week. However, the number of re-employment opportunities for laid-off workers are becoming more scarce, “a sign the unemployment rate probably remained elevated in August.” According to the Department of Labor initial claims for state unemployment benefits fell 2,000 to a seasonally adjusted 231,000 for the week ending August 24. Unemployment claims have fallen from an 11-month high in late July “as distortions from temporary motor vehicle plant shutdowns for new model retooling and the impact of Hurricane Beryl faded.” All of the employment news is running alongside the expected 25 basis point reduction the Federal Reserve will make in September. Economists are expecting the jobless rate this month to “either have remained near a three-year high of 4.3% or fallen to 4.2%.”

[Japan raises economic assessment for first time in 15 months](#)

[Poland's government plans record defense spending in its 2025 budget \(AP\)](#)

As the war in Ukraine continues to rage and former President Trump makes statements surrounding NATO and how much those countries spend on defense, Poland is stepping up to the plate. Poland's budget proposal for 2025 includes record defense spending of 187 billion zlotys (\$48.7 billion), officials said on Wednesday. Prime Minister Donald Tusk presented the main points for a nation that borders Ukraine and is part of the eastern flank of NATO. With security concerns increasing, Tusk described the budget proposal as “generous” and supporting further economic growth. Referencing defense sector spending Tusk said, “it is a great effort, but there is no turning back from it.” Finance Minister Andrzej Domanski said the defense spending proposal would constitute 4.7% of GDP, compared to 4.2% this year. Poland's defense spending numbers make them a leader in NATO and in the European Union. The 2025 proposal would “break the previous defense spending record of 159 billion zlotys (\$41.5 billion). About \$1.2 billion has been earmarked toward the construction of Poland's first nuclear plant as they seek to cut their dependence on energy sources coming from Russia, like gas and oil.

Advanced Technologies

[Contentious California AI bill passes legislature, awaits governor's signature \(Reuters\)](#)

On Wednesday California lawmakers passed a hotly contested artificial-intelligence safety

bill, which Governor Gavin Newsom has until September 30th to either sign it into law or veto it. The bill mandates safety testing for many of the most advanced AI models that “cost more than \$100 million to develop or those that require a defined amount of computing power.” Developers of AI software operating in California also need to outline methods for turning off the AI models if they go awry, effectively creating a kill switch. Tech companies developing generative AI have “largely balked at the legislation, saying it could drive AI companies from the state and hinder innovation.” Representative Nancy Pelosi is opposing the legislation, while Elon Musk, who runs an AI firm, supports it. The bill will also give the state attorney general the authority to sue if developers are not compliant, “particularly in the event of an ongoing threat, such as the AI taking over government systems like the power grid.” The bill also requires developers to hire third-party auditors to assess their safety practices and provide additional protections to whistleblowers speaking out against AI abuses. Author of the bill, Democratic State Senator Scott Wiener, who represents San Francisco said the legislation is “necessary to protect the public before advances in AI become either unwieldy or uncontrollable.

[3 ways Apple can impress Wall Street at its upcoming AI iPhone event](#)

[Nvidia’s subdued forecast dampens enthusiasm in AI chip stocks after steady rally \(Reuters\)](#)

Nvidia shares pared some losses in premarket trading on Thursday, shaking off an earlier decline as investors stayed confident about the chip giant’s growth prospects despite a forecast that fell short of lofty expectations. The company’s shares were down “3.4% after it forecast third-quarter gross margins that could miss market estimates and revenue that was largely in line, spurring a selloff across chip stocks including Broadcom, Advanced Micro Devices, and Arm.” They have continuously beaten Wall Street’s estimates for several quarters on surging demand for AI chips, “leading investors to bank on the company’s penchant for routine blowout forecasts.” The forecast followed strong second-quarter earnings that topped Wall Street expectations, and the AI bellwether announced a new \$50 billion share buyback as well. Shares of other companies also recovered some losses and “were last trading down between 0.2% and 1%.”

Military Installations & Communities

[US forces ready with a ‘Range of Options’ to deal with South China Sea aggression. US admiral says \(Military.com\)](#)

American forces are ready with a “range of options” to deal with increasing acts of aggression in the disputed South China Sea if ordered to carry them out jointly and after consultations with treaty ally the Philippines. This came from US Indo-Pacific Command chief Admiral Samuel Paparo, who heads the biggest number of combat forces outside the US mainland, but refused to provide details of the contingency options. Paparo’s comments came when

asked at a news conference what the longtime treaty allies could do to deal with “China’s so-called gray-zone tactics in the disputed waters.” The “gray-zone tactics” refer to types of assault, like water cannon fire and the blocking and ramming of rival ships in the disputed waters, that are under the threshold of an actual armed attack and wouldn’t allow the Philippines to invoke its “1951 Mutual Defense Treaty with the US.” The 1951 treaty obligates either country to help the other in case of an armed external attack. Paparo would not disclose the specifics as it would allow China to “build a countermeasure to them.”

[87,000 Vietnam Veterans May Qualify for \\$844 Million in Benefits. How Come Nobody Told Them?](#)

[Connecticut using \\$5 Million in Federal funds for temporary veterans housing \(Military.com\)](#)

With \$5 million in federal funds, Connecticut’s Department of Veterans Affairs plans to renovate three buildings on the Rocky Hill campus for temporary veterans housing. The project aims to “provide up to 46 bedrooms for veterans and their families” in three existing buildings, according to Deputy Commissioner Joseph D. Danao II. Danao said the facilities are meant to help veterans in a variety of circumstances, “from US Navy sailors transitioning to civilian life after service at the Groton submarine base to homeless veterans and their families.” The funds Connecticut received came from the American Rescue Plan Act and all funding must be contracted by December 31. Danao said, “whatever money is not obligated by the end of the year, we have to give it back, so we’re working really hard with our partner state agencies to execute this and get the most out of this program for our veterans.” The work includes assessment and abatement of asbestos and lead, renovations that are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, painting, and purchase of appliances and furniture. The project includes 11 three-bedroom apartments and rooms paired around shared bathrooms.

Homeland Security

[California Dems want to help undocumented immigrants buy homes – during presidential race](#)

A first-in-the-nation California proposal could make undocumented immigrants eligible for up to \$150,000 in state-supported home loans as immigration has become a hot button issue in the 2024 campaign. Only a week since the joyous Democratic Convention that

saw Kamala Harris selected as the Democratic nominee for President, this proposal could cut the legs out from under her. The measure, which cleared the statehouse on Wednesday sets up a lose-lose situation for Gov. Gavin Newsom who was a top surrogate for Biden and now has transferred that status to the Harris-Walz ticket. If Newsom does not sign the bill he may be hit on the left for not promoting policies that help those in the country who are undocumented. But, if he does sign the bill he will certainly get hit on the right by those who think Democrats and Harris are soft on the border. It is also possible Republicans would hit Newsom, Harris, and Democrats for helping illegal immigrants during a cost of living crisis instead of American citizens. While policies like this may appease the left flank of the Democratic party, often times it puts them at odds with a majority of the country. As always, perception is reality and regardless of what Newsom does with the bill, there will be a lot of spin behind his decision.

[Department of Homeland Security Announces \\$380 Million in Additional Funding to Communities Receiving Migrants](#)

[Chinese leader Xi meets US national security adviser as the two powers try to avoid conflict \(AP News\)](#)

Chinese leader Xi Jinping met with U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan on Thursday as the latter wound up a three-day visit with the stated aim of keeping communications open in a relationship that has become increasingly tense in recent years. Sullivan, on his first trip to China as the main adviser to President Joe Biden on national security issues, earlier met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and a top general from the Central Military Commission. Starting with a trade war that dates back to 2018, China and the United States have grown at odds over a range of issues, from global security, such as China's claims over the South China Sea, to industrial policy on electric vehicle and solar panel manufacturing. Sullivan's trip this week is meant to keep the tensions from spiraling into conflict. "We believe that competition with China does not have to lead to conflict or confrontation. The key is responsible management through diplomacy," he told reporters at a news conference shortly before leaving Beijing.

Transportation & Infrastructure

[Maryland Awards Contract for Francis Scott Key Bridge Rebuild After Deadly Collapse \(U.S. News\)](#)

Maryland transportation leaders on Thursday approved a contract for rebuilding the Francis Scott Key Bridge several months after the 1.6-mile (2.6-kilometer) steel span collapsed under the impact of a massive container ship that lost power and crashed into one of its supporting columns. In the immediate aftermath of the deadly March 26 collapse, officials quickly promised to rebuild the bridge — a longstanding Baltimore landmark and vital piece of transportation infrastructure. They cited a 2028 completion date and estimated the project would cost \$1.7 billion and would include significantly more pier protection to better defend against future wayward ships. At a monthly meeting Thursday

morning, the Maryland Transportation Authority board awarded a \$73 million contract for the first phase of the project to Kiewit Infrastructure, which calls itself “one of North America’s largest and most respected engineering and construction organizations.” Bruce Gartner, executive director of the Maryland Transportation Authority, said the contract award signifies a big step forward in the recovery and rebuild process.

[Biden-Harris Administration Provides Millions to Boost Trucking Workforce Programs](#)

[California Receives \\$150 Million for EV Charging Ports \(Transport Topics\)](#)

U.S. officials awarded California nearly \$150 million for the construction of more than 9,200 electric vehicle charging ports in an attempt to make zero-emission cars attractive to a wider range of drivers. The funding from the Department of Transportation is part of a \$521 million infrastructure package awarded to 29 states, eight federally recognized tribes and the District of Columbia. The federal government’s goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollution by investing in electric vehicle infrastructure that has promised to significantly improve the climate. A lack of reliable charging stations has proven to be one setback that has challenged the industry. “One of the reasons that we’re seeing in the market research why EV sales are not taking off the way that many of the manufacturers had thought is because people have range anxiety,” Federal Highway Administrator Shailen Bhatt said. “If you live in multifamily housing and you don’t have a driveway, there should be a charger close by so that you could charge your vehicle and you’re not stranded.”

Biotechnology & Healthcare

[The Coalition for Health AI wants local governance and national standards for health AI \(Fierce Healthcare\)](#)

In this week’s episode of "Podnosis," we dive into a discussion with two founders of the Coalition for Health AI (CHAI). They share why both local providers and the federal government must play a role in overseeing AI in healthcare. Brian Anderson, M.D., CEO of CHAI, and Michael Pencina, Ph.D., COO of CHAI and Director of Duke AI Health, tackle the misconception that legacy tech giants can stifle startup competitors through the assurance lab model. They also share updates on the federal AI assurance lab network, revealed first to Fierce Healthcare.

[Biden drug cost cap will save seniors about \\$1,100 a year, AARP study finds](#)

[Surgeon general warns parents are facing dangerous levels of stress \(The Hill\)](#)

The U.S. surgeon general is warning that parenting can be harmful for your mental health because mothers and fathers face dangerous levels of stress. In an advisory issued Wednesday, Dr. Vivek Murthy said he is blessed to be a father of two, but he noted how difficult he finds parenting for himself and others. Being a dad is both the “toughest and most rewarding” job he’s ever had, Murthy said. “The stresses parents and caregivers have today are being passed to children in direct and indirect ways, impacting families and communities across America,” he said. In the advisory, Murthy said 41 percent of parents say they are so stressed most days they can’t function, and 48 percent say their stress is completely overwhelming compared to other adults. Murthy argued that parents today are facing different challenges from older generations, including social media, an increasing youth mental health crisis and the “epidemic of loneliness” that impacts younger people and their parents.

Climate & Development

[UN chief issues climate SOS, warns of ‘unimaginable’ catastrophe \(Reuters\)](#)

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has issued his latest climate SOS, calling on countries to “Save Our Seas” as he warned of a crisis of an “unimaginable scale” caused by greenhouse gases and rising sea levels. Speaking at a gathering of Pacific Island regional leaders on Tuesday in Tonga’s capital Nuku’alofa, he warned there was “no lifeboat to take us back to safety”. “This is a crazy situation: Rising seas are a crisis entirely of humanity’s making. A crisis that will soon swell to an almost unimaginable scale,” he said. “The reason is clear: Greenhouse gases – overwhelmingly generated by burning fossil fuels – are cooking our planet. And the sea is taking the heat – literally.” Nuku’alofa is hosting more than 1,000 international delegates for the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting until August 30. Climate change and its impact on the Pacific’s low-lying communities is high on the agenda at the gathering of regional officials, who lead some of the world’s most imperilled countries. Guterres, who last attended the Leaders Meeting in 2019, warned that with about 90 percent of people living within 5km (3 miles) of the coast, and an average elevation of just one to 1-2 metres (3.2-6.5 ft) above sea level, the “Pacific islands are uniquely exposed”.

[Emissions from Canada’s 2023 wildfires higher than all but 3 countries](#)

[The US Appetite for Electricity Grew Massively in the First Half of 2024, and Solar Power Rose to the Occasion \(Inside Climate News\)](#)

The United States increased its electricity generation from utility-scale solar power by nearly one-third in the first half of this year compared to the same period last year. Despite that considerable increase in solar, the climate benefits of this growth were undermined by a rapid rise in electricity demand, which was met in large part by an increase in generation from fossil fuels. This week, the Energy Information Administration released electricity

generation statistics for June, which allows for a close look at where we stand halfway through 2024. The numbers tell a story of a country moving in the right direction, but not nearly fast enough. First, the topline: Generation from utility-scale power plants was 2.1 million gigawatt-hours from January to June, an increase of 5 percent from January to June of 2023. That's the highest percentage increase in decades when comparing the first half of a year to the first half of the prior year. Grid planners and analysts have warned that the country is entering a period of rapid growth in electricity consumption to meet the needs of data centers, factories and other new construction. This follows a time of modest growth, which was due to a variety of factors, including the high efficiency of new lighting, appliances and building methods.

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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