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### View From The Hill



While the Senate remained in recess this week until after the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday, the House returned to Washington to continue its effort to pass fiscal year 2025 federal funding bills. The House is aiming to pass full year funding bills for the Departments of Defense, State, and Homeland Security today. Notably, the chamber adopted an amendment on the Floor that prohibits DHS money from being used to pay the salary of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, whom House Republicans voted to impeach several months ago. The House Energy and Commerce Committee [scrapped](#) a planned markup at the last minute of outgoing Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers's landmark data privacy legislation, the American Privacy Rights Act (APRA). The cancelled markup came after rare disagreement on the scope of the bill between McMorris Rodgers and House GOP Leadership spilled into the open, with Leadership threatening not to advance the bill further if it made it out of committee.

On the campaign front, one of the members of the "Squad," Rep. Jamaal Bowman (D-NY), [lost](#) his primary race by a wide margin to Westchester County Executive George Latimer. The race turned into the most expensive House primary campaign in U.S. history, as the primary came to be seen as a proxy battle between the moderate and progressive wings of the Democratic party, as well as intra-party tensions surrounding the ongoing conflict in Gaza. Further upstate, State Sen. John Minnion handily won the democratic primary and will face Rep. Brandon Williams (R-NY) in November. Williams is seen as one of the most vulnerable Republicans in the House after New York redistricting made his seat much more difficult for Republicans. In Colorado, conservative firebrand Lauren Boebert (R-CO) won a five-way primary battle in a red-leaning district. Boebert's victory comes after she moved districts to avoid running for reelection in a less Republican-friendly district. In Utah, Rep. John Curtis (R-UT) won the primary for the race to succeed outgoing Senator Mitt Romney (R-UT), defeating a Trump-backed challenger and several others.

It was the Press versus Members of Congress at the Annual Women’s Congressional Softball Game, a bipartisan annual summer [tradition](#) that raises funds for survivors of breast cancer. The press team prevailed against the congresswomen, 9-4.

## Aerospace & Defense

### [Extended range version of Army guided rocket enters production \(Defense News\)](#)

The Army has given Lockheed Martin approval to produce an “extended-range version of its Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System”. In May, Lockheed was awarded a \$200 million contract modification to build up to 240 extended range GMLRS. Leading up to the production decision, the GMLRS ER had multiple successful test flights. “The extended range version can reach 150-plus kilometers compared to the 70-kilometer range capability of the GMLRS. In 2023, Lockheed won a \$4.8 billion for GLMRS as the US adjusted its production numbers to replenish rockets that had been sent to Ukraine in order to fight off Russia’s invasion. Production of GMLRS is expected to be increased from 6,000 to 14,000 a year, and a multi-year deal is expected in FY2024. The service is also expected to spend \$1.2 billion in FY25 to buy 6,408 missiles as part of the anticipated multi-year contract.

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### [The US is buying new version of counter-IED jammer \(Defense One\)](#)

The Pentagon is buying new versions of venerable jamming systems in order to keep up with developments in roadside bombs. The Navy placed a \$42.7 million order for Northrop Grumman, a major producer of a jamming system called Joint Counter Radio-Controlled Improvised Explosive Device Warfare (JCREW), in February for “engineering and sustainment support of the systems for US forces and the government of Australia”. Options in the contract could increase its value to \$123.2 million. This comes two years after Northrop Grumman received a \$329 million contract for JCREW production. The majority of JCREWs ordered for the next few years are for protecting vehicles and dismounted troops, but there are several contractors that produce versions for specific applications, such as mounted and dismounted, and fixed sites such as compounds.

## Budget & Economy

### [Supreme Court Knocks Down Wall Street Regulator's In-House Courts \(Politico\)](#)

On June 27, the Supreme Court ruled that the SEC can't rely on in-house, administrative tribunals to resolve certain enforcement disputes; a decision which would be a substantial check on the power of corporate watchdogs in the federal government. In a 6-3 decision, divided along ideological and party lines, the justices backed a challenge to the constitutionality of the SEC's internal tribunals. This decision comes as a resounding win for conservatives who have long argued that federal regulators have too much authority over corporations. Chief Justice John Roberts, who authored the majority opinion, stated that the SEC's reliance on in-house courts violates the Constitution's guarantee of a jury trial in fraud cases. Justice Sonia Sotomayor penned the dissenting opinion, arguing that "the constitutionality of hundreds of statutes may now be in peril, and dozens of agencies could be stripped of their power to enforce laws enacted by Congress." The SEC has not yet commented on the ruling, and it remains to be seen how this decision alters the way in which SEC prosecutes fraud.

### [House Appropriations Committee pares back Space Force budget request](#)

### [House GOP Unveils DOJ Funding Bill after Promising Crackdown on "Weaponization" \(The Hill\)](#)

On June 25, House Republicans unveiled a bill to fund the Departments of Commerce and Justice for FY 25. If passed, the legislation would cut funding for salaries at the Justice Department by 20%, and for U.S. attorney's offices by 11%. The bill strips a billion dollars total in funding from the Department of Justice, and blocks the construction of a new FBI headquarters. The final bill allocates \$36.53 billion to the Justice Department, which is \$987.82 million, or 3% lower than FY 24, and \$3.06 billion less than President Biden's budget request. This budgetary decision comes at the same time that House Republicans are moving forward with votes on proposals to reduce the salaries of Lloyd Austin, the Secretary of Defense to \$1, and completely cutting off pay for Antony Blinken, the Secretary of State. House Appropriations Committee Chair Tom Cole (R-OK) expressed in a statement that the proposed spending bill "halts the weaponization of the federal government against its citizens," while Attorney General Merrick Garland has already called it a drastic cut to programs conducted by the Justice Department that keep communities safe.

## Advanced Technologies

### [Army plans multiple AI industry partnerships \(NextGov\)](#)

In an effort to modernize its warfighter operations, the US Army is looking to integrate third-party algorithms into its operations by engaging with industry. Young Bang, the principal deputy assistant of the Army for acquisition, explained that the Army is looking to adopt third-party algorithms as quickly as possible and that they are not able to create better algorithms than industry leaders. There will be a series of requests for information (RFI) to industry leaders “focused on AI capabilities, security, and testing.” The RFI specifically for Army partnerships will come in the next month. In this partnership, the Army is interested in evaluating the trustworthiness of external algorithms and determining the risk levels of their software. Specific focuses will be placed on poisoned data sets, version control, trojan horse malware, and others. This announcement comes after the March announcement from Young’s office of a 100-day plan to “survey the Army’s technological landscape and prepare it for widespread AI acquisition and adoption.”

### [DHS report details AI’s potential to amplify biological, chemical threats](#)

### [How AI is turning satellite imagery into a window on the future \(NextGov\)](#)

Satellite image providers say that a combination of new AI tools as well as more and faster satellite data will allow them to “better anticipate events of geopolitical significance and notify customers and operators of impending crises.” Currently, simple AI capabilities can pick out things like cars or ships, but the analysis of these images is still primarily done by humans. Not only does this analysis take time, but it can also result in not recognizing a certain pattern until after it is too late. William Marshall, the CEO of Planet, said in an interview that recent breakthroughs will allow AI to “do more and more complex analysis - and far faster than humans.” This will allow for real-time analysis of satellite data. Analysts won’t just see things as they are happening and be able to respond, but they will also be able to make future predictions using real-time data. Companies like Planet and Nvidia are also looking to make the satellites themselves smarter by providing them with “rudimentary AI” while they are up in space. The overall goal is to “drive more compute, higher bandwidth, more processing done in space.” This processing will allow analysts on the ground to have a head start, potentially providing advantages in any conflicts that could arise.

## Military Installations & Communities

### [Soldiers Now Face Punishment for Sharing, Liking Extremist Content on Social Media Under New Army Policy \(Military.com\)](#)

On June 26, the Army released a new policy on the circumstances in which soldiers can be held accountable for liking and sharing extremist content. The new rules allow for disciplinary action to occur against service members - including being kicked out of the service - if they knowingly display flags and symbols, and wear clothes associated with radical causes, on or off duty. This is the Army's biggest step forward to curb extremism in its ranks. The effort began largely after the events on January 6, 2021, which many former military members participated in: NPR estimated that as many as 1 in 5 of the charged protesters were formerly affiliated with the U.S. military. These new rules specifically outline what extremist content looks like, stating that extremism is "broad" and includes "advocating for widespread unlawful discrimination" based on race, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, among others. The Army's Inspector General is also tasked with submitting quarterly reports to the Army Secretary on allegations, and active investigations involving service members promoting extremist content.

### [As troops struggle to find child care, 24-hour centers offer help](#)

### [Boeing Moves Forward with 'Advanced Combat Aircraft' Site in Missouri \(Military.com\)](#)

As of June 27, Boeing has announced its intention to move forward with a combat aircraft expansion project near a Berkeley, Missouri complex, amid nationwide concern over the company's manufacturing practices. Steve Nordlund, a senior executive for Boeing St. Louis stated that the company is pursuing an Air Force Program, and seeks to build an "advanced combat aircraft site," expected to be completed in 2026. The ambitious 1.1 million square-foot facility would double Boeing's manufacturing footprint in Missouri. The \$1.8 billion expansion project is one of the largest defense projects in Missouri's history, and the county's council has already approved \$155 million in tax breaks for the project. The expansion comes as competition increases for which private company can build the Next Generation Air Dominance (NGAD) for the Air Force. While Boeing and the Air Force have neither confirmed nor denied, trade publications have reported that Boeing and Lockheed Martin are facing off in a final competition for the project. Last year. The Air Force announced its plans to award a contract in 2024, however Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Allvin recently cast doubt on this original timeline, stating that the Air Force will

need to make “decisions” of whether to continue NGAD in light of other pressing spending needs.

## Homeland Security

### [NYPD officer database had security flaws that could have let hackers covertly modify officer data \(NextGov\)](#)

On June 27, Jason Parker, an independent security researcher, reported that a public-facing database which is utilized to track NYPD officer profiles contained security flaws that would have allowed a hacker to add, remove or modify data entries, and insert malicious files into the website’s back-end systems. The database was launched in 2020 as a part of police reform, and contains information about active duty NYPD officers, including their disciplinary records. Parker reported his findings to the city, and it has temporarily walled off access to the developer site wherein malicious files could be planted. Unfortunately, this is not the first time that a branch of New York’s local government has been compromised online: earlier this year the state Legislature’s bill drafting system was hacked, and both Suffolk County and the city of Albany suffered cyber attacks that disabled citizen access to city services in recent years. In light of these incidents, NYC Cyber Command established a Vulnerability Disclosure Program in October 2023. As cyber threats evolve, it becomes clear that innovative, preventative cybersecurity is key for local governments, towns and cities to function to the best of their ability.

### [Migrant apprehensions have dropped over 40% since Biden announced asylum restrictions, DHS says](#)

### [DHS hires initial cohort of 10 to join its AI Corps \(NextGov\)](#)

On June 25, The Department of Homeland Security announced that it has recruited its first 10 Artificial Intelligence Experts to serve on its AI Corps. In total, the DHS plans to hire a total of 50 experts, in a Corps that is modeled off of the White House’s U.S. Digital Service, wherein experts are deployed to various federal agencies to assist and grow ta driverless roboheir technology initiatives. The AI Corps follows this same model, but across the DHS. In an announcement on Tuesday, the Department advocated for the Corps as a way to counter fentanyl trafficking, combating child sexual exploitation and abuse, in addition to fortifying national cybersecurity. The AI Corps is directed by Michael Boyce, a veteran of the White House Office of Management and Budget, and its inaugural 10 members have

experience across private and public sectors, including the Department of Defense, the U.S. Naval Observatory, McKinsey & Company and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

## Transportation & Infrastructure

### [Waymo's California dream come true \(Morning Brew\)](#)

Waymo, a driverless robotaxi service owned by Google, is opening to the public in San Francisco following a 300,000 person waitlist. The company operates white Jaguars as ride-sharing robotaxis, and is already open to the public in Phoenix, AZ, and plans to begin limited rollouts in Los Angeles and Austin. The company garnered criticism for its safety issues - last month, a probe by the US Highway Traffic Safety Administration discovered safety incidents relating to Waymo. This month, Waymo recalled software in all its cars after one crashed into a telephone pole, and in February, San Francisco residents set fire to a Waymo car. Waymo's goals as it expands are to compete with established rideshare companies like Uber and Lyft, and begin to turn a profit. Its closest competitor, GM's autonomous vehicle Cruise, had its licenses in California suspended last year after a series of crashes.

### [GM's Cruise names former Amazon, Microsoft Xbox executive as new CEO](#)

### [Hill Democrats Urge Action on Rail Safety Legislation \(Transport Topics News\)](#)

Congressional Democrats are pushing a railway safety bill following investigations into the highly publicized derailment of a chemical train in East Palestine, Ohio in 2023 - the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) report was published on June 25. Co-sponsored by Sen. Vance (R-OH), the Railway Safety Act proposes updates to Federal Railroad Administration guidelines and enhanced industry safety standards. The bipartisan RAIL bill is widely supported in the House, but Republican leaders have yet to schedule Congressional consideration of the bill. The renewed push for the legislation comes after a high-profile hearing with Boeing CEO Dave Calhoun after several manufacturing errors that caused in-flight problems in aircraft. The East Palestine train derailment was reportedly caused by a defective part.

## Biotechnology & Healthcare

### [US Supreme Court blocks Purdue Pharma bankruptcy settlement \(Reuters\)](#)

The U.S. Supreme Court blocked Purdue Pharma's bankruptcy settlement on Thursday. The settlement would have protected the Sackler family, owners of the OxyContin-producing company, from lawsuits over their role in the opioid epidemic. The decision overturned a lower court's ruling that would have allowed the family to pay \$6 billion in settlements in return for legal immunity. The main issue at the heart of the case was whether the Sackler family, under the U.S. bankruptcy law, could receive legal protections without filing for personal bankruptcy. During arguments, "a Justice Department lawyer stated that Sackler family members withdrew billions from Purdue before agreeing to the \$6 billion settlement, effectively allowing them to decide their contribution." The case against the settlement has Purdue accusing the U.S. Trustee of delaying billions of dollars from being given for victim compensation.

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### [Biden administration to lower costs for 64 drugs through inflation penalties on drugmakers \(CNBC\)](#)

The Biden administration said it will impose inflation penalties on 64 prescription drugs for the third quarter of the year. Under the Inflation Reduction Act, drug makers are required to pay rebates to Medicare if they increase the price of a medication faster than the rate of inflation. This provision is separate from another under the Act, which allows Medicare to negotiate for lower drug prices with manufacturers. Under Medicare Part B, Americans 64 and older will pay lower rates from July 1 to September 30. Currently, more than 750,000 Medicare patients use the covered drugs each year, and the inflation penalties come at the heels of past rebates from the Biden administration, including 48 drugs whose prices were lowered from the same rebate provision in the beginning of 2024.

## Climate & Development

### [How Water Could Be the Future Fuel \(Washington Post\)](#)

A fuel plant in Corpus Christi, Texas, is leading the way for a new generation of fuels by

producing hydrogen made from water using renewable energy electricity. Feeding water through machines that pull out its hydrogen atoms, chemically transformed into diesel for delivery trucks, doesn't produce greenhouse pollution. Therefore, turning hydrogen into liquid fuel has the potential to significantly reduce global warming effects, as pollution from heavy vehicles contributes heavily to climate change. According to a 2022 study conducted by researchers in Sweden and Denmark, the downside is that this type of "fuel could cost around \$9 per gallon to produce, which is currently double U.S. prices and requires massive wind turbines and solar panels. "However, although there has been a push to shift cars and other light vehicles to electric motors, other forms of transport will have to rely on some liquid fuel for the foreseeable future," so it is important to step to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

### [Defense Science Board Presents Findings on Climate Change and Global Security at U.S.-Canada Working Group Meeting](#)

#### [In West Virginia, the Senate Race Outcome May Shift Limits of US Climate Ambitions \(Inside Climate News\)](#)

Senator Joe Manchin (I-WV) announced in November 2023 that he would not run for re-election, leaving doubts as to how Senate climate policy will differ with his successor. West Virginia is the second-largest coal producing state, and seems poised to elect a coal operator and businessman, Jim Justice, the state's current Republican governor. Should Justice join the Senate, he would reinforce a pro-fossil fuel bloc of Senate Republicans. Although Manchin has been an advocate for coal mining and miners, he has reached across the aisle to pass landmark bills like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law of 2021, and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. Glenn Elliott, the Democratic opponent to Justice, states that while West Virginian coal has played a huge role in growing the U.S.'s economy, it has come at "a great cost... it's damaged communities." For his part, Elliott believes that it's the responsibility of a future West Virginian Senator to be at the forefront of discussions around moving away from fossil fuels, not only to make room for renewable energy, but also to make sure that when that transition occurs, West Virginia's economy and coal workers are not adversely harmed.

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## Next Week's Hearings

**Armed Service Committee:**

**House:** NONE

**Senate:** NONE

**Appropriations Committee:**

**House:** NONE

**Senate:** NONE

**Homeland Security Committee:**

**House:** NONE

**Senate:** NONE



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