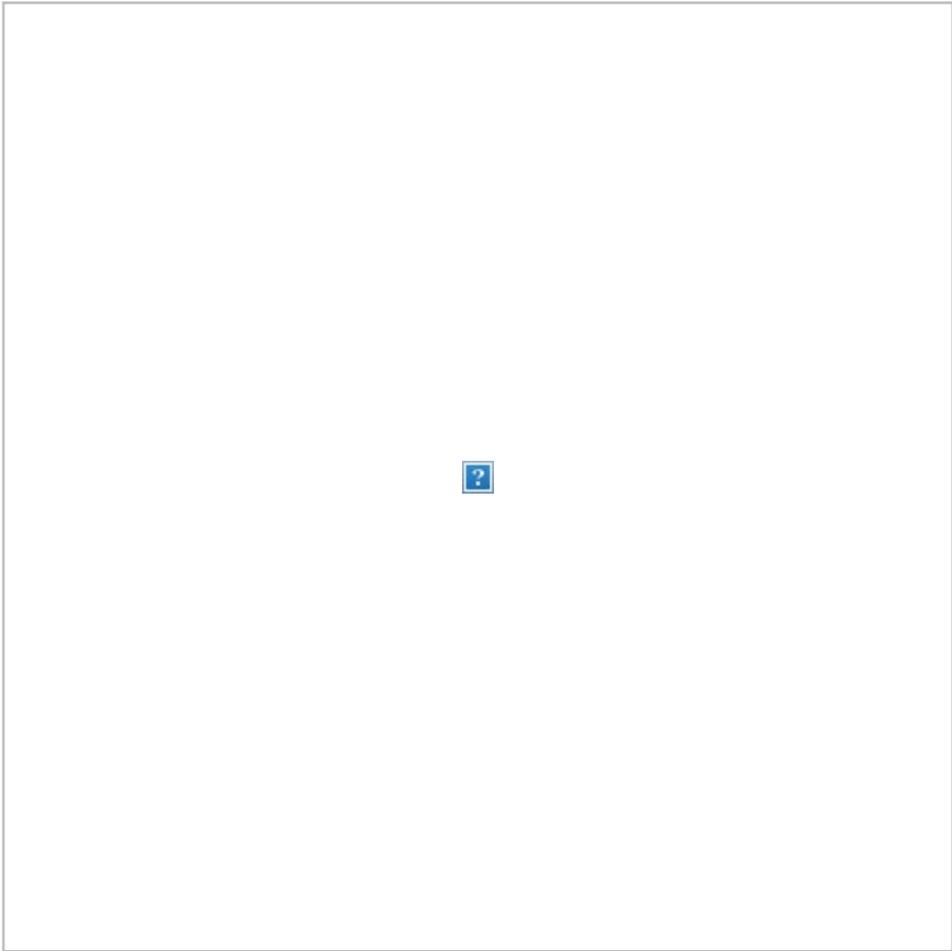
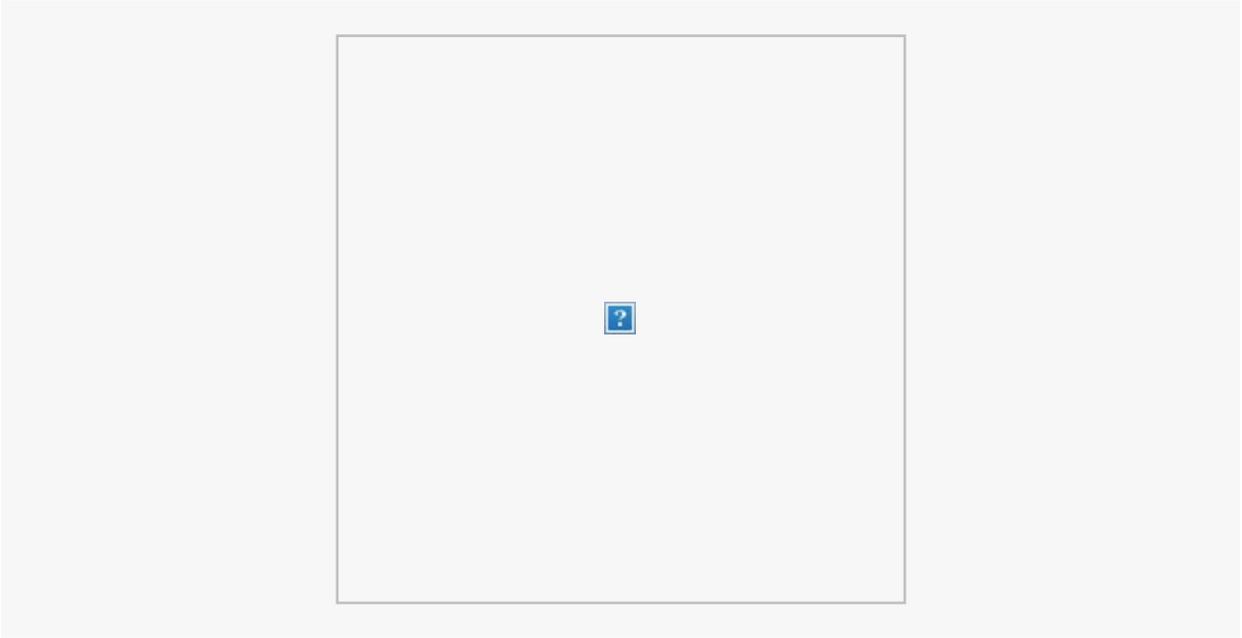


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March 29, 2024

Headlines - Aerospace & Defense - Budget & Economy - Advanced Tech - Military Installations & Communities - Homeland Security - Transportation & Infrastructure - Biotech & Healthcare - Climate & Development

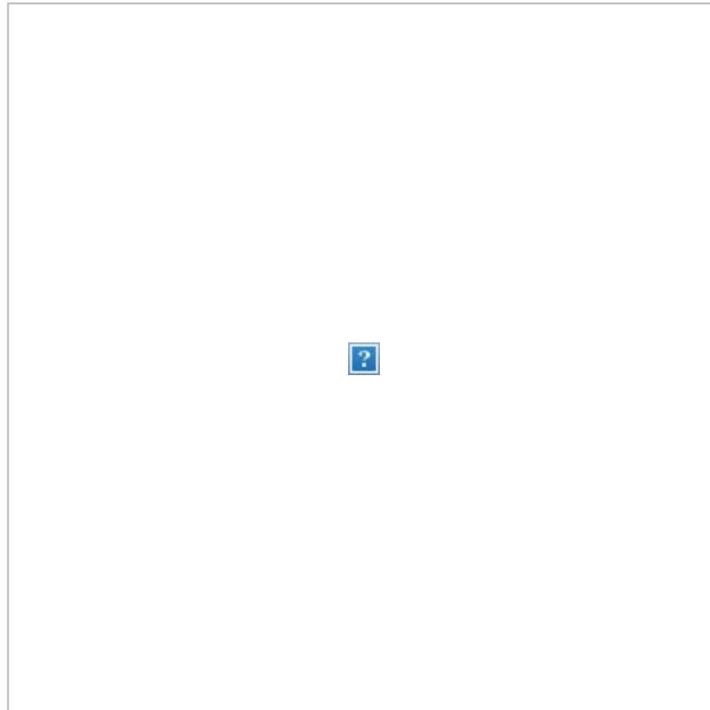
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Notable Headlines

- [Rise in homeowners vs. squatters incidents prompts action from lawmakers](#)
- [3 presidents, celebrity performances and protester interruptions at Biden campaign's \\$26M fundraiser](#)
- [Muslim American appeals court nominee loses Democratic support](#)
- [Sam Bankman-Fried sentenced to 25 years in prison — as judge rips him as power-obsessed scammer](#)
- [RNC weighs limiting NBC's access at this summer's convention](#)

Worth reading: ['Hello From Sunny Moscow': My Year of Letters with Evan Gershkovich](#)

View From The Hill



After finally putting to bed fiscal year (FY) 2024 government funding, Congress began a two week recess this week. Typically, the Spring Recess is a popular time for Members to lead Congressional Delegations (CODELs) across the globe, as lawmakers spend quality time together on a bipartisan basis engaging with foreign officials on issues important to the United States. This recess saw House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mike Rogers (R-AL) and the committee's Ranking Member Adam Smith (D-WA) [pay](#) a visit to

Uzbekistan to shore up mutual strategic cooperation and economic partnerships. The House defense panel leaders were joined by Representatives Veronica Escobar (D-TX) and Salud Carbajal (D-CA). Additionally, Sen. Lindsay Graham (R-SC) [traveled](#) to Israel, while Representatives August Pfluger (R-TX), Dale Strong (R-MS), and Lou Correa (D-CA) [visited](#) to Egypt.

Maryland's federal elected delegation also [promised](#) swift advocacy for federal support in recovery and rebuilding efforts following the devastating collapse of Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge after it was struck by a Sri Lanka-bound cargo ship leaving the port. Historically, Congress moves swiftly to fund such recovery efforts, though no specific plan has yet been released and any major bipartisan action will be a heavy lift this year.

Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK), currently Chairman of the House Rules Committee, is [considered](#) the heavy favorite to replace retiring Rep. Kay Granger (R-TX) atop the powerful House Appropriations Committee. Chairwoman Granger has opted to step down from her position on the committee early, leaving a sooner-than-expected opening for the gavel.

In a surprise addition to the litany of lawmakers heading for the exits from Congress, Rep. Ann McClane Kuster (D-ME) [announced](#) her decision not to seek reelection this year. Though the district safely reelected Kuster in 2022, it could prove competitive as an open seat. Democrats still maintain the edge for retaking the House this cycle, but will [need](#) to win a high number of races currently considered to be "toss-ups."

Former U.S. Senator Joseph Lieberman (I-CT) [passed](#) away this week at age 82 following complications from a fall. Lieberman was a known national security hawk during his twenty-four years in the Senate and was Al Gore's running mate in the 2000 Presidential Election. He was the first Jewish American nominated on a major party's presidential ticket.

Aerospace & Defense

[Kyiv asks NATO allies for air defenses after Russia infrastructure \(Reuters\)](#)

Ukraine's defense minister at a NATO-Ukraine Council meeting on Thursday asked allies for more air defenses. Last week Russia carried out its largest air strike on Ukraine's energy system since the initial invasion took place in February 2022. Russia has described its latest string of attacks as "revenge strikes" against Ukraine. Russia has also increased its use of ballistic missiles. The Ukrainian defense minister said air support from allies was vital as "the total explosive power of combined air attacks on Ukraine since the beginning of 2024 exceeds 9 kilotons."

[Congress funds Taiwan military support as foreign aid bill stalls](#)

[US Navy preps hypersonic weapon test this spring, with Army watching \(DefenseNews\)](#)

The US Navy is heading into a major test of a hypersonic weapon that "will help determine

the way ahead for a joint development program with the US Army.” The Navy’s test of the ‘Common-Hypersonic Glide Body’ will lead into the Army test in the summer. Hypersonic weapons can change the game as they are capable of flying faster than Mach 5 (3,836 miles per hour) and can go between varying altitudes which make them difficult to detect. As China and Russia are developing and testing hypersonic weapons, the US is in a race to field systems that can defend against them.

Budget & Economy

[10-year Treasury yield slips lower as investors weigh economic data \(CNBC\)](#)

As investors continue to assess the US economy, as well as when the Federal Reserve might start to cut interest rates, the 10-year US Treasury yield ticked slightly lower on Tuesday. It was slightly down by more than 1 basis point (0.01%) at 4.238%. More data released on Tuesday showed that “orders for long-lasting goods in the US rose by 1.4% last month, which was higher than the 0.8% economists predicted.” The latest consumer confidence index was slightly lower than expected which indicated optimism in the US economy took a small hit in March. The personal consumption expenditures index will be released today and is one of the “Fed’s favorite inflation gauges.”

[O’Malley outlines plans to rebuild Social Security Administration workforce](#)

[Budget watchdog warns US could suffer market shock over national debt \(The Hill\)](#)

Due to the US’ unprecedented fiscal trajectory, the Congressional Budget Office Director, Phillip Swagel warned the US could suffer a similar market shock that was seen in the United Kingdom during Liz Truss’s extremely short tenure as Prime Minister. Markets reacted when PM Truss pressed for large tax cuts but did not provide offsets. The proposal spurred a major “selloff of British debt, forcing UK interest rates to decades-long highs.” When governments take actions, markets react, which could be positive or negative. In the CBO’s long-term budget outlook, the nonpartisan agency projected the national deficit would rise “significantly in relation to GDP over the next 30 years, reaching 8.5% of GDP in 2054.”

Advanced Technologies

[Xi tells Dutch prime minister: No force can stop China’s tech advance \(CNBC\)](#)

During a meeting in Beijing, Chinese President Xi Jinping told the Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte when talking about technology that “the Chinese people also have legitimate development rights, and no force can stop the pace of China’s scientific and technological progress.” The relationship between China and the Netherlands has been strained since they joined with the US to block exports of advanced chip technology to China over concerns they could be used for military purposes. The Dutch tech giant ASML has been

barred from exporting extreme ultraviolet lithography machines to China and “is the only company currently capable of making such machines.” These machines are crucial for chip manufacturing and are used by companies like TSMC to make the “smallest and most sophisticated chips.”

[US may soon unveil list of Chinese chip factories barred from receiving tech](#)

[NYC subway testing out weapons detection technology. Mayor Adams says \(CBS\)](#)

With violence on subways top of mind for many New Yorkers, Mayor Adams is hoping some new technology can help slow the rate of violence. He announced NYC will be purchasing electromagnetic weapons detection systems and hopes a trial period will begin in the next several months or so. If the system detects a weapon a red box appears on an iPad where the weapon is located on the individual. However, some civil rights groups are taking issue saying the new device could play into overly aggressive cops and that it's 'dystopian.' False alarms can happen as it did in City Hall in 2022 when a CBS reporter testing out the system was pinged for having a weapon and it turned out to be her iPad.

Military Installations & Communities

[2 Fort Carson soldiers injured in second apache helicopter crash in 48 hours \(Military.com\)](#)

Two soldiers are hospitalized after their AH-64 Apache helicopter went down on Wednesday evening. The crash is just the second in as many days involving an Army Apache. The craft has also had several incidents over the last year that injured or killed service members. The other crash involving an Apache occurred Monday in the state of Washington. That crash also occurred during a routine training exercise. The two incidents this week come after the fatal crash that happened in February which caused the Army National Guard to temporarily ground all of its helicopters.

[Space Force's Leader Warns of 'Sheer Amount of Work' Needed to Start New Part-Time Service Model](#)

[Troops still aren't getting enough sleep, and the Defense Department isn't taking responsibility \(Military.com\)](#)

Many would agree getting enough sleep is vital for productivity. According to a new report from the Government Accountability Office that was released this week “service members aren't getting enough sleep, in large part because there's no coherent Pentagon effort to remedy the problem.” The report concluded that fatigue among service members seemed to be more the rule than the exception. Active-duty troops were sleeping less than seven hours nightly, twice as often as civilians. This lack of sleep has caused numerous issues

from near-misses to even deaths. The GAO report author said the military does recognize this lack of sleep is an issue, but “no one owns it.” Between 2015 and 2019 “almost 500 deaths, serious injuries, and property damage events were reported by the Navy all related to driving while fatigued.” It is clear a new course of action must be taken.

Homeland Security

[Mayorkas impeachment headed to Senate for April 11 trial \(Roll Call\)](#)

Two months after the House impeached Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas, Speaker Johnson will send the articles of impeachment to the Senate on April 10. This trial will be one of the first issues on the Senate’s agenda when it returns to session. With Democrats controlling the Senate this impeachment effort is likely dead on arrival. Republican accusations range from “breach of public trust” and lying to Congress on the topic of border security. Republicans successfully impeached Mayorkas after a botched attempt due to some surprise ‘no’ votes from Republicans and Democratic member Al Green walking onto the floor to vote after surgery. There will be ten impeachment managers including Rep. Mark Green (TN), Rep. McCaul (TX), Rep. Biggs (AZ), Rep. Higgins (LA), Rep. Cline (VA), Rep. Guest (MS), Rep. Garabino (NY), Rep. Greene (GA), Rep. Pfluger (TX), Rep. Hageman (WY), and Rep. Lee (FL).

[An Airstrip is Being Built on a Yemeni Island Near the Red Sea](#)

[UN Security Council demands immediate Gaza ceasefire after US abstains \(Reuters\)](#)

Earlier this week the UN Security Council was able to adopt a resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire after the US abstained from the vote. While the abstention was welcomed by other members of the security council, it put the US in a tougher position with its ally Israel. The resolution also called for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that the failure of the US to veto the resolution “was a clear retreat from its previous position and would hurt Israel’s war efforts and bid to release more than 130 hostages still held by Hamas.” The White House stressed that the abstention from the vote did not represent a shift in policy, while Netanyahu canceled a visit to Washington DC a high-level delegation was set to make.

Transportation & Infrastructure

[Biden OKs \\$60M in aid after Baltimore bridge collapse as governor warns of ‘very long road ahead’ \(AP\)](#)

Tragedy struck earlier this week when the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapsed after a cargo ship crashed into it very early Tuesday morning. President Biden has authorized \$60 million in immediate federal aid to help assist in recovery efforts. The US Army Corps of Engineers are currently moving the largest crane on the Eastern Seaboard to help remove the wreckage. Sen. Chris Van Hollen said a second crane could arrive on Saturday. Some aspects of the supply chain will be bottlenecked until the channel has been cleared of

bridge debris and search teams are able to recover the bodies of four workers who are presumed dead. There is no time table as to when a new bridge will be up and running, but it is safe to say it will be no time soon.

[Republicans slammed for trying to blame Baltimore bridge collapse on Biden's infrastructure bill](#)

[Boeing needs to be led by engineers, time is not on its side, Emirates Airline president says \(CNBC\)](#)

Tim Clark, president of Emirates Airline, says that in order for Boeing to pull themselves out of its current state of crisis they need to be "led by engineers." Boeing announced their CEO will be stepping down at the end of the year as part of a large management shake up. Aviation analysts and former employees have "criticized the company's reported sidelining of engineers in its senior management ranks." Of the top executives at Boeing, only one had an engineering background and that was Stand Deal, head of the commercial airline division. But, he is stepping down and being replaced by Stephanie Pope who will assume the role of chief operating officer. Clark continued with his comments saying, "to fix Boeing's issues the company needs a strong engineering lead as its head coupled with a governance model that prioritizes safety and quality."

Biotechnology & Healthcare

[A Winnipeg biotech company's role in a new treatment used in Canada \(CTV News\)](#)

A biotech company in Canada will be the first to utilize phage therapy which is a new way to treat a serious resistant infection. This therapy is antimicrobial and can work where other medications cannot. The therapy works by having the bacteriophage "land on a bacterial cell, then it will compress itself and inject its genetic information into the bacteria." From there the virus would replicate inside the cell, eventually destroying it. Phage therapy is now being used to treat chronic artificial joint infections or when antibiotics just couldn't cut it.

[Health care is 'overwhelmingly complex' for older adults, experts say: 'Ever-increasing hurdle'](#)

[Dengue fever outbreak in Puerto Rico creates public health emergency \(NBC\)](#)

The Puerto Rico Health Secretary, Carlos Mellado has declared a public health emergency as dengue fever is ever present and on the rise. While the risk is always there due to Puerto Rico having a hot, humid climate, the secretary says "cases have exceeded historical figures." With the declaration of a state of emergency, Puerto Rico joins Brazil, Peru, and several other Latin American nations dealing with the outbreaks. As of Tuesday this week there have been "3.5 million cases and more than 1,000 deaths in Latin America." In Puerto Rico 549 cases were reported, with 62% of patients being hospitalized.

Fortunately, no fatalities have occurred thus far.

Climate & Development

[Melting polar ice is slowing the Earth's rotation, with possible consequences for timekeeping \(NBC\)](#)

According to a new study that was published this week it found that as the polar ice caps melt it changes how quick the Earth rotates and could at some point impact time. This happens because as the ice melts and returns to water it moves around changing how Earth's mass is concentrated. Due to a combination of factors, in recent years the Earth has started to spin faster and the melting of the ice caps has somewhat counteracted that. The increase in spinning had scientists considering subtracting a "negative leap second" from clocks as soon as 2026. However, the melting of the ice caps has delayed that possibility by about three years.

[Biden highway climate rule struck down by Texas judge: 'Unauthorized'](#)

[90% of some of the world's traditional wine regions could be gone in decades. It's part of a larger problem \(CBS\)](#)

It has long been known that human contributions to climate change have had impacts in most aspects of life. These impacts have now stretched to wine. Researchers have found that as conditions necessary to produce grapes grow more unfruitful some wine regions are at risk of disappearing within decades. The impact is being felt heavily in Spain, Italy, Greece and Southern California which are all home to the world's traditional wine producers. In 76 years, which would be by the end of this century, "roughly 90% of these specific regions" were at high risk of disappearing. Researchers found that excessive drought and more frequent heat were the main drivers of this possibility.

Next Week's Hearings

Armed Service Committee:

House: None listed

Senate: None listed

Appropriations Committee:

House: None Listed

Senate: None listed

Homeland Security Committee:

House: None listed

Senate: None listed



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