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From: Rick Dwyer <rdwyer@hrmffa.org>
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To: Rick Dwyer <rdwyer@hrmffa.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Executive Insight Brief

Ladies & Gentlemen,
Below please find this week's edition of *Executive Insight Brief* from The Roosevelt Group.

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November 22, 2024

Headlines - View From The Hill - Aerospace & Defense - Advanced Tech - Military Installations & Communities - Homeland Security - Transportation & Infrastructure - Biotech & Healthcare - Climate & Development

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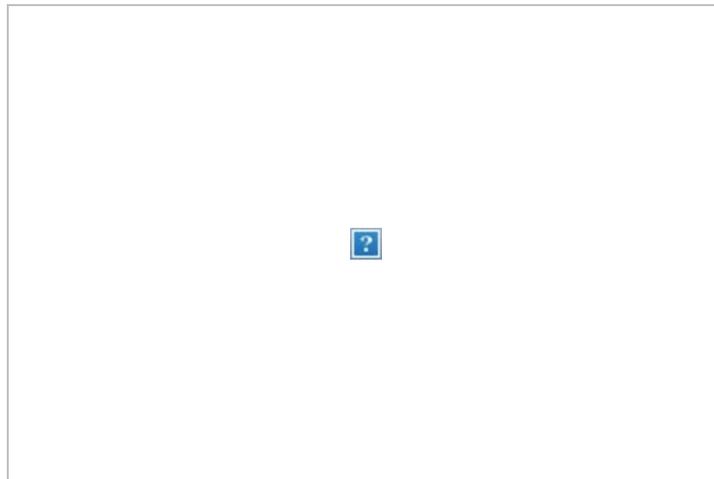


Notable Headlines

- [Linda McMahon, Trump's Education pick, was sued for allegedly enabling sexual abuse of children](#)
- [Trump Cabinet picks hover over the search for Vance's Senate successor in Ohio](#)
- [Russia hit Ukraine with new mid-range ballistic missile, Putin says](#)
- [Promotion delayed for general who oversaw Afghanistan pullout](#)
- [Bob Casey concedes to Dave McCormick in Pennsylvania Senate race](#)

Worth Reading: [International Criminal Court issues arrest warrant for Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu](#)

View From The Hill



Heads were spinning this week on Capitol Hill, as lawmakers, aides, and the press corps tried to keep up with the pace of President-elect Trump's nominations for top jobs in his incoming administration, as well as the litany of controversy surrounding them. First, former Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-FL), [began](#) knocking on doors in the U.S. Senate, vying for GOP support to be the next Attorney General in charge of the Department of Justice. Despite his newfound prioritization of the Senate, Gaetz still managed to spur heartburn among his former colleagues in the House, where the Ethics Committee—the only committee evenly split between Republicans and Democrats—voted along party lines against releasing what is widely assumed to be a damning report on Gaetz. Prior to his resignation from the House last week and his nomination to be Attorney General, the committee had been preparing to release a report outlining its findings in its investigation into [allegations](#) that Gaetz had attended drug-fueled sex parties and paid an underage minor for sex as a sitting Member of Congress. While the FBI also investigated these allegations, the Department of Justice ultimately opted against bringing charges in the case. On Thursday, after meeting with only a handful of Republican senators, Gaetz announced he was withdrawing from consideration, saying that the process had become

an “unfair distraction” for President-elect Trump.

Continuing the theme of controversial nominations, President-elect Trump’s nomination to lead the Department of Defense, Pete Hegseth, was already a shock to many across the Washington defense establishment. This week, however, his nomination became even more embattled after troubling, detailed [reports](#) of sexual assault were revealed from back in 2017. Like Gaetz, Hegseth was never charged in the case and has maintained that the encounter was entirely consensual. The woman and alleged victim in the case, referred to by media-obtained case files as “Jane Doe,” reported to police in California at the time that she believed she had been drugged and had repeatedly tried to leave the Fox News host’s hotel room, but was blocked.

Currently, the Gaetz and Hegseth nominations have caused the most handwringing, though former Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) being tapped to be the next Director of National Intelligence and Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.’s nomination to lead the Department of Health and Human Services have also prompted scrutiny. These nominations have led to an awkward and palpable dynamic among Capitol Hill Republicans, with Senators caught between a politically powerful and resurgent Trump, who they largely believe deserves a chance to nominate whomever he sees fit after a decisive electoral victory, and their obvious and well-founded concerns with some of the nominees. We will be watching in the coming weeks whether a trend of falling in line emerges or if the Senate GOP sets some early boundaries with the incoming President-elect.

Providing a fresh headache for Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA), firebrand Rep. Nancy Mace (R-SC) introduced a [resolution](#) this week requiring gendered restrooms to be used only by biological members of that sex. The resolution was aimed at targeting Representative-elect Sarah McBride (D-DE), who is set to become the first transgender Member of Congress when she assumes office in January. Speaker Johnson, so far, is attempting to walk a fine line, stating that he will enact Rep. Mace’s proposed rule, while also working to accommodate McBride.

Like the GOP, House Democrats [opted](#) to keep all of their current leadership in place going into the 119th Congress, with Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) as Leader, Rep. Katherine Clark (D-MA) as Whip, and Rep. Pete Aguilar (D-CA) as Caucus Chair. Now that leadership elections have passed for both parties, the political jockeying now moves to committee leadership posts and assignments.

Aerospace & Defense

[The F-15 fighter jet is having a second spring in Asia](#)

The Boeing F-15 fighter jet is seeing renewed interest across Asia, with South Korea, Japan, and Indonesia driving modernization or acquisition efforts. South Korea recently secured U.S. approval for a \$6.2 billion upgrade of its 59 F-15K jets, scheduled between 2024 and 2034. The enhancements include advanced mission computers, AESA radars, electronic warfare systems, and missile warning technology, strengthening Seoul’s “kill chain” strategy against North Korean threats. Japan, the first Asian nation to modernize its F-15 fleet, is upgrading 68 F-15Js in collaboration with Boeing and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, incorporating cutting-edge radars, mission systems, and JASSM-ER missile

capabilities to align with the latest F-15EX standards. Despite initial cost and schedule hurdles, Japan's program is on track. Indonesia has shown interest in acquiring up to 24 F-15EX jets, signing a memorandum of understanding with Boeing in August 2023, though the deal depends on completing funding for 42 Rafale fighters from France. Meanwhile, the U.S. Air Force plans to deploy 36 F-15EX jets to Okinawa, Japan, replacing older F-15C/Ds, underscoring the jet's enduring strategic value. Singapore, another F-15 operator, has yet to announce similar upgrade plans.

[France, Germany, UK, US make Norway's billion-dollar frigate shortlist](#)

[Second Trump presidency could mean harder line with defense industry](#)

A potential return of Donald Trump as U.S. president could lead to tougher negotiations with defense contractors, focusing on cost-cutting and fixed-price contracts, as seen in his renegotiation of Boeing's VC-25B Air Force One deal. While this approach saved money, it caused significant losses for Boeing and has made contractors wary of such agreements. Trump's ability to publicly pressure firms, like Lockheed Martin over F-35 delays, could push for faster delivery and accountability. Meanwhile, the U.S. Air Force faces budget constraints while advancing programs like the B-21 Raider, F-15EX, and drone wingmen, but high costs threaten projects like the Next Generation Air Dominance (NGAD) system. A Trump administration might boost military funding, supporting critical programs like NGAD while delaying others, such as a next-generation stealth tanker. However, resistance from contractors and the challenges of balancing modernization priorities may complicate efforts.

Advanced Technologies

[US Army fires Precision Strike Missile in salvo shot for first time](#)

The US Army and Lockheed Martin fired two new Precision Strike Missiles (PrSMs) in a salvo test shot as part of production qualification flight testing at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico. The testing proved PrSM's capability to "be fired one after another from the M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, or HIMARS, launcher" per Army doctrine that requires two missiles to be fired at a target in operations in order to effectively guarantee hitting an incoming threat target. The test also included having an operator in the cab to prove out soldier safety requirements during firing for the first time. The first set of PrSMs was delivered to the Army in December 2023 to begin replacement of the legacy Army Tactical Missile System. The missile can be launched from both the HIMARS and M270A2 multiple launch rocket system which will be critical to the service as "it sees a deep-strike capability that can counter Russian and Chinese technologies."

[Notre Dame unveils first-ever hypersonic Mach 10 wind tunnel](#)

[Pentagon announced hypersonic testing pact with UK, Australia](#)

On Monday, the Pentagon announced a new hypersonic testing partnership with Australia and the United Kingdom, an agreement “focused on improving facilities and information sharing across the three countries.” The partnership dubbed the Hypersonic Flight Test and Experimentation project (HyFLiTE) will include up to six trilateral flight test campaigns set to occur by 2028. The goal is to increase the hypersonic testing cadence and leverage the three nations’s combined “funding, facilities, and experience.” This agreement falls within the second pillar of AUKUS, which is focused on technology sharing and advanced capability development. The announcement did not offer details on the upcoming test campaigns, but notes that those efforts will draw from a funding pool of \$252 million.

Military Installations & Communities

[Eligible veterans get easier access to military bases under new rules](#)

More than 4 million veterans eligible for certain on-base benefits may now find it easier to access military installations under new rules announced by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs. The new procedures allow these veterans and their caregivers to enroll for recurring installation access, enabling them to present the same credential for future visits. Once enrolled, they can visit facilities like commissaries, exchanges, golf courses, movie theaters, clubs, and certain MWR (Morale, Welfare, and Recreation) facilities. The 2020 law expanded eligibility to veterans with VA-documented service-connected disabilities from 0% to 90%, as well as Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war, and designated caregivers. Identification requirements may vary by facility, with veterans needing additional documentation if they don’t have a VA Health Identification Card. Enrollment, which simplifies access, is valid for one to three years or one year after the last installation visit.

[Police Report Sheds New Light on Pentagon Nominee Hegseth's Sexual Encounter that Led to Assault Allegation](#)

[Fort Indiantown Gap hosts first open house in a decade](#)

The Pennsylvania National Guard and the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs opened Fort Indiantown Gap to the public for the first time in a decade during an open house on November 16, 2024. The event began with a ceremony featuring remarks from Brig. Gen. John Pippy and a flyover by a KC-135 Stratotanker and two MC-130J Commandos. Visitors were invited to explore the base’s new 63,000-square-foot Training Support Center and witness demonstrations, including aerial medical evacuations by the 2-104th General Support Aviation Battalion and counterdrug operations by the Northeast Counterdrug Training Center. Musical entertainment, a visit from Miss Pennsylvania, and

the opportunity to interact with service members highlighted the Guard's strong community ties. The open house aimed to showcase the Guard's mission and capabilities while emphasizing its connection to the local community. Leaders noted that while the base is a controlled access post, it remains an integral part of the region, supporting local, state, and federal agencies and hosting over 132,000 personnel annually.

Homeland Security

[The FBI and DHS leaders won't testify publicly about national security threats before the Senate](#)

Leaders of the FBI and Department of Homeland Security declined to testify publicly at a scheduled hearing for the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, on global threats to national security, a break from standard protocol. This marks the first time in more than 15 years that an FBI director and Homeland Security secretary both refused to testify at the annual committee hearing. The hearings were to be a significant opportunity for members of Congress to hear from agency leaders about what they see as key threats facing our nation. The FBI and DHS released statements that they believed the Committee would most benefit from further discussions that can only occur in a classified setting.

[DHS warns of violent Venezuelan gang 'Tren de Aragua' expanding in DC area](#)

[Bitfinex Hacker Sentenced in Money Laundering Conspiracy Involving Billions in Stolen Cryptocurrency](#)

Ilya Lichtenstein, cryptocurrency hacker, was sentenced to 60 months in federal prison for hacking, theft, and money laundering from Bitfinex, a global cryptocurrency exchange. Lichtenstein hacked into Bitfinex's network and fraudulently authorized thousands of transactions, transferring nearly \$120,000 bitcoin from the company. He attempted to erase evidence of his actions and laundered the stolen funds with the help of his wife, Heather Morgan. They used computer programs to automate transactions, deposited funds in darknet markets, and converted the bitcoin to other cryptocurrencies. To legitimize their banking activity they used U.S. based business accounts and exchanged some of the stolen funds into gold.

Transportation & Infrastructure

[Airline CEOs and Buttigieg fight over regulations with only weeks to go](#)

After receiving criticism from airline CEOs that claim the Biden administration has over-regulated them, Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg has pointed to their large profit margins despite the new passenger protection rules. These new regulations include automatic cash refunds for canceled flights and enjoy broad public support. CEOs of Delta Air Lines and Southwest Airlines said they hope President-elect Donald Trump will be more pro-business when he returns to office. Buttigieg responded by arguing that strong passenger protections are good for the airline business. The airline industry has opposed several passenger protections, to the extent of suing the Transportation Department to kill a rule that required fee transparency. Buttigieg suggested that airline CEOs spend less time thinking about their regulator, and more time thinking about their passengers.

[Baltimore's Key Bridge replacement could be taller than the original, renderings show](#)

[Trump says he is naming former Wisconsin Rep. Sean Duffy to be transportation secretary](#)

President-elect Donald Trump named former Wisconsin Rep. Sean Duffy to be the next transportation secretary, making him the second Fox-affiliated host that has been named to Trump's Cabinet. Duffy served nearly 9 years in the House of Representatives and was a member of the Financial Services Committee and chairman of the subcommittee on insurance and housing. Trump said Duffy would use his experience in Congress to "maintain and rebuild our Nation's Infrastructure, and fulfill our Mission of ushering in The Golden Age of Travel, focusing on Safety, Efficiency, and Innovation. Importantly, he will greatly elevate the Travel Experience for all Americans!"

Biotechnology & Healthcare

[White House Releases Interagency Report to Advance Biotechnology and Biomanufacturing for Robust Economic Growth](#)

A new report from the Biden-Harris administration, "Building a Vibrant Domestic Biomanufacturing Ecosystem," is aimed at advancing biotechnology and biomanufacturing in our national economy. The report was created by the Biomanufacturing Interagency Working Group, which was established to assess the U.S. domestic biomanufacturing production capacity and how to ameliorate any challenges. The Working Group involves representatives from Departments of Energy, Defense, and State, among others. The report predicts rapid growth in the U.S. bioeconomy in the next two decades, with hundreds of thousands of well-paying jobs added. The resources identified in the report will help guide strategic decisions to grow and sustain the U.S. bioeconomy.

[RFK Jr. weighing FDA crackdown on food additives under Trump](#)

[Trump names Dr. Mehmet Oz to head Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services](#)

President-elect Donald Trump has named Dr. Mehmet Oz to be the administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which oversees health insurance for over 150 million Americans. Dr. Oz is a cardiothoracic surgeon and television personality that ran for Senate in 2022 unsuccessfully with Trump's backing, and was appointed to the Presidential Council on Sports, Fitness and Nutrition under Trump's previous administration. Dr. Oz experienced some controversy during the Covid-19 pandemic when he promoted the antimalarial drug hydroxychloroquine as a cure, despite a lack of scientific evidence. Trump has promised that Dr. Oz will reduce federal government spending on Medicaid. Oz has long voiced support for Medicare Advantage, a fast-growing program in which the federal government pays private insurers to provide coverage to senior citizens and disabled Americans.

Climate & Development

[Biden inks billion-dollar climate deals to foil Trump rollbacks](#)

The Department of Energy (DOE) is racing to close \$25 billion in pending loans to businesses building major clean energy projects across the country. It is one final push from the Biden administration to "cement his climate legacy before President-elect Trump takes office under the premise of shredding Democratic spending programs." DOE's Loan Programs Office has become one of Biden's strongest tools for "greening the economy" by making "billion-dollar deals to restart a nuclear power plant in Michigan, fund lithium mining in Nevada, and building factories for churning out electric vehicle components in Ohio and Tennessee." This office faces an uncertain future as Trump's pick to lead DOE, Chris Wright, is a fracking executive who has criticized "the use of large government subsidies and mandates." Of the 29 loans the administration has announced, 16 have yet to be completed. Andy Marsh, president and CEO of Plug Power, summed up the sentiment with the statement, "There's nothing like seeing your own coffin to get you moving faster."

[Trump's against climate action. But some right-wing governments are all for it](#)

[BlackRock accused of contributing to climate and human rights abuses](#)

BlackRock, the world's biggest asset management company, faces a complaint at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCED) for allegedly "contributing to environmental and human rights abuses around the world through its investments in agribusiness." Friends of the Earth US and the Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil accuse BlackRock of increasing investments in companies that have

been implicated in the devastation of the Amazon and other major forests despite warnings that this is “destabilizing the global climate, damaging ecosystems, and violating the rights of traditional communities. The complaint was filed under OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, which are “recommendations from governments to private companies on responsible business conduct.”

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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