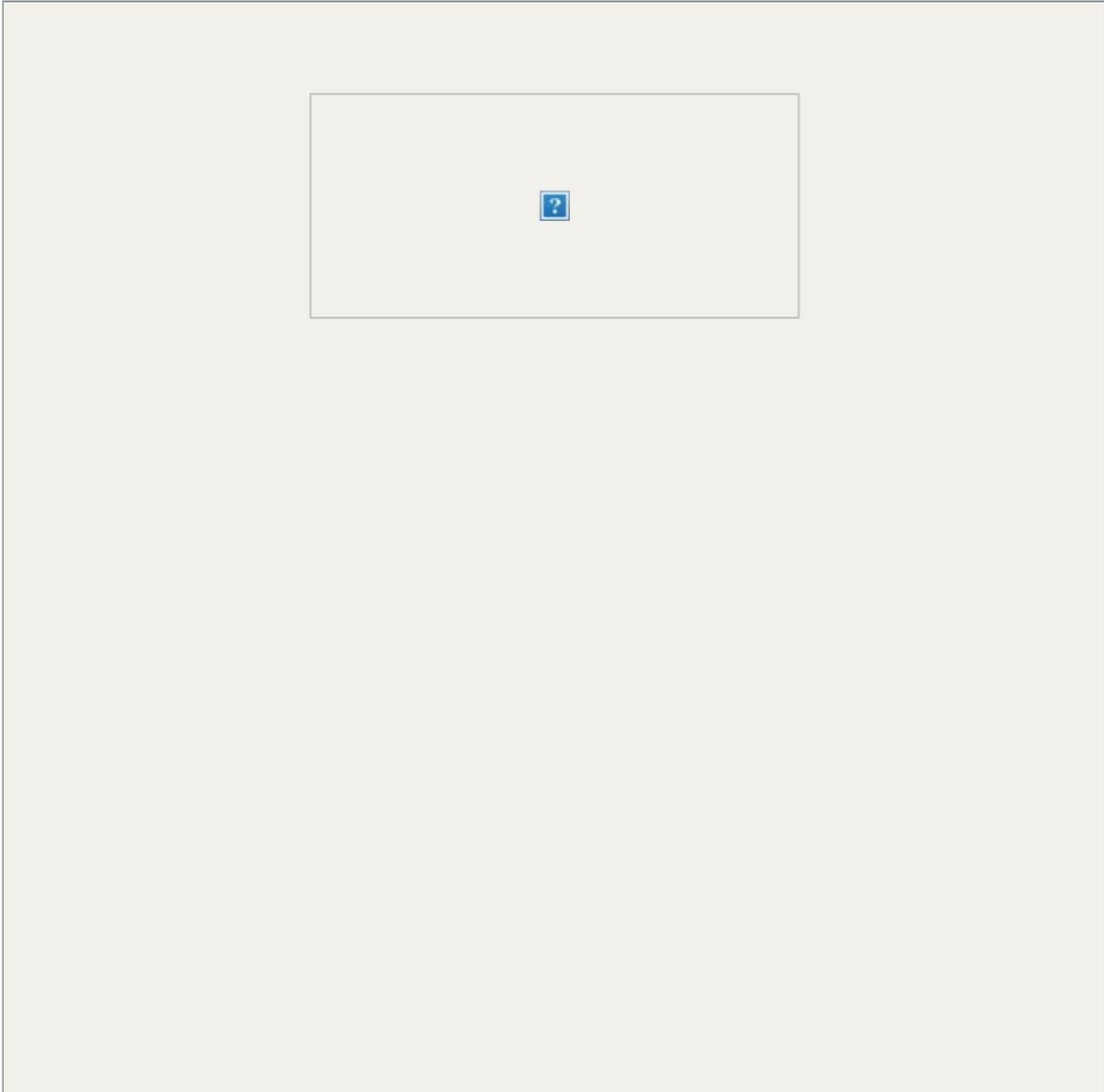


**From:** [Rick Dwyer](#)  
**To:** [Rick Dwyer](#)  
**Subject:** Executive Insight Brief  
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**Ladies & Gentlemen,**  
Below please find this week's edition of *Executive Insight Brief* from The Roosevelt Group.

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August 1, 2025

# Executive Insight Brief

Stay informed with The Roosevelt Group's Executive Insight Brief—your weekly roundup of key developments shaping federal policy, defense, and homeland security. Curated by our expert team, each issue delivers timely analysis and strategic context to help you stay ahead.

## Notable Headlines

[Trump signs order imposing new tariffs on a number of trading partners that go into effect in 7 days](#)

[China uses "dark fleet" to buy oil from Iran and evade U.S. sanctions in international waters](#)

[Senate panel advances more than \\$1 trillion in government funding for 2026](#)

[More automation—that's what the pick to lead Pentagon weapons testing wants](#)

[In reversal, Navy will share satellite data with NOAA until fall 2026](#)

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## View From The Hill

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Only one side of the Capitol was busy this week, as House Members enjoyed their first week of the summer recess while the Senate lurched forward on some of President Trump's nominations. Senators [voted](#) to confirm Trump's former criminal defense attorney, Emil Bove, as a circuit court judge, with Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) joining with Democrats to oppose Bove. This came amidst mounting [pressure](#) from President Trump towards Judiciary Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-IA) to end the Senate's so-called "blue-slip" process, which allows home state Senators to block nominations. This has stalled some Trump administration nominations for U.S. Attorneys and judges, though Grassley has indicated his intention to hold firm to the blue slip precedent.

The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee [passed](#) a bipartisan measure introduced by Sen. Josh Hawley (R-MO) to ban Members of Congress, the President, and Vice President from engaging in individual stock trading, over strong pushback from the White House. The *Preventing Elected*

*Leaders from Owning Securities and Investments Act*, or the *PELOSI Act*, was named after former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, whose own stock portfolio's **performance** has been the subject of motivation for stock trade ban proposals for years. Hawley tweaked his initial language to a new name to solicit Democratic support, and Pelosi released a statement of support for the bill. Hawley was the only Republican on the panel to vote for the bill, and President Trump railed against him after it passed out of committee, referring to him as a "second-tier Senator." Rep. Anna Paulina Luna (R-FL) **announced** that she would seek to force a vote on a similar measure when the House returns in September, setting up a fresh headache for Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA).

A rare intra-party feud **played** out on the Senate Floor this week, as Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ) objected to quick passage of a package of law enforcement bills that would broaden grant programs for local law enforcement, bolster police training capacity, and provide resources for secondary fentanyl exposure. Booker took to the floor in opposition over accusations that the Trump administration is withholding grant funding from New Jersey law enforcement agencies to coerce state and local jurisdictions into cooperating with immigration enforcement policies. Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) criticized Booker for failing to offer his proposed amendments during the bills' consideration by the Judiciary Committee, on which he sits.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) **joined** all Democrats on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee to invoke what is known as the "Rule of Five," in an attempt to compel the Trump Department of Justice to release all known evidence and files related to the Jeffrey Epstein investigation. The rarely invoked mechanism may not hold up in court, but Democrats can use it to continue driving a wedge between the administration and the MAGA base on the issue, which has plagued the President and Congressional Republicans for weeks.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) is **grappling** with a mountain of nominations, which have been moving at a snail's pace as Democrats refuse to let nominees reach confirmation via unanimous consent, eating up precious

floor time. Amidst pressure from the White House to keep Senators in town over the August Recess to move nominations, Thune is considering making changes to Senate rules or adjourning long enough for the President to make recess appointments to quickly fill vacancies throughout the administration.

As the midterm elections come increasingly into focus, President Trump is [pressuring](#) red states to engage in rare mid-decade redistricting efforts to squeeze more GOP-controlled seats to stave off risk of a Democratic House takeover. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott has already announced plans to convene a special session of the state legislature to do so, and talk about similar efforts is occurring in Florida, Missouri, and Indiana. Democratic governors, notably Gavin Newsome in California and Kathy Hochul in New York, have said they will consider redistricting to the benefit of Democrats if their GOP counterparts move forward with these proposals.

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## Pentagon News

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In a statement on Wednesday, the European Commission—the European Union’s executive arm—[announced](#) that eighteen member states, including France, Italy, and Poland, have signaled interest in over €127 billion (\$146 billion) in EU-backed loans for defense procurement. These loans are [made available](#) through the Security Action for Europe (SAFE), a financial instrument offering up to €150 billion (\$171.6 billion) to accelerate defense readiness by supporting urgent, large-scale investments in the European defense industry.

Launched in May 2025 [in response to](#) the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine and amid [concerns](#) over potentially reduced U.S. commitments to European security, SAFE is [designed to](#) build a robust and resilient EU-wide

defense architecture. The initial expressions of interest will **enable** the European Commission to raise funds from capital markets ahead of the formal November 30 deadline for National Defense Investment Plan proposals from each member state.

In a social media post, EU Commissioner for Defense and Space Andrius Kubilius **welcomed** the strong interest shown by member states in SAFE loans, calling it “a major step” towards achieving European defense goals “quickly and decisively.”

While the EU seeks to streamline efforts for increased armed vigilance, the U.S. continues to develop its own defensive capabilities in the UAS realm.

On Monday, Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) officials **gave** *Defense News* an inside look at their recent drone and electronic warfare test in remote Alaska. For most participating tech firms, it was their first time flying systems outside controlled lab settings, and the growing pains were evident. Officials said companies were forced to adapt quickly in the field, as many struggled to stay on target and on their flight paths. But ultimately, the exercise gave operators a chance to troubleshoot in real time, develop new techniques, and spotlight equipment gaps that could motivate future investments.

The event, supported by the Army’s 11th Airborne Division, reinforced the Pentagon’s priority to integrate real-world testing in drone development initiatives. DIU’s **push** for “all-the-time” testing through initiatives like **Project G.I.** and a new **Range Strike Group** aims to break through the bottlenecks of FAA waivers, outdated infrastructure, and spectrum restrictions.

As drone warfare **redefines** battlefield operations in Ukraine, the U.S. military and its allies want to learn from Ukrainian innovation driven by lessons learned in the conflict. Former DIU manager, Chris Bonzagni, longed for testing to be conducted in Ukraine, but due to the U.S. military’s growing wariness of formal

involvement in the conflict since President Trump took office, DIU settled for testing in Alaska. Lt. Col. Scott Smith, the division's director for non-lethal effects, said that operators involved in testing have found new ways to disrupt frequencies and that he looks forward to DIU's contributions to make the Army more flexible and agile.

While drones dominate the skies in Ukraine and Alaska's Fort Wainwright testing exercises, another larger aircraft extends its presence within Executive Branch affairs.

President Trump's airborne gift from Qatar has brought much attention to the White House. The costs of renovating the gift, a "[free](#)" Air Force One, have been classified. While the true financial impact of the plane remains elusive, a telling ripple has appeared in the Pentagon's nuclear missile modernization program: a mysterious \$934 million transfer of funds from the Sentinel ICBM program to an unnamed classified project. Earlier, the Secretary of the Air Force [estimated](#) that the project should cost less than \$400 million, though engineers have claimed the number is unrealistic. [According](#) to NBC News, the cost of renovations could reach around \$1 billion, and if the aforementioned \$934 million is for the Air Force One replacement, the prediction could be correct. The renovations would include installing encrypted communications, hardening its defenses, protecting against cyber and physical threats, and more.

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## Next Week's Hearings

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**Armed Services Committee**

**U.S House of Representatives**

- NONE

### **Senate**

- NONE

### **Appropriations Committee**

#### **U.S. House of Representatives**

- NONE

#### **U.S. Senate**

- NONE

### **Homeland Security Committee**

#### **U.S. House of Representatives**

- NONE

#### **U.S. Senate**



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