

From: [Rick Dwyer](#)
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Ladies & Gentlemen,
Below please find this week's edition of *Executive Insight Brief* from The Roosevelt Group.

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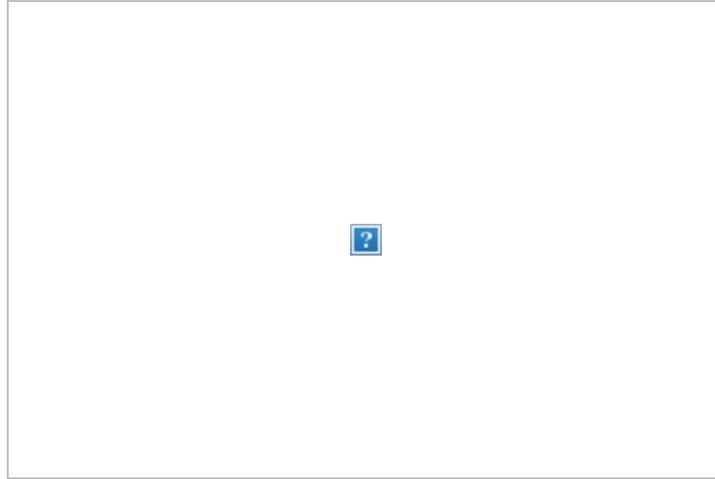
Notable Headlines

- [Adams indictment focuses on connections to Turkey](#)
- [Tlaib calls on Blinken to resign over statements related to Israel-Hamas war](#)
- [Hurricane Helene strengthening on track to Florida and Southeast](#)

- [Vance, Walz face potential game-changing moment with VP debate](#)
- [Some of Mark Robinson's top office staff to resign following CNN report](#)

Worth reading: [The 'Obama effect' is coming for Macron and Trudeau](#)

View From The Hill



Congress passed a short-term Continuing Resolution (CR) this week to fund the federal government into mid-December. The measure was passed over conservatives' objections after House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) failed to secure enough votes to pass a six-month CR over the last three weeks. Lawmakers, anxious to return home for the final stretch of campaign season, quickly passed the funding bill Wednesday evening. What the future holds for full-year enacted funding now rests with the upcoming election, where control of both chambers of Congress and the White House are up for grabs. The outcome of the election will certainly impact the dynamics around funding negotiations once lawmakers return in six weeks.

Before heading home, Congress did manage to host a flurry of activity this week. In the House, the Homeland Security Committee's cybersecurity subcommittee held a [hearing](#) with a top CrowdStrike executive on last month's botched software update that crashed 8.5 million Windows devices, causing a massive global IT outage. The House also [passed](#) legislation to weaken environmental requirements on microchip manufacturers. The White House has indicated President Joe Biden will sign the measure, angering some House Democrats who opposed the measure, as well as outside environmental groups.

A bipartisan Senate report [released](#) on Wednesday blasted significant failures on the part of the U.S. Secret Service as contributing factors that allowed for the attempted assassination of former President Trump at his July rally in Butler, PA. The report notes internal finger-pointing on the part of agents as to who was in charge of security on the day of the rally, as well as resource constraints and significant communication gaps before and during the incident.

A bipartisan group of congressional leaders [unveiled](#) a bronze statue of the famed musician, Johnny Cash, in the Capitol this week, marking the first time a statute of a professional musician has stood in the halls of Capitol Hill. The statue was sent to the Hill on behalf of the State of Arkansas, who voted in 2019 to send a statue of the artist to represent the state.

Aerospace & Defense

[Biden announces \\$8 billion in military aid for Ukraine \(Reuters\)](#)

With a few months to go in his first and final term, President Biden announced more than \$8 billion in military assistance for Ukraine to help the country “win its war” against Russia. Biden used a visit by Volodymyr Zelenskyy to make the announcement. Biden’s time in office has largely been dominated by the war in Ukraine and his administration’s willingness to back Ukraine financially and militarily. There are fears a Trump presidency would not follow down this path, something leaders around the world have expressed. The new military aid includes a “precision-guided glide bomb called the Joint Standoff Weapon” giving Ukraine a major upgrade to weapons it is using to strike Russian forces. The Joint Standoff Weapon will allow Ukrainian soldiers to strike at safer distances. While the new aid was welcomed, Zelenskyy would have also wished the announcement came with another – to allow Ukraine to use US missiles to hit targets deeper into Russia. Zelenskyy has been pushing for this, but Biden has held firm believing it would escalate the already deadly conflict.

[Saab to open munitions production facility in Michigan](#)

[Defense leaders set to spotlight joint tech acceleration at AUKUS meetings in London \(DefenseScoop\)](#)

Defense Secretary Austin, along with his British and Australian counterparts will meet in London to set the path ahead for the AUKUS trilateral security partnership. Austin aims to discuss new plans to “more deeply intertwine the nations’ innovation systems over the next two years to ultimately accelerate emerging technologies that will likely be needed in future fights.” Maj. Pete Nguyen told reporters, “we share a common understanding that we are stronger together. This meeting reinforces our commitment on the third anniversary.” Launched in September 2021, AUKUS is an arrangement in which the nations are working to collectively and simultaneously advance their weapons arsenals, improve interoperability of their systems and counter China’s extensive military forces in the Indo-Pacific region. AUKUS members are currently working to expand their collective capacity to “produce offensive and defensive hypersonic technologies through a robust series of trilateral tests and experiments.” Pentagon leadership is also expecting an announcement about the first-ever AUKUS innovation challenge that was conducted by and with the Defense Innovation Unit.

Budget & Economy

[FTX fraudster Caroline Ellison sentenced to 2 years in prison, ordered to forfeit \\$11 billion \(CNBC\)](#)

Caroline Ellison, the star witness in the prosecution of her former boyfriend, FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried, was sentenced Tuesday in New York federal court to “two years in prison and ordered to forfeit \$11 billion for her role in the massive fraud and conspiracy that doomed the cryptocurrency exchange once valued at \$32 billion.” The federal Probation Department recommended three years of supervised release, with no time at all behind bars. Defense lawyers also requested a no-prison sentence for Ellison. Assistant US Attorney, Danielle Sassoon, also urged US District Court Judge Lewis Kaplan for leniency, citing Ellison’s “consistent truthfulness while refusing to minimize her role in the fraud.” Sassoon also said she could not “overstate Ellison’s assistance in convicting Brankman-Fried.” However, Kaplan said the FTX case is probably the greatest financial fraud perpetrated in the history of the US and because of that a “literal get-out-of-jail-free card he could not agree to.”

[Janet Yellen Defends Her Record – and Delivers a Warning](#)

[US economy grew at a solid 3% rate last quarter, government says in final estimate \(AP\)](#)

The US economy expanded at a healthy 3% annual pace from April through June. It was boosted by a “strong consumer spending and business investment” the government said Thursday. The Commerce Department reported that the nation’s gross domestic product picked up sharply in the second quarter from the lukewarm 1.6% annual rate in the first three months of the year. Consumer spending was the main driver growing at a pace of 2.8% and business investment was solid at a pace of 8.3%. While the economy continued to grow and employers kept hiring, the market has shown signs of weakness in recent months. From June to August, employers added an average of 116,000 jobs a month, the “lowest three-month average since mid-2020.”

Advanced Technologies

[Biden-Harris Administration launches NSTC Workforce Center of Excellence with expected \\$250 million investment \(Dept. of Commerce\)](#)

Earlier this week the Biden Administration announced the launch of the National Semiconductor Technology Center’s (NSTC) Workforce Center of Excellence (WCoE). This marks a decisive step toward solving one of the most “pressing challenges facing the

US semiconductor industry – workforce development.” It has been a goal of the Biden administration to ensure the US is a global leader when it comes to semiconductors. It will be vital for the US, in case of a conflict in the Indo-Pacific to have a domestic supply chain of semiconductors. However, in order for this to be sustainable it needs a highly skilled and adaptable workforce. To achieve these goals the WCoE will “implement three inaugural programs each aimed at reshaping the workforce. Natcast intends to fund \$11.5 million “in anticipated awards to seven institutions supporting efforts to develop semiconductor workforce ecosystems across more than a dozen US states.” The institutions are Rochester Institute of Technology, American Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation, Idaho Technology Council, Maricopa County Community College District, Texas A&M University, University of California, Los Angeles, and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

[Pentagon makes early pick for hypersonic interceptor developer](#)

[Visa agrees to buy AI-focused enterprise tech firm Featurespace \(Reuters\)](#)

Visa has agreed to buy AI-focused Featurespace, which develops enterprise technology preventing fraud and financial crime. It was purchased for an undisclosed amount. Visa said that Featurespace’s AI-enabled solutions will “help its clients manage fraud in real time and protect its payment ecosystem.” While the price was not disclosed a Sky News report cited sources putting the amount close to \$935 million. Featurespace was founded in 2008, has over 400 employees and its customers include HSBC, NatWest, and Worldpay. The purchase of Featurespace is a break of good news for Visa who is being accused by the US Department of Justice of illegally monopolizing the debit card market. Top tech companies are racing to “build artificial intelligence into their products and services, leading to surging demand for AI chips, services, and machine learning technology.”

Military Installations & Communities

[VA checking for connection between PFAS chemicals and kidney cancer in afflicted veterans \(Military.com\)](#)

The Department of Veterans Affairs will study whether kidney cancer is linked with exposure to chemicals used in military-grade firefighting foam and other products to determine whether veterans may be eligible for expedited benefits. On Wednesday, the VA announced the process could decide “whether kidney cancer should be designated a presumptive service-connected condition for former service members who were exposed to PFAS, often called ‘forever chemicals.’” Such a designation would accelerate the process for veterans to receive VA health care and disability compensation, “removing a requirement that those afflicted prove that the illness was related to military service.” Several

studies have shown an association between occupational exposure to PFAS chemicals with a higher risk of kidney cancer. The investigation into kidney cancer would be the first to determine a presumptive condition for veterans exposed to a toxic substance during military service regardless of location.

[Army delays bonus pay for deployed soldiers](#)

[Senate approves National Guard Chief, ending 2-month vacancy \(Military.com\)](#)

Following a two-month vacancy and Senate approval, the National Guard is set to get a new leader. The Senate voted by voice to confirm Lt. Gen. Steven Nordhaus as chief of the National Guard Bureau and to give him a fourth star. This confirmation along with others has "cleared the deck of top military promotions" ahead of a six-week congressional break to campaign for November's elections. The tranche of approved nominees also included Lt. Gen. Ronald Clark, whose promotion Sen. Tuberville (R-AL) "had been delaying over the controversy surrounding Defense Secretary Austin's initially secret hospitalization earlier this year." The nominations approved earlier this week also included new leaders for US Southern Command, Transportation Command, and US Forces Korea.

Homeland Security

[US seeks to ban Chinese software from cars, citing national security concerns \(ABC News\)](#)

The Biden administration is looking to ban Chinese-made software from cars because of national security concerns, the Commerce Department announced on Monday. The Bureau of Industry and Security, part of the Commerce Department, is expected to publish a rule that "focuses on hardware and software" of the software connected in cars and developed in China. "Cars today have cameras, microphones, GPS tracking, and other technologies connected to the internet. It doesn't take much imagination to understand how a foreign adversary with access to this information could pose a serious risk to both our national security and the privacy of U.S. citizens," said Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo. "To address these national security concerns, the Commerce Department is taking targeted, proactive steps to keep PRC and Russian-manufactured technologies off American roads." The software could be exploited by malicious Chinese actors, and in some cases "allow for external connectivity and autonomous driving capabilities in connected vehicles," the Commerce Department said.

['Every lever of statecraft' needed to overcome Pacific threats, commander says](#)

[Why the Department of Homeland Security is investing in AI \(The Hill\)](#)

The Department of Homeland Security is adding to its bench of artificial intelligence talent. Though many organizations are embracing AI for competitive advantage, the need within DHS may be different than what private-sector entities are looking for. The mission statement for the department is “With honor and integrity, we will safeguard the American People, our homeland, and our values.” Fulfilling this mission requires finding and securing information that could threaten the nation and its people from terrorist threats and actions. Whether such threats are foreign or domestic, the DHS seeks to deter, identify and apprehend such threats. Their success requires information on where such threats originate and how they will emerge to harm the nation and its people. This suggests that the DHS believes AI can play a role in collecting and analyzing such information. AI is superb in taking data — typically lots of data — and learning patterns that can uncover trends. In the case of Homeland Security, it can identify people, organizations or artifacts that pose a threat to the nation.

Transportation & Infrastructure

[Judge approves \\$600 million class-action settlement in East Palestine derailment \(The Hill\)](#)

A federal judge on Wednesday signed off on a \$600 million payment from the Norfolk Southern railroad to settle claims related to the infamous 2023 derailment of a train carrying hazardous chemicals in East Palestine, Ohio. Judge Benita Pearson of the Northern District of Ohio, an Obama appointee, signed off on the settlement, first announced in April. The settlement does not include an admission of wrongdoing by the railroad. In August, some of the residents included in the class-action unsuccessfully moved for Pearson to give them more time to review the settlement, particularly while possible long-term health impacts on residents remain unclear. “This outcome would not have been possible without the resilience and support of the East Palestine community and the broader class of impacted residents and business owners,” court-appointed class counsel in the case said in a statement. “We look forward to beginning the distribution of funds in the coming weeks to help this community rebuild and move forward.” While no one was killed or directly injured in the February 2023 derailment, more than 1,500 people were evacuated and local officials conducted a controlled burn on the cars, some of which contained vinyl chloride, a toxic substance used in the production of plastics.

[House Committee Approves TSA Clearance Bill](#)

[McLeod Previews AI Capabilities Amid Freight Rate Challenges \(Transportation Topics\)](#)

Even in the midst of a prolonged rate recession, trucking companies still have opportunities

to grow their businesses by investing in their operations and offering better customer service than their competitors, the CEO of McLeod Software said. “My recommendation is invest in your company. Invest in the future,” Tom McLeod said here at the trucking technology vendor’s 2024 user conference, held Sept. 22-24. While offering analysis of current freight market conditions, McLeod discussed how new software features and artificial intelligence can help motor carriers and logistics providers become more efficient in a challenging business environment. The company introduced updates for its LoadMaster and PowerBroker transportation management systems and its MPact suite of business intelligence tools, including its first proprietary AI product. While freight rates typically fluctuate as capacity expands and contracts, trucking companies have endured a rate recession for two and a half years, largely due to a persistent oversupply of trucks, McLeod said. “They’re not overly dependent on the spot market,” he said. “They’ve got their costs in line. They didn’t go crazy raising driver pay and their retention has been pretty good.”

Biotechnology & Healthcare

[Democrats introduce ObamaCare tax credit extension bill, setting up fight with GOP \(The Hill\)](#)

Congressional Democrats on Wednesday introduced a bicameral bill to extend enhanced subsidies that help make the Affordable Care Act’s (ACA) insurance plans cheaper, the official opening shot in what will likely be the next major fight over the law. The legislation from Sens. Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) and Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), as well as a companion House bill from Rep. Lauren Underwood (D-Ill.), would make the enhanced tax subsidies permanent. The enhanced subsidies increase financial help to low-income individuals who qualify for plans with cheap, or even zero-dollar, premiums. They were first put into effect during the height of the coronavirus pandemic as part of the economic recovery law, and later extended in the Inflation Reduction Act. Millions of enrollees have come to rely on the enhanced subsidies, and they’ve helped boost health insurance enrollment to record levels. Many of the people who have benefited the most are in red states that haven’t expanded Medicaid. The enhanced subsidies, combined with increased funding for outreach and marketing, have led to record-high enrollment in ACA exchanges.

[EPA must review risks of fluoride in drinking water to children, judge rules](#)

[California Governor Signs Law Banning Medical Debt From Credit Reports \(KFF Health News\)](#)

Californians with medical debt will no longer have to worry about unpaid medical bills showing up on their credit reports under legislation signed Tuesday by Gov. Gavin Newsom, adding the nation’s most populous state to a growing effort to protect consumers squeezed by unaffordable medical bills. The bill, by Sen. Monique Limón (D-Santa

Barbara) and backed by Democratic Attorney General Rob Bonta, will block health care providers, as well as any contracted collection agency, from sharing a patient's medical debt with credit reporting agencies. At least eight states have banned medical bills from consumer credit reports in the past two years. In June, the Biden administration proposed similar federal protections, but it's unclear when the rules will be enacted — or, if former President Donald Trump is elected again, if they will be at all. "Nobody chooses to get sick, and then your credit gets ruined," said Chi Chi Wu, a senior attorney with the National Consumer Law Center. "That's why we encourage states to keep adopting laws. In case something goes wrong at the federal level, the states could protect their own consumers."

Climate & Development

[House environment caucus wants to flex its muscles \(E&E News\)](#)

Despite having one of the highest membership rates of any caucus on Capitol Hill, the roughly 100-person House Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition has kept a low profile over the years, leaving its imprint on legislation without the accompanying sharp elbows and chest-thumping. Now the leaders of a new outside group hope they might be able to raise the caucus' profile — while also increasing its output and clout in policymaking. Fifteen years since SEEC's founding, this spring saw the establishment of the SEEC Institute, a nonpartisan nonprofit designed to solicit donations to fund research, travel and professional development opportunities for caucus lawmakers and their staff. It's not unusual for caucuses to have these sorts of foundations, often called institutes, to educate, empower and support congressional offices. But Max Frankel, the executive director and one of just two full-time employees of the SEEC Institute so far, has more sweeping ambitions, describing a vision for an organization that can and will stand out in a town saturated with environmental advocacy groups and think tanks.

[Environmentalists hate a fast-moving chips bill. Biden looks poised to sign it.](#)

[EPA announces environmental justice program within Climate Corps \(The Hill\)](#)

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on Wednesday announced a partnership with AmeriCorps to form the Environmental Justice Climate Corps, an offshoot of the previously-announced American Climate Corps aimed at recruitment in low-income areas. The agency said in its announcement Wednesday that it will open applications for the program early next year. The new program, which will pay participants a living allowance, is part of an effort to recruit members of the Climate Corps from communities directly affected by the hazards it seeks to combat, with a goal of recruiting over 250 people over three years. EPA Administrator Michael Regan is set to formally announce the initiative alongside AmeriCorps CEO Michael Smith as part of a panel at 2024 Climate Week in New York, where President Biden delivered remarks Tuesday evening. "Our partnership is a first-of-its-kind effort within the federal government to expand pathways into environmental justice careers," Regan said in a statement. "This program will create

opportunities for young people through President Biden’s American Climate Corps that will help folks in overburdened communities access and benefit from historic funding secured under the President’s Investing in America agenda.”

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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