

2020 General Assembly Session - Summary of HRTPO-Related Bills and Budget Amendments
April 17, 2020

Bill	Summary	Patron	Status
<i>Passed House and Senate</i>			
<i>Approved by Governor</i>			
HB364	Statewide prioritization process; project selection. Requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board, when evaluating projects under the statewide prioritization process known as SMART SCALE, to evaluate (i) congestion mitigation on the basis of total traffic volumes, not just traffic volumes during weekdays, and (ii) accessibility on the basis of the area of influence of a project for a radius of 55 miles.	Cole	2/11/20: House - Left in Transportation
HB429	Free use of toll facilities; teachers, firefighters, and emergency medical services personnel. Authorizes any teacher employed by a public school district, firefighter, or emergency medical services personnel to use all toll bridges, toll ferries, toll tunnels, and toll roads in the Commonwealth without the payment of toll while traveling between his place of residence and his place of employment.	Scott	2/11/20: House - Left in Transportation
HB465	Local regulation of certain transportation companies. Extends from January 1, 2020, to October 1, 2020, the prohibition on offering motorized skateboards or scooters, bicycles, or electric power-assisted bicycles for hire in any locality that has not enacted any licensing ordinance, regulation, or other action regulating such business. The bill clarifies that localities are authorized to create or amend such ordinances, regulations, or actions even after any such business is operating in the locality and exercise authority otherwise authorized by law. The bill contains an emergency clause.	Keam	1/29/20: House - Passage Emergency (93-Y 5-N) 3/3/20: Senate - Passed (40-Y 0-N) 3/27/20: Governor - Approved - Chapter 478 (eff. 7/1/20)
HB523	Dulles Greenway. Amends the powers and responsibilities of the State Corporation Commission (SCC) to regulate toll road operators under the Virginia Highway Corporation Act of 1988. The bill adds requirements that toll rates not materially discourage the public's use of the toll road, that the cost of operating the toll road be reasonably apportioned across all toll road users based on the relative distance each class of user travels on the toll road, such that the toll rates are established in a reasonable and nondiscriminatory manner in relation to the benefit obtained, and that toll rates shall provide the operator with no more than a reasonable return.	Subramanyam	2/6/20: House - Continued to 2021 in Labor and Commerce by voice vote
HB561	Statewide prioritization process; primary evacuation routes. Requires the Office of Intermodal Planning to include in the results of screening candidate projects in the Six-Year Improvement Program whether such projects are located on a primary evacuation route.	Brewer	2/7/20: House - VOTE: Passage (99-Y 1-N). 3/4/20: Senate - Passed (40-Y 0-N) 4/9/20: Governor - Approved - Chapter 971 (eff. 7/1/20)
HB620	Statewide prioritization process; project selection. Requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board, when evaluating projects under the statewide prioritization process known as SMART SCALE, to evaluate (i) congestion mitigation on the basis of total traffic volumes, not just traffic volumes during weekdays, and (ii) accessibility on the basis of the area of influence of a project for a radius of 55 miles.	Cole	2/13/20: House - Left in Transportation
HB642	Transportation funding; statewide prioritization process. Requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board, when administering SMART SCALE, to ensure that projects are evaluated for district grant program funds and high-priority funds separately, and that the projects selected in one program do not impact the other program. The bill requires the Board to weight congestion mitigation at at least 55 percent in the Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads highway construction districts. The bill requires that projects eligible for district grant program funds receive a district-specific score and an overall score.	LaRock	2/13/20: House - Left in Transportation

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HB774	Commonwealth Transportation Board; revenue-sharing funds. Increases the maximum matching allocation that the Commonwealth Transportation Board may make to a locality from \$5 million to \$10 million and increases the portion of such funds that such locality may use for the maintenance of highway systems from \$2.5 million to \$5 million.	LaRock	2/10/20: House - VOTE: Engrossment (41-Y 51-N); Engrossment refused
HB886	State Trails Advisory Committee; sunset. Extends from January 1, 2021, to January 1, 2027, the sunset of the State Trails Advisory Committee. The committee assists the Commonwealth in developing and implementing a statewide system of attractive, sustainable, connected, and enduring trails for the perpetual use and enjoyment of the citizens of the Commonwealth and future generations.	Plum	1/28/20: House - VOTE: Passage (91-Y 7-N) 2/21/20: Senate - Passed (38-Y 0-N). 3/12/20: Governor - Approved - Chapter 314 (eff. 7/1/20)
HB970	Use of transportation funds. States that it is the policy of the Commonwealth that revenues dedicated to transportation purposes shall not be used or redirected for any non-transportation purpose. Any attempt to repurpose funds dedicated to transportation as of July 1, 2019 shall be deemed invalid and shall not be effectuated.	LaRock	1/21/20: House - Continued to 2021 in Transportation by voice vote
HB1217	Department of Transportation; at-risk infrastructure; report. Directs the Department of Transportation, in collaboration with the Commonwealth Center for Recurrent Flooding Resiliency, to (i) identify roads and bridges at risk of deterioration due to flooding in Northern Virginia; (ii) develop recommendations for managing such assets; and (iii) report its findings and recommendations to the Chairs of the House and Senate Committees on Transportation by the start of the 2022 General Assembly Session.	Tran	2/4/20: House - VOTE: Passage (60-Y 38-N). 3/3/20: Senate - Passed with amendment (39-Y1-N) 3/4/20: House - Adoption (60-Y 36-N) 4/9/20: Governor - Approved - Chapter 978 (eff. 7/1/20)
HB1243	Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995; Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act of 2002; affected local jurisdictions and public entities; consideration of economic impact. Requires a private entity requesting approval to develop and operate a qualifying transportation facility under the Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995 or a qualifying project under the Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act of 2002 to include an economic impact analysis identifying any potentially adverse economic or revenue impacts a potential comprehensive agreement may have on all affected local jurisdictions. The bill further provides that affected local jurisdictions be given reasonable opportunity to consult with the parties concerning the nature and scope of the impacts and regarding measures that may be taken to avoid or mitigate the impacts or make the agreement revenue-neutral. The bill directs each responsible public entity to certify compliance with the review of the economic impact analysis provisions.	Heretick	2/4/20: House - Continued to 2021 in Transportation by voice vote
HB1389	Use of transportation funds in the Commonwealth. Requires affirmative authorization by the General Assembly in an appropriation act for any funds in the Commonwealth, including local and regional funds and toll revenues, to be used for a transportation project physically located outside of the Commonwealth.	LaRock	2/11/20: House - Left in Transportation

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Bill	Summary	Patron	Status
HB1414	<p>Transportation. Amends numerous law related to transportation funds, revenue sources, construction, and safety programs. The bill adopts numerous structural changes to the transportation funding system in the Commonwealth. Most transportation revenues are directed to a new Commonwealth Transportation Fund and the existing Highway Maintenance and Operating Fund. Funds are then disbursed, based on codified formulas, to subfunds established to meet the varying transportation needs of different modes of transportation. The bill contains transitional provisions phasing in the new funding structure over a period of four years. The existing gas tax based on a percentage of the wholesale price of gasoline and diesel fuel is converted to a cents-per-gallon tax. A rate of \$0.282 per gallon of gasoline will be phased in over three years, and then indexed every year thereafter. The regional gas tax will be converted to a rate of \$0.076 per gallon of gasoline. Registration fees for motor vehicles will be lowered. The Department of Motor Vehicles will implement a Highway Use Fee for alternative fuel and fuel efficient vehicles. Alternatively, a person whose vehicles would be subject to this new fee may elect to instead enroll in a mileage-based user fee program to be developed by the Department. In Northern Virginia, the regional transportation improvement fee, used to support WMATA, is lowered to \$0.10 per \$100 for the recordation of conveyance of a deeds. A new regional congestion fee is imposed at a rate of \$0.15 per \$100 for the recordation of conveyance of a deed. The regional transient occupancy tax is raised from \$2 to \$3. The bill authorizes the use of transportation bonds to complete the final section of Corridor Q of the Appalachian Development Highway System, and authorizes a bond issuance for improvements in the Interstate 81 and Interstate 66 corridors. The bill establishes a new Virginia Passenger Rail Authority. The bill adopts several safety initiatives, including: (i) making it illegal to possess an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle, (ii) requiring all passengers in a vehicle to wear safety belts and making failure to wear a safety belt a primary offense, (iii) prohibiting the use of handheld personal communication devices, (iv) establishing a speed monitoring program in highway safety corridors that uses a vehicle sensor to take a picture of a vehicle traveling more than 10 miles over the speed limit, subjecting the driver to a monetary fine, and (v) allowing localities to lower the speed limit below 25 miles per hour in business and residential districts. The Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles will establish an advisory committee to oversee education and enforcement of policies such as the seatbelt and hands-free provisions. The bill changes the requirement for a vehicle inspection from once every 12 months to once every 24 months. The bill also creates numerous new transportation safety programs, including an Interstate Operations and Enhancement Program, a Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program, the Statewide Special Structures Program, and a Transit Incentive Program.</p>	Filler-Corn	<p>2/10/20: House - VOTE: Passage (56-Y 42-N). 2/26/20: Senate - Passed with substitute (22-Y 18-N) 3/8/20: Conference report agreed to by House and Senate 4/11/20: House - Governor's recommendaton received</p>
HB1438	<p>Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission; high-occupancy toll lanes on certain portions of Interstate 64. Authorizes the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission to impose and collect tolls in high-occupancy toll lanes on certain portions of Interstate 64. The area of Interstate 64 in which such tolls may be imposed is the vicinity of the interchange of Interstate 64 and Jefferson Avenue to the interchange of Interstate 64, Interstate 264, and Interstate 664. The bill directs the Commission to enter into an agreement with the Commonwealth Transportation Board and the Department of Transportation regarding the standards for operating the facility and use of toll proceeds.</p>	Jones	<p>2/11/20: House - VOTE: Passage (63-Y 35-N). 2/26/20: Senate - Passed (29-Y 11-N). 4/6/20: Governor - Approved - Chapter 703 (eff. 7/1/20)</p>

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HB1518	Compensation of counties for certain construction and improvement of primary and secondary highways. Allows the Department of Transportation to pay a locality up-front for eligible expenses related to certain transportation projects administered by the locality, instead of being reimbursed after completion of the project. The bill also removes language related to an obsolete funding formula.	McQuinn	2/7/20: House - Block Vote Passage (100-Y 0-N). 3/3/20: Senate - Passed (40-Y 0-N) 4/7/20: Governor - Approved - Chapter 784 (eff. 7/1/20)
HB1571	Department of Transportation; Elizabeth River Crossings. Directs the Virginia Department of Transportation to terminate the contract with Elizabeth River Crossings related to the Downtown and Midtown Tunnels across the Elizabeth River for cause due to the defective tube in the Midtown Tunnel or, if unable to terminate for cause, for convenience.	Scott	2/11/20: House - Left in Transportation
HB1602	Virginia Tourism Authority; Governor's New Airline Service Incentive Fund. Creates the Governor's New Airline Service Incentive Fund to be administered by the Virginia Tourism Authority to support the local, regional, national, and international airports in Virginia by providing the means for attracting new passenger air service routes by advertising and promoting new air service routes that would commence in Virginia.	Austin	2/10/20: House - VOTE: Passage (90-Y 8-N). 2/21/20: Senate - Passed with substitute (38-Y 0-N). 3/7/20: Conference report agreed to by House and Senate. 4/11/20: Governor - Approved - Chapter 1119 (eff. 7/1/20)
HB1726	Transportation funding in the Hampton Roads region. Raises additional revenues for the Hampton Roads Transportation Fund by levying a regional grantors tax and a regional transient occupancy tax. The bill provides that the new revenues generated shall be used operate a regional system of inter-jurisdictional, high-frequency bus service in the region.	Askew	2/11/20: House - VOTE: Passage (59-Y 38-N). 2/26/20: Senate - Passed with substitute (22-Y 18-N) 3/4/20: Conference report agreed to by House and Senate 4/11/20: House - Governor's recommendation received
HJ55	Study; Department of Rail and Public Transportation; Commonwealth Corridor passenger rail service; report. Requests the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to study the feasibility of an east-west Commonwealth Corridor passenger rail service connecting Hampton Roads, Richmond, and the New River Valley.	Rasoul	2/11/20: House - Left in Appropriations
HJ58	Transportation agreements. Recognizes that public-private transportation partnership agreements that contain provisions prohibiting or frustrating the construction of non-tolled transportation facilities as alternatives to tolled facilities through economic disincentives are against public policy.	Heretick	1/31/20: House - Tabled in Rules (18-Y 0-N)
HJ101	Study; JLARC; reduction or elimination of tolls on Midtown and Downtown Tunnels in Hampton Roads; report. Directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the feasibility of reducing or eliminating tolls on the Midtown and Downtown Tunnels in Hampton Roads.	Heretick	2/11/20: House - Left in Rules

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Bill	Summary	Patron	Status
HJ107	Study; JLARC; transportation systems and transportation funding. Directs the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, in conjunction with the Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, to study the state of the transportation systems and transportation funding in the Commonwealth.	Austin	2/11/20: House - Left in Rules
HJ128	Study; Department of Rail and Public Transportation; commuter rail system in the Commonwealth; report. Requests the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to study and develop best practices for constructing, operating, and maintaining commuter rail systems in the Commonwealth.	Roem	2/11/20: House - Left in Rules
SB332	Allocation of remote sales tax collections; Transportation Trust Fund. Allocates sales tax revenues collected from remote sellers, pursuant to Chapters 815 and 816 of the Acts of Assembly of 2019, to the Transportation Trust Fund to be used for the maintenance and repair of existing highways.	Stuart	1/29/20: Senate - Passed by indefinitely in Finance and Appropriations (15-Y 0-N)
SB452	Motor vehicle fuels sales tax in certain counties and cities. Imposes a regional motor vehicle fuels sales tax at a rate of 7.6 cents per gallon and gasoline and 7.7 cents per gallon of diesel fuel in any county or city outside of the Northern Virginia or Hampton Roads regions or the Interstate 81 Corridor, where such a tax is already imposed. The new revenues will be returned to the transportation district in which the revenues are generated via the construction district grant program. The bill also converts the existing regional motor vehicle fuels sales in Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, and the Interstate 81 Corridor from tax from a percentage of the distributor price of a gallon of gasoline to this same cents per gallon rate. The rate will be indexed each year beginning July 1, 2021.	Edwards	2/7/20: Senate - Read third time and passed (24-Y 15-N). 3/3/20: House - Left in Appropriations
SB453	Transportation revenues. Directs the Secretary of Transportation to evaluate (i) the impact of increased fuel efficiency and increased use of hybrid and electric vehicles on transportation revenues and (ii) potential options to provide a sustainable funding stream for transportation infrastructure, and report to the General Assembly no later than December 10, 2020.	Edwards	2/4/20: Senate - Stricken at request of Patron in Finance and Appropriations

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SB890	<p>Transportation. Amends numerous law related to transportation funds, revenue sources, construction, and safety programs. The bill adopts numerous structural changes to the transportation funding system in the Commonwealth. Most transportation revenues are directed to a new Commonwealth Transportation Fund and the existing Highway Maintenance and Operating Fund. Funds are then disbursed, based on codified formulas, to subfunds established to meet the varying transportation needs of different modes of transportation. The bill contains transitional provisions phasing in the new funding structure over a period of four years. The existing gas tax based on a percentage of the wholesale price of gasoline and diesel fuel is converted to a cents-per-gallon tax. A rate of \$0.242 per gallon of gasoline will be phased in over two years, and then indexed every year thereafter. The regional gas tax will be converted to a rate of \$0.076 per gallon of gasoline. The regional gas tax will be imposed in all counties and cities in the Commonwealth not currently paying a regional gas tax. The Department of Motor Vehicles will implement a Highway Use Fee for alternative fuel and fuel efficient vehicles. Alternatively, a person whose vehicles would be subject to this new fee may elect to instead enroll in a mileage-based user fee program to be developed by the Department. In Northern Virginia, the regional transportation improvement fee, used to support WMATA, is lowered to \$0.10 per \$100 for the recordation of conveyance of a deeds. A new regional congestion fee is imposed at a rate of \$0.10 per \$100 for the recordation of conveyance of a deed. The regional transient occupancy tax is raised from \$2 to \$3. The bill authorizes the use of transportation bonds to complete the final section of Corridor Q of the Appalachian Development Highway System, and authorizes a bond issuance for improvements in the Interstate 81 and Interstate 66 corridors. The bill establishes a new Virginia Passenger Rail Authority. The bill also creates numerous new transportation safety programs, including an Interstate Operations and Enhancement Program, a Virginia Highway Safety Improvement Program, the Robert O. Norris Bridge and Statewide Special Structures Program, and a Transit Incentive Program.</p>	Saslaw	<p>2/11/20: Senate - Read third time and passed (23-Y 17-N) 2/26/20: House - Passed with substitute (52-Y 44-N) 3/8/20: Conference report agreed to by House and Senate 4/11/20: Senate - Governor's recommendation received</p>
SB1016	<p>Transportation funding; statewide prioritization process. Provides that the economic development factor shall be weighted at least twice as much as the congestion mitigation factor in highway construction districts with higher-than-average unemployment or with localities with high fiscal stress when the Commonwealth Transportation Board is evaluating a project located on a corridor of statewide significance under the SMART SCALE criteria.</p>	Stanley	<p>2/12/20: Senate - Left in Finance and Appropriations</p>
SB1038	<p>Hampton Roads Transportation District Regional Transit Program. Creates the Hampton Roads Transportation District Regional Transit Program to develop, maintain, and improve a regional network of transit routes and related infrastructure, rolling stock, and support facilities. The program would be funded by an additional (i) regional grantor's tax at a rate of \$0.15 per \$100 of the consideration for the conveyance, and (ii) regional transient occupancy tax at a rate of one percent of the charge for the occupancy, both imposed in localities in the Hampton Roads Transportation District. The moneys would be deposited into the Hampton Roads Regional Transit Fund, created by the bill.</p>	Lucas	<p>2/11/20: Senate - Read third time and passed (22-Y 18-N) 2/24/20: House - VOTE: Passage with substitute (55-Y 44-N). 3/3/20: House - Agreed to conference report (57-Y 40-N) 3/4/20: Senate - Agreed to conference report (24-Y 16-N) 4/11/20: Senate - Governor's recommendation received</p>

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SJ50	Study; Department of Rail and Public Transportation; Commonwealth Corridor passenger rail service; report. Requests the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to study the feasibility of an east-west Commonwealth Corridor passenger rail service connecting Hampton Roads, Richmond, and the New River Valley.	McClellan	1/29/20: Senate - Read third time and agreed to by voice vote 3/4/20: House - Block Vote Passage (90-Y 2-N). 3/5/20: Senate - House amendment agreed to by voice vote
Budget Amendments			
O#6s	SB332: Allocation of Remote Sales Tax Collections. This amendment reflects the necessary general fund revenue adjustment associated with SB 332. The bill would allocate sales tax revenues collected from remote sellers, pursuant to Chapters 815 and 816 of the Acts of Assembly of 2019, to the Transportation Trust Fund to be used for the maintenance and repair of existing highways. The amount of the general fund reduction is estimated at \$85.2 million each year.	Stuart	Member Request
112#1c	Governor's Airline New Service Incentive Fund. This amendment provides \$425,000 the first year and \$825,000 the second year from the general fund to establish the Governor's New Airline Service Incentive Fund administered by the Virginia Tourism Corporation. Funding would be used to assist in the provision of marketing, advertising, or promotional activities by airlines in connection with the launch of new air passenger service at Virginia airports, and to incentivize airlines that have committed to commencing new air passenger service in Virginia, pursuant to the provisions of Senate Bill 990 and House Bill 1602.	Newman	Conference Report
374#11h	State Trails Advisory Committee. This amendment provides an appropriation to allow the Department of Conservation and Recreation to provide staff support to the State Trails Advisory Committee.	Mullin	Member Request
430#2c	Transit Ridership Incentive Program (language only). This amendment directs the Secretary of Transportation to ensure that at least \$5.0 million from the nongeneral fund of the annual allocation to the Transit Ridership Incentive Program, established in House Bill 1414 and Senate Bill 890 of the 2020 General Assembly, is used to provide operating assistance to transit programs that reduce congestion in urban areas. The Secretary is directed to report on the methodology that will be implemented by June 30, 2021.		Conference Report
443#4s	HJ55 - Study the Feasibility of an East-West Commonwealth Corridor Passenger Rail Service. This amendment provides \$300,000 from the genral fund the first year pursuant to the passage of HJ55 which requires the Department to study the feasibility of an east-west Commonwealth Corridor passenger rail service connecting Hampton Roads, Richmond, and the New River Valley.	Rasoul	Member Request
443#5h	HJ128 - Study Best Practices for Commuter Rail Systems. This amendment provides \$1.0 million from the general fund the first year pursuant to HJ128 which requires the Department to study and develop best practices for constructing, operating, and maintaining commuter rail systems in the Commonwealth	Roem	Member Request

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443#3c	Commonwealth Corridor Study (language only). This amendment provides funding from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation for the Commonwealth Corridor Study, established through Senate Joint Resolution 50 of the 2020 General Assembly.	McClellan	Conference Report
443#5s	Adjust Language to Reflect SB 890 (language only). This amendment adjusts embedded language to reflect the provisions of SB 890 of the 2020 General Assembly. Includes: "The Commonwealth Transportation Board shall prioritize the expansion of rail service between the Northern Virginia, Central Virginia, and Hampton Roads regions prior to expanding rail service to North Carolina."		Floor Approved
446#1c	VDOT Review of Interstate 664 Corridor (language only). This amendment ensures that VDOT coordinate with the DRPT and the Port Authority in its evaluation of multimodal transportation needs along the Interstate 664 corridor.		Conference Report
447#1c	Local Project Administration (language only). This amendment directs the Virginia Department of Transportation to authorize a full-time employee of a regional planning district commission, who has received appropriate certification, to serve as the responsible charge on locally administered construction projects. Current VDOT policy allows only full-time employees of local governments to serve in this capacity.		Conference Report
452#3h	Buyout Contract for Elizabeth River Toll. This amendment provides \$2.5 billion from the general fund in the first year to buy out the contract for the Elizabeth River Toll pursuant to legislation enacted during the 2020 General Assembly session.	Scott	Member Request
451#2c	Use Commonwealth Port Fund to Support Local Road Maintenance. This amendment, along with a companion amendment in Item 459, supplants general fund support for road maintenance for localities with Port facilities with \$1.0 million annually from the Commonwealth Transportation Fund. These amendments are consistent with actions in the introduced budget to replace general fund support for transportation with nongeneral fund sources that are designated for transportation usage.		Conference Report
451#3c	Financial Assistance for City/Town Road Maintenance. This amendment provides \$1.0 million from the nongeneral fund each year to increase funding for street maintenance payments to localities, held constant in fiscal year 2020. Payments to localities for road maintenance would be adjusted for inflation.		Conference Report
459#1c	Waterway Maintenance Fund. This amendment increases the appropriation to the Waterway Maintenance Fund to \$1.5 million in each year to support shallow-draft dredging projects. The increased allocation to the Waterways Maintenance Fund results in a corresponding reduction in available general fund revenues of \$150,000 annually.		Conference Report

From: Craig Quigley <cquigley@hrmffa.org>
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2020 10:18 AM
To: Craig Quigley
Subject: Executive Insight Brief

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

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THE
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EXECUTIVE INSIGHT BRIEF

April 17, 2020

TOP STORIES

Trump guidelines on reopening economy let governors make final decision

President Trump on Thursday evening unveiled guidance for a phased [reopening of parts of the U.S.](#) economy that leaves the final decisions up to governors.

The 18-page document, which was obtained earlier by *The Hill* and distributed to governors during a conference call Thursday afternoon, recommends that states see a downward trajectory in the number of confirmed coronavirus cases as well as flu-like symptoms before they move to lift stay-at-home orders and other restrictions meant to curb the spread of the virus.

Opening Up America Again Guidelines

Iranian Vessels Conduct Unsafe Interaction with U.S. Naval Forces in Arabian Gulf

NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY BAHRAIN (NNS) -- On April 15, eleven [Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy](#) (IRGCN) vessels repeatedly conducted dangerous and harassing approaches of the USS Lewis B. Puller (ESB 3), USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60), USS Firebolt (PC 10), USS Sirocco (PC 6), USCGC Wrangell (WPB 1332) and USCGC Maui (WPB 1304) while the U.S. vessels were conducting joint integration operations with U.S. Army AH-64E Apache attack helicopters in the international waters of the North Arabian Gulf.

The IRGCN vessels repeatedly crossed the bows and sterns of the U.S. vessels at extremely close range and high speeds, including multiple crossings of the Puller with a 50 yard closest point of approach (CPA) and within 10 yards of Maui's bow.

The U.S. crews issued multiple warnings via bridge-to-bridge radio, five short blasts from the ships' horns and long-range acoustic noise maker devices, but received no response from the IRGCN.

Russia tests direct-ascent anti-satellite missile

“Russia’s DA-ASAT test provides yet another example that the [threats to U.S. and allied space systems are real](#), serious and growing,” said Gen. John W. “Jay” Raymond, USSPACECOM commander and U.S. Space Force Chief of Space Operations. “The United States is ready and committed to deterring aggression and defending the Nation, our allies and U.S. interests from hostile acts in space.”

Russia’s missile system is capable of destroying satellites in low Earth orbit (LEO) and comes on the heels of Russia’s on-orbit testing the U.S. highlighted in February, namely COSMOS 2542 and COSMOS 2543. These satellites, which behaved similar to previous Russian satellites that exhibited characteristics of a space weapon, conducted maneuvers near a U.S. Government satellite that would be interpreted as irresponsible and potentially threatening in any other domain.

FBI official says foreign hackers have targeted COVID-19 research

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - A senior cybersecurity official with the Federal Bureau of Investigation said on Thursday that [foreign government hackers](#) have broken into companies conducting research into treatments for COVID-19, the respiratory illness caused by the coronavirus.

FBI Deputy Assistant Director Tonya Ugoretz told participants in an online panel discussion hosted by the Aspen Institute that the bureau had recently seen state-backed hackers poking around a series of healthcare and research institutions.

“We certainly have seen reconnaissance activity, and some intrusions, into some of those institutions, especially those that have publicly identified themselves as working on COVID-related research,” she said.

Remote voting, hearing changes for House may come too late for pandemic use

House Democratic leaders appear to be accelerating the consideration of

options for [remote voting and hearings](#), but any decisions on how to proceed may still come too late for use during the coronavirus pandemic.

“We can’t do any of them right now because the rules will have to be modified,” House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer told reporters on a conference call Wednesday. “There will have to be agreement between the parties.”

House rules do not allow for the chamber to vote remotely or for committees to conduct formal hearings or business meetings without a physical presence. A rules change would require lawmakers to be in Washington to adopt a resolution for remote work procedures — unless there was unanimous consent among members, which is unlikely.

Clear Skies During Lockdown is a Pandemic Upside

With almost all of the world under lockdown, cars are off the roads and the [smog is disappearing](#) in some of the planet’s most polluted atmospheres.

From Asia to Europe to North America, the blue skies are back.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

[1387](#)

Geoffrey Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" characters begin their pilgrimage to Canterbury (according to scholars)

[1492](#)

Christopher Columbus signs a contract with the Spanish monarchs to find the "Indies" with the stated goal of converting people to Catholicism. This promises him 10% of all riches found, and the governorship of any lands encountered.

[1895](#)

Treaty of Shimonoseki is signed ending the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95)

1961

1,400 Cuban exiles land in Bay of Pigs in a doomed attempt to overthrow Fidel Castro

1982

Proclamation of the Constitution Act by Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau

LOOK AHEAD

The Atlantic Council holds a webcast, beginning at 10 a.m., on "The Making of Putin's Russia: The Rise of Russia's Oligarchs."

10:00 AM EDT on 04/17/2020

press@atlanticcouncil.org

202-778-4993

Travis Horne; Information on the webcast is available at

<https://atlanticcouncil.org/event/the-making-of-putins-russia-anders-aslund-on-the-rise-of-russias-oligarchs>

Participants:

- Anders Aslund, Resident senior fellow in the Atlantic Council's Eurasia Center
- Melinda Haring, Deputy director of the Atlantic Council's Eurasia Center

The Atlantic Council holds a webcast, beginning at 1:30 p.m., on "Artificial Intelligence Creating a New Era of Abundance Through the Acceleration of Intelligence Automation."

1:30 PM EDT on 04/17/2020

press@atlanticcouncil.org

202-778-4993

Travis Horne; Information on the webcast is available at <https://atlanticcouncil.org/event/ai-creating-a-new-era-of-abundance-through-the-acceleration-of-intelligent-automation>

Participants:

- Dave Cops, Co-founder and CEO of Worlds

The Jewish Institute for National Security of America holds a conference call briefing, beginning at 2 p.m., on "U.S. Military Service Chiefs on National Defense, Readiness and COVID-19."

2:00 PM EDT on 04/17/2020

info@jinsa.org

202-667-3900

James Cetrone; RSVP to Naomi Burstein at nburstein@jinsa.org for dial-in information.

Participants:

- Jeb Nadaner, Vice president of defense and government affairs at JINSA
- Former Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert, Member of the JINSA Board of Advisors
- Retired Gen. James Amos, Member of the JINSA Board of Advisors and former commandant of the Marine Corps

The U.S. Air Force Academy holds a webcast, beginning at 1 p.m., of the 2020 graduation ceremony.

1:00 PM EDT on 04/18/2020

U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.

202-456-9570

(Pence); Time is Eastern. Livestream at
<https://www.dvidshub.net/webcast/23844>

Participants:

- Vice President Mike Pence (via video)

The Hudson Institute holds a discussion via webcast, beginning at 9 a.m., on "Missile Defense and Stability."

9:00 AM EDT on 04/21/2020

cstewart@hudson.org

202-974-6456

Carolyn Stewart; Information on the webcast is available at
<https://www.hudson.org/events/1801-video-event-missile-defense-and-stability-a-conversation-with-deputy-assistant-secretary-robert-soofer-and-dr-jim-miller42020>

Participants:

- Rebeccah Heinrichs, Senior fellow at the Hudson Institute
- former Defense Undersecretary for Policy Jim Miller, Senior fellow at Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Lab
- Deputy Assistant Defense Secretary for Nuclear and Missile Defense Policy Robert Soofer

The Cyber Threat Alliance holds a [webinar](#) on "How Threat Sharing Hones Your Competitive Edge."

10:00 AM EDT on 04/21/2020

[RSVP](#)

New America's Open Technology Institute hosts a [webinar](#) on "Digital Security Needs a Work-From-Home Makeover."

11:00 AM EDT on 04/21/2020

[RSVP](#)

The Institute for Critical Infrastructure Technology holds a webinar, beginning at 2 p.m., on "Enterprise RPA (Robotic Process Automation): Transforming Mission Delivery at Scale."

2:00 PM EDT on 04/21/2020

info@icitech.org

Webinar information is available at

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/2108784543079814924>

Participants:

- Eric Hansen, Director of BluePrism's Defense Department and Intelligence Programs
- Rachael Martin, Mission chief for intelligent business automation, augmentation and analytics at the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center
- Parham Eftekhari, Executive director of ICIT
- Steve Holt, Partner at Invoke Public Sector
- Christine Gex, Innovation and RPA lead at the Army

The Intelligence National Security Alliance holds a "Wednesday Wisdom" webcast, beginning at 4:30 p.m., with Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research Ellen McCarthy and Benjamin Brake, director of the State Department's Office of Cyber Affairs.

4:30 PM EDT on 04/22/2020

info@insaonline.org

703-224-4672

Information on the webcast is available at <https://www.insaonline.org/events>

National Science Foundation holds a virtual meeting of the Advisory Committee for Cyberinfrastructure to receive updates on NSF-wide OAC activities, April 22-23.

8:00 AM EDT on 04/23/2020

NSF, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Room E2020, Alexandria, Va.

703-292-8970

Amy Friedlander; To attend the virtual meeting email taabraha@nsf.gov to request meeting link.

The Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association holds its Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification symposium via webcast, beginning at 8:15 a.m.

Highlights:

- 8:30 a.m.: Katie Arrington, chief information security officer in the Office of the Defense Undersecretary for Acquisition and Sustainment, delivers keynote remarks
- Noon: Dwight Deneal, director of the Defense Logistics Agency's Office of Small Business Programs; Coast Guard Rear Adm. Michael Johnston, assistant commandant for acquisition and chief acquisition officer at the U.S. Coast Guard; and Katie Arrington, chief information security officer in the Office of the Defense Undersecretary for Acquisition and Sustainment, participate in a keynote fireside chat

8:15 AM EDT on 04/23/2020

703-631-6179

Information on the webcast is available at
<https://www.afcea.org/event/CMMCWelcome>

Energy Department; National Nuclear Security Administration holds a closed meeting of the Defense Programs Advisory Committee to finalize DPAC recommendations to the Stockpile Responsiveness Program and discuss the path ahead on new topics.

8:30 AM EDT on 04/23/2020

1000 Independence Avenue SW

202-586-7183

Rachel Barnhill

The Atlantic Council holds a webcast, beginning at 11 a.m., on a new report, "Moving Out: A Comprehensive Assessment of European Military Mobility."

11:00 AM EDT on 04/23/2020

press@atlanticcouncil.org

202-778-4993

Travis Horne; Information on the webcast is available at
<https://atlanticcouncil.org/event/moving-out-military-mobility-in-europe>

Participants:

- Army Europe Commander Gen. Christopher Cavoli
- former Supreme Allied Commander Europe Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti

National Aeronautics and Space Administration holds a meeting by teleconference of the Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel.

Agenda includes: Updates on the International Space Station Program; Updates on the Commercial Crew Program; Updates on Exploration System Development Program; and Updates on Human Lunar Exploration Program

12:00 PM EDT on 04/23/2020

lisa.m.hackley@nasa.gov

202-358-1947

Lisa Hackley; Dial-in at 800-593-9979; pass code, 8001361#

The Heritage Foundation holds a webinar, beginning at 1 p.m., on "Nuclear Stability or Russian Advantage: Will Extending New START Serve the U.S.?"

1:00 PM EDT on 04/23/2020

lectures.seminars@heritage.org

202-675-1761

Webinar information is available at <https://www.heritage.org/arms-control/event/webinar-nuclear-stability-or-russian-advantage-will-extending-new-start-serve>

Participants:

- Tim Morrison, Senior fellow at the Hudson Institute
- Patty-Jane Geller, Policy analyst for nuclear deterrence and missile defense at Heritage
- Michaela Dodge, Research scholar at the National Institute for Public Policy

- Frank Rose, Senior fellow for security and strategy at the Brookings Institution

The Korea Economic Institute of America holds a webinar, beginning at 2 p.m., on "Diplomacy or Readiness? U.S.-South Korea Military Exercises and Denuclearizing North Korea."

2:00 PM EDT on 04/23/2020

202-464-1982

Webinar information is available at <http://www.keia.org/event/diplomacy-or-readiness-us-south-korea-military-exercises-and-denuclearizing-north-korea>

Participants:

- Kyle Ferrier, Director of academic affairs at KEI
- Terence Roehrig, Director of the Naval War College Asia-Pacific Studies Group

Have a great weekend!

***The Executive Insight Brief is a compilation of articles of interest prepared by The Roosevelt Group research team. This information is provided for situational awareness. Items are chosen to highlight trends and issues in the news and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of The Roosevelt Group.*

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