

July 8, 2022

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Notable Headlines

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[Monkeypox cases rise 77% in a week, WHO reports: "Concerned by the scale and spread of the virus"](#)



Budget & Appropriations

[For chips and budget packages, Democrats face choices \(Roll call\)](#)

Much of official Washington and interested observers outside the Beltway have been attempting to parse Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell's bombshell last Thursday that appeared to drive a stake into bipartisan talks to pass a package of domestic semiconductor manufacturing incentives this summer. After letting the Kentucky Republican's comments sink in over the July Fourth holiday, we spoke to some veteran Washington hands about possible pathways for Democratic leaders to salvage both the competitiveness package and a skinnier version of their partisan budget reconciliation package. Getting both done before the August recess became more difficult after McConnell's threat. However, there is another avenue for Democrats to have their cake and eat it too, if fraught with peril. First, a little recap of where things stand: As McConnell tweeted Thursday, there won't be a bipartisan competitiveness package "as long as

Democrats are pursuing a partisan reconciliation bill.” He didn’t say anything about what happens after Democrats are done with reconciliation and President Joe Biden has signed it. However, since clearing reconciliation will likely take much of July, and after the August recess lawmakers will be consumed with funding the government and avoiding a shutdown before going home to campaign, realistically the next opportunity will be during a post-election lame-duck session. That means if Democrats opt to jam through reconciliation in July, it might help out vulnerable incumbents on one score but deprive others in key states of a major talking point on the microchips bill.

[85 U.S. Airports Receive \\$1 Billion For Upgrades, Biden Administration Announces](#)

[Dems want to tax high earners to protect Medicare solvency \(ABC News\)](#)

Senate Democrats want to boost taxes on some high earners and use the money to extend the solvency of Medicare, the latest step in the party's election-year attempt to craft a scaled-back version of the economic package that collapsed last year, Democratic aides told The Associated Press. Democrats expect to submit legislative language on their Medicare plan to the Senate's parliamentarian in the next few days, the aides said. It was yet another sign that Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., and Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., could be edging toward a compromise the party hopes to push through Congress this summer over solid Republican opposition. Manchin scuttled last year's bill. Under the latest proposal, people earning more than \$400,000 a year and couples making more than \$500,000 would have to pay a 3.8% tax on their earnings from tax-advantaged businesses called pass throughs. Until now, many of them have been using a loophole to avoid paying that levy. That would raise an estimated \$203 billion over a decade, which Democrats say would be used to delay until 2031 a shortfall in the Medicare trust fund that pays for hospital care. That fund is currently projected to start running out of money in 2028, three years earlier.

[20 Years of Assessing DOD's Weapon Programs Shows the Importance of Having the Right Information Before Making Investment Decisions](#)

[Crypto's big win: The Lummis-Gillibrand bill puts the CFTC in charge \(Protocol\)](#)

“Most digital assets are much more similar to commodities than securities” won't be music to Gary Gensler's ears, but the crypto industry will likely welcome a bipartisan Senate bill unveiled Tuesday that puts a friendlier regulator largely in charge. The Responsible Financial Innovation Act, introduced by Republican Sen. Cynthia Lummis and Democrat Kirsten Gillibrand, lays out how cryptocurrencies should be defined and regulated. If it becomes law, it would be a victory for the crypto industry, which has long complained about insufficient or vague regulations governing digital assets and what it sees as the SEC's aggressive enforcement-first posture. The bill supports positions endorsed by the crypto industry, including the key argument that many cryptocurrencies should not be subject to securities regulations. As was revealed in a leaked version of the bill, Lummis and Gillibrand would hand over key oversight responsibility to the CFTC, not the SEC, which has been known for aggressive enforcement actions against crypto companies under Gensler.

Aerospace & Defense

[US stealth fighters arrive in South Korea amid tensions with North \(The Hill\)](#)

U.S. Air Force F-35 stealth fighter jets arrived in South Korea on Tuesday to conduct flight operations alongside their South Korean counterparts amid tensions with North Korea. The aircraft are expected to fly with several others over South Korea and surrounding waters as part of a 10-day training mission, U.S. Forces Korea said in a statement. South Korean F-35 aircraft are expected to fly with the American aircraft. “The familiarization and routine training flights will enhance the interoperability of the two Air Forces to perform and operate on and around the Korean Peninsula,” the statement said. “The aviation training is also an opportunity for the aircrews to perform sustainment and maintenance duties to support the latest in military aircraft technology,” it added. In a separate statement, South Korea’s defense ministry said the drills are aimed at “demonstrating the South Korea-U.S. alliance’s strong deterrence and combined defense posture, as well as improving interoperability between the two Air Forces,” according to Yonhap News Agency.

[US Navy can’t keep up with demand for highly trained warfare tactics instructors](#)

[Poland Pushes Fighter Jet Issue Over to NATO to Decide \(Bloomberg\)](#)

-Warsaw says willing to send its jets to a U.S. base in Germany
-Russia has warned against sending fighters to Ukraine
Poland offered to send its MiG-29 fighter jets to an American base in Germany for NATO to decide what to do with them, as it grapples with public pressure from Ukraine to send in planes to help combat Russia’s air superiority. The government in Kyiv has repeatedly called for more fighter jets for its pilots, putting Poland in a tricky spot as it seeks to avoid being pulled into a potentially broader conflict with Russia. The government in Warsaw has now opted to push the issue over to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization more broadly to handle. So far the military alliance has been highly cautious about adding fighters to the weaponry that’s being sent in to support Ukraine’s military. Russia has already warned that doing so would be seen as an act of direct aggression by NATO members. “It is about providing some transparency,” Polish Deputy Foreign Minister Pawel Jablonski said Wednesday on local radio. “It is not that Poland wants to make any decisions on its own that may affect NATO security. Likewise, other NATO members should not independently make decisions that may disproportionately affect Poland’s security.”

[Avian secret: The key to agile bird flight is switching quickly between stable and unstable gliding](#)

[Ukrainian Drone Drops Bomb Through Open Hatch To Score First Kill On Russia’s Oldest Tank \(Forbes\)](#)

Some weeks ago we learned that Russia was mobilizing T-62 tanks from its long term storage facilities; predictably enough, they are not faring well. The first one to show up on

the battlefield became a target for a Ukrainian drone which dropped a hand grenade right through the driver's hatch. Russia's tanks have taken a severe beating on the frontline, as increasing numbers of Javelins and other anti-tank weapons supplied by the West are reaching Ukrainian forces, and as Ukrainian artillery hone their skills at hitting individual vehicles with the aid of drones. According to the listing by independent analysts Oryx, who painstakingly document every single vehicle loss which can be confirmed, Russia has now lost at least 836 tanks, out of an estimated 2,800. Those are the confirmed losses, there may be many more not documented. These staggering losses – more than the total number of tanks possessed by Germany, France and the U.K. put together – mean that Russia is having to draw on stocks of vehicles in its strategic reserves, giant warehouses and vehicles parks with vehicles previously retired from active duty. Among the oldest of these are the venerable T-62s, a type first introduced in the 1960s. The last one rolled off the production line in 1973.

Advanced Technologies

[U.S. military's newest weapon against China and Russia: Hot air \(Politico\)](#)

The Pentagon is working on a new plan to rise above competition from China and Russia: balloons. The high-altitude inflatables, flying at between 60,000 and 90,000 feet, would be added to the Pentagon's extensive surveillance network and could eventually be used to track hypersonic weapons. The idea may sound like science fiction, but Pentagon budget documents signal the technology is moving from DoD's scientific community to the military services. "High or very high-altitude platforms have a lot of benefit for their endurance on station, maneuverability and also flexibility for multiple payloads," said Tom Karako, senior fellow for the International Security Program and Missile Defense Project director at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. The Pentagon continues to invest in these projects because the military could use the balloons for various missions. Over the past two years, the Pentagon has spent about \$3.8 million on balloon projects, and plans to spend \$27.1 million in fiscal year 2023 to continue work on multiple efforts, according to budget documents.

[US Navy, Air Force running 'capstone test' of new high-power microwave missile](#)

[Air Force to Test 3D-Printed Rocket Motors \(Defense One\)](#)

The U.S. Air Force will test a "rocket factory in a box" made by a New Mexico startup in hopes of being able to 3D-print missile energetics. The technology could allow the military to get solid rocket motors for less money, more quickly, and in remote locations. "This is a technology push forward to see what the art of the possible is," X-Bow Systems CEO Jason Hundley said in an interview. For years, the Pentagon has talked about the need to diversify its space launch locations and get satellites into orbit in a matter of days. "The Air Force Research Labs' goal is to prove that a technology like this could actually exist and be movable and transportable," Hundley said. "Part of our future work with the Air Force will be evaluating, you know, the effectiveness of that in different potential scenarios." X-Bow, pronounced "crossbow," was founded in 2016, but operated in secrecy until March. In April, it announced it had raised \$27 million in a Series A funding round. Lockheed Martin Ventures is among the startup's investors, which is of note since the Federal Trade

Commission blocked Lockheed from acquiring Aerojet Rocketdyne, which also makes solid rocket motors.

[Newest sats launched by DoD include jammer-evading, classified payloads](#)

[Air Force Research Lab begins integration, testing for experimental navigation satellite \(Defense News\)](#)

Integration and testing activities for an experimental navigation satellite are ramping up at the Air Force Research Laboratory's Space Vehicles Directorate as the U.S. Space Force prepares to launch its first major positioning, navigation and timing demonstration in nearly 50 years. The lab is on track to launch in late 2023 the third Navigation Technology Satellite, or NTS-3, built by prime contractor L3Harris Technologies. The effort will showcase advanced capabilities that could improve future GPS satellites or inform a new program to augment today's constellation. Those technologies include steerable beams to provide regional coverage, a reprogrammable payload that can receive upgrades on orbit and protections against signal jamming. Speaking with reporters during a recent visit to the Space Vehicles Directorate at Kirtland Air Force Base in New Mexico, NTS-3 program manager Arlen Biersgreen said the effort is part of a legacy of experimental positioning, navigation and timing, or PNT, missions that have shaped key military and civilian space technology.

Military Installations & Communities

[New Reserve Maternity Leave Policy Issued by Pentagon 18 Months After Congressional Order \(Military.com\)](#)

The military Reserve components and National Guard are rolling out new maternity leave policies, providing up to six days of inactive duty pay and retirement points for members who give birth, with the Navy being the latest service to outline its policies last week. But Reserve moms who gave birth within the past 18 months -- after Congress passed the law directing the Defense Department to offer the benefit, but before the agency and the services issued their guidance -- will not be eligible. The Defense Department published a policy June 9 on Reserve Component Military Leave, ordering the services to provide paid authorized absences in lieu of inactive duty for training, also known as IDT, for at least 12 training periods, or the equivalent of three weekends. The new benefit is effective June 9, 2022, even though the law that required it was signed on Jan. 1, 2021, and stipulates that the benefit go into effect the day the legislation passed. The directive, titled "Reserve Component Maternity Leave Program," clearly states that the policy is not retroactive.

[Army Cuts Off More Than 60K Unvaccinated Guard and Reserve Soldiers from Pay and Benefits \(Military.com\)](#)

[New details emerge about the 2020 Bonhomme Richard fire, ahead of censure of three-star \(NavyTimes\)](#)

The initial response to the July 2020 fire that destroyed the multibillion-dollar amphibious assault ship Bonhomme Richard was uncoordinated and hampered by confusion as to which admiral should cobble together Navy and civilian firefighters, according to new information from the then-head of Naval Surface Forces. The discombobulation in those early hours meant sailors may have missed a small window to contain the fire in a storage area. One admiral who said he lacked authority to issue an order pleaded with the ship's commanding officer to get back on the ship and fight the fire, when the CO and his crew were waiting on the pier. And when that admiral — now-retired Vice Adm. Rich Brown — found the situation so dire that he called on other another command to intervene, it refused, Brown said in an interview. Brown, who led Naval Surface Forces and Naval Surface Force Pacific from January 2018 to August 2020, told Defense News in June he set up an ad hoc chain of command to coordinate trying to save the ship that Sunday morning, after seeing lower-level leaders struggle to communicate or to fight the fire aggressively. The move came after the fleet's operational chain of command declined to step in due to confusion over who had control over the ship. An investigation into the fire, released in October 2021, outlined several failures leading up to the fire and during the response. But Brown's comments offer additional details and a new perspective on how the fire response came together and what was left out of the formal investigation.

[After Criticism, Army Reinstates High School Diploma Requirement as Recruitment Plummet \(Defense One\)](#)

[The Pentagon's F-35 program office has a new top official \(BreakingDefense\)](#)

Air Force Lt. Gen. Michael Schmidt took the reins of the Pentagon's F-35 program office today, where he will lead the continued development of the Defense Department's most notorious and expensive weapons program. Schmidt — formerly the Air Force's program executive officer for command, control, communication, intelligence, and networks (C3I) — replaced Air Force Lt. Gen. Eric Fick, who led the F-35 Joint Program Office since July 2019. Schmidt takes over the F-35 program office as contract negotiations for F-35 Lots 15-17 continue to drag on despite more than a year of discussions. Fick told reporters in March that the Pentagon and F-35 maker Lockheed Martin had yet to come to agreement on the unit cost of the aircraft, though they will likely be higher than the previous batch due to supply chain issues. Schmidt will also oversee the F-35 as it moves through its Block 4 modernization program, where the baseline jet is upgraded with additional weapons, as well as improved sensors, mission systems and software. "I'm truly honored to have been asked to take over the best fighter aircraft in the world and look forward to make it even better," Schmidt said during the change of command ceremony.

Homeland Security

[Homeland Security chief: 'We are in a heightened threat environment' \(Politico\)](#)

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Sunday told CBS' Margaret Brennan that the country is facing a "heightened threat environment," noting both safety concerns for Supreme Court justices and recent demonstrations by white supremacist groups. The Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe v. Wade on June 24 has galvanized groups on both sides of the abortion rights debate, with some people protesting outside justices'

homes. Mayorkas said on "Face the Nation": "We are very mindful that the Supreme Court's decision in reversing and overturning Roe v. Wade has really heightened the threat environment, and we have deployed resources to ensure the safety and security of the Supreme Court and the justices" including other staff members. "We do not condone violence, and law enforcement will and has responded to acts of violence when people do not honor their freedom to protest peacefully, but instead violate the laws of our country and the states within it," he continued.

[Rising threats spark US scramble for cyber workers](#)

[CISA Announces Post-Quantum Cryptography Initiative \(Homeland Security Today\)](#)

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) announced today the establishment of a Post-Quantum Cryptography Initiative to unify and drive agency efforts to address threats posed by quantum computing. In March 2021, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas outlined his vision for cybersecurity resilience and identified the transition to post-quantum encryption as a priority. In coordination with interagency and industry partners, this new initiative will build on existing Department of Homeland Security (DHS) efforts as well as those underway at the Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to support critical infrastructure and government network owners and operators during the transition to post-quantum cryptography. "CISA continually works to understand and anticipate the risks to critical infrastructure from evolving technologies including quantum computing," said CISA Director Jen Easterly. "We look forward to continued work with NIST and other key stakeholders to ensure that public and private sector organizations are prepared to effectively manage the transition to post-quantum cryptography."

[Hacker Claims to Have Stolen 1 Billion Records of Chinese Citizens From Police](#)

[Mayorkas calls for new immigration law amid renewed scrutiny and tragedy at the border \(ABC News\)](#)

Congress "must pass" new immigration laws, Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas said Sunday while defending the administration's policies amid renewed scrutiny of the high amount of migration at the southern border. "Because the border has been a challenge for decades, ultimately Congress must pass legislation to once and for all fix our broken immigration system," Mayorkas told ABC "This Week" co-anchor Martha Raddatz. Mayorkas' defense comes after 53 migrants were found dead in a tractor-trailer in San Antonio, Texas, late last month, which Mayorkas called a "tragic result" of a "dangerous journey." Four men have been charged in the deaths. On "This Week," Mayorkas said that the U.S. was working with regional allies in Central and South America beyond pushing for legislation, which remains a dim prospect in Congress. "These are remarkable, distinct times," Mayorkas said. In lieu of new laws, "we have a multi-faceted approach, not only to work with our partner countries but to bring law enforcement to bear to attack the smuggling organizations in an unprecedented way," he said. "We are doing so very much."

Transportation & Infrastructure

[5G for 12 GHz Coalition snaps back at Starlink 'misinformation campaign' \(Fierce Wireless\)](#)

The 5G for 12 GHz Coalition, a group that includes Dish Network and RS Access, said today that it wants to set the record straight on Starlink's "misinformation campaign." The most recent spat started a little over a week ago when SpaceX encouraged Starlink users to send messages to the FCC and lawmakers about the 12 GHz proceeding. More than 70,000 messages flooded the FCC's public comment system in a matter of days, mostly from people who said they want to protect the Starlink satellite system from what they perceive as a bad plan by Dish to use the 12 GHz band for 5G. The comments are tied to an online petition, hosted on [votervoices.net](#), designed to send pre-written messages; it's not clear how many are duplicative or if all the senders are actual Starlink customers. The Starlink internet service had over 400,000 customers around the world as of May. The 5G for 12 GHz Coalition for over a year now has been engaged in a fight with SpaceX over the viability of sharing the 12 GHz band with satellites and terrestrial 5G. The coalition argues that the engineering analysis shows sharing is possible while SpaceX disputes that. "In addition to this manipulated filing, Starlink has initiated a public misinformation campaign by falsely telling customers and the public that coexistence is not possible in the band among Starlink and 5G services – despite nationwide data proving otherwise," the 5G for 12 GHz Coalition said on Thursday. "This tactic, which is commonly used by Elon Musk, is not only disingenuous, but it promulgates an anti-5G narrative that is harmful to American consumers who deserve greater competition, connectivity options and innovation."

[States are spending billions on electric vehicles in battle to replace automotive capital Michigan \(CNBC\)](#)

[Will FCC, state broadband maps duel or dance? \(Fierce Telecom\)](#)

The U.S. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is in the midst of a multi-year, multi-million-dollar effort to update its broadband coverage map. But the gears of government turn slowly and rather than waiting for the new FCC maps, several states including Virginia, New York, Georgia, Tennessee, Texas and Florida have either already released or are developing their own maps. While this might seem like a duplicative effort on the surface, Anna Read, senior officer for Pew's Broadband Access Initiative, told Fierce the state-level maps will complement rather than compete with the new FCC map. Officials have touted the forthcoming FCC map as a revolutionary step forward, arguing the data it is set to provide will be significantly more accurate than the Form 477 information the agency has previously relied on to track coverage. But there are limitations to its scope. An FCC representative told Fierce that as mandated under the Broadband DATA Act passed in 2020, its new map will specifically measure "broadband availability." This will be determined on a location-by-location basis and be based on reporting of maximum advertised speeds. Of course, there will be a challenge process for third parties, state and local governments, Tribal entities and the public to rebut coverage claims, with this designed to help ensure the data reported by providers is accurate. The FCC representative said the agency will also cross-check provider data with crowdsourced information. But the narrow scope of its data collection means the map won't include information on things like adoption, affordability or the quality of the broadband service that's actually delivered.

[Future of key California high-speed rail line solidified with \\$4.2B](#)

['Insane' lithium price bump threatens EV fix for climate change \(Al Jazeera\)](#)

Lithium, the highly reactive silver-white metal that is a crucial ingredient in batteries used in electric vehicles (EVs), is becoming much more expensive – and fast. For governments ranging from China to the European Union that have pledged to phase out combustion engines in the near future, the soaring cost and growing scarcity of the metal raise questions about how they will meet their deadlines, many of which come due as soon as 2035. With combustion engines accounting for one-quarter of carbon emissions, according to the United Nations, a delay in transitioning away from petrol and diesel cars would deal a serious blow to efforts to reduce carbon emissions and avert the worst effects of climate change. “As Elon Musk has said, ‘lithium will be the limiting factor,’” Joe Lowry, an expert on the global lithium market and the founder of Global Lithium LLC, told Al Jazeera. “It is very simple math.” Despite retreating from its April highs, the price of Lithium has jumped more than 600 percent since the start of the year, from about \$10,000 per metric tonne in January to \$62,000 in June, according to Benchmark Market Intelligence. Citigroup has predicted more “extreme” price hikes on the way.

Biotechnology & Healthcare

[Dems try again on drug prices \(AXIOS\)](#)

Democrats are trying again to enact government price negotiations for prescription drugs, with a revised plan that would be wrapped into a broader reconciliation bill. State of play: Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer on Wednesday released updated drug pricing language for review by the chamber’s rules referee, with a goal of passing it through the partisan reconciliation process, which wouldn’t need any Republican votes. Schumer has been engaged in talks with Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) on a package that would let Medicare negotiate directly with drugmakers over the price of prescription drugs. While there’s no agreement on other components in the package, Schumer has told Senate Democrats that if a deal can be reached, a bill could reach the Senate floor before August recess, per a source familiar.

The big picture: The specifics of the new plan “appear ever so slightly more favorable to industry,” said Raymond James analyst Chris Meekins.

Details: According to a summary of drug pricing provisions obtained by Axios, negotiations would begin next year. The new negotiated prices would take effect in 2026.

[FDA allows pharmacists to prescribe COVID anti-viral medicine](#)

[Health Care — Not all Dems buying ‘go vote’ message on abortion \(The Hill\)](#)

Voters are becoming disillusioned by Democrats’ calls to storm the polls following Roe v. Wade’s demise, arguing the party’s failure to prepare for the moment means it could face an unpleasant fate in November. Almost from the moment the Supreme Court announced it was ending the constitutional right to an abortion, Democrats began working to make it a

midterm issue, presenting a vote for their side as a way to help codify Roe at the state and perhaps federal level — or at least prevent Republicans from doing the opposite. But that message is already falling flat. Frustration with the lack of progress on many women's issues and what some see as a lack of a clear vision on abortion have left voters skeptical that the solution lies at the ballot box. "Here we are with leadership basically [reduced] to begging for people to vote," said Aaron Chappell, political director of the grassroots group Our Revolution. "No clear plan, no promises of what those votes will translate to." "The people chanting 'just vote blue' make me lowkey want to die," said another disgruntled operative involved with strategy for progressive candidates. "It's nuts."

[New imaging technique allows researchers to see gene expression in brains of live mice in real time \(ScienceDaily\)](#)

[A massive pet "biobank" will study why cats and dogs get sick \(AXIOS\)](#)

Help wanted: Mars Petcare is seeking 10,000 dogs and 10,000 cats for a biobank — an aggregation of biological samples, images and other data — that aims to improve the health of house pets by detecting maladies earlier. Why it matters: Compared with human biobanking, animal biobanking is in its infancy. This initiative may be the largest and most ambitious so far to try to pinpoint what triggers disease in healthy pets by sifting through genomic patterns. "The overall aim is to improve pet care of the future and health outcomes, and to improve the health span and quality of life of our pets," says Kay O'Donnell, vice president of the Waltham Petcare Science Institute, a division of Mars Petcare. Driving the news: Mars Inc., the giant conglomerate that makes M&M's and Snickers, has a division that runs chains of veterinary hospitals and makes products like Pedigree dog food and Iams cat food. That unit recently announced the new biobank and issued a call for dogs and cats in the U.S. to participate.

Climate & Development

[Democrats race to clinch deal on climate, energy with Manchin \(Washington Post\)](#)

Democratic leaders are racing to finalize a revised proposal to tackle climate change and jump-start the nation's transition to clean energy, part of a larger sprint to strike a deal with Sen. Joe Manchin III (D-W.Va.) on their stalled spending bill this month. The frenzied deliberations reflect weeks of private talks between Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Manchin, a centrist who scuttled negotiations over the party's last attempt at a broader spending package in December. A climate agreement would help the country meet President Biden's ambitious clean-energy goals, even as Manchin pursues policies that would still promote fossil fuels. While top Manchin aides say they are far from a deal, some Democrats are still hoping to finalize a retooled climate proposal as soon as next week, when lawmakers are set to return from recess, according to two people familiar with the matter, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly. Already, party leaders have held advanced discussions with the West Virginian on spending to combat climate change, including how to curb emissions of methane, a potent planet-warming gas, the individuals said.

[Interactive Climate Opportunity Map shows benefits of future net-zero energy policies \(Brown University\)](#)



[China's domination of solar a risk to zero-carbon future: IEA \(Al Jazeera\)](#)

Countries must lessen their dependence on China's production of solar panels and dramatically boost manufacturing capacity to reach net-zero emissions, the International Energy Agency has said. In a report released on Thursday, the IEA said that while China's policies and innovation have made solar power more affordable, its domination of the sector has also resulted in "imbalances" in supply chains. "China has been instrumental in bringing down costs worldwide for solar photovoltaics (PV), with multiple benefits for clean energy transitions," IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said. "At the same time, the level of geographical concentration in global supply chains also poses potential challenges that governments need to address. Accelerating clean energy transitions around the world will put further strain on these supply chains to meet growing demand, but this also offers

opportunities for other countries and regions to help diversify production and make it more resilient.” The world will need to quadruple the pace at which solar capacity is increasing by 2030 in order to reach net-zero emissions by 2050, the IEA said.

[Revealed: US water likely contains more ‘forever chemicals’ than EPA tests show](#)

[Gas and Nuclear Power Can Be ‘Green’ Under New EU Plan \(WSJ\)](#)

Lawmakers in the European Union voted to include nuclear power and natural gas in the bloc’s list of investments deemed sustainable, a move it hopes will trigger more funding of those sectors but that critics said would slow down the EU’s shift to greener energy sources. Opponents of the plan failed to gather enough support for a veto during a vote in the European Parliament on Wednesday, clearing the way for the two energy sources to be included in the EU’s so-called green taxonomy if they meet a series of conditions such as limits on greenhouse gas emissions. The taxonomy, which will affect a range of industries beyond energy, is meant to help funnel more money into projects that the bloc considers to be sustainable and is part of a larger push to slash greenhouse gas emissions. It doesn’t bar investments in projects that aren’t on the list or prevent European countries from making decisions about their own energy mix.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen before the vote at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, on Wednesday. The debate over whether nuclear energy and natural gas should be included in the taxonomy took on a new dimension in recent months after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. About 40% of the gas the EU used last year came from Russia.

Next Week’s Hearings

Next Week’s Hearings:

HASC: None Listed

SASC: None Listed

Defense Appropriations Subcommittees

House: None Listed

Senate: None Listed

Homeland Security Committees

House: None Listed

Senate:

Tuesday, July 12th at 10:00AM EST: Nominations of Errol R. Arthur, Kendra D. Briggs,

and Carl Ezekiel Ross to be Associate Judges, Superior Court of the District of Columbia
Witnesses: None Listed

Thursday, July 14th at 10:15AM EST: Protecting the Homeland from Unmanned Aircraft
Systems
Witnesses: None Listed

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