



FEDERAL COVID-19 UPDATES – May 28, 2020

Total U.S. coronavirus deaths reported: (last Friday, 96,363); Tuesday 99,807; Wednesday 100,625; Thursday 102,114

Happening on the Hill

White House

- 11:00 am – In-House Pool Call Time
- 2:00 pm – Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany holds a briefing
- 2:30 pm – Trump and Melania receive a briefing on the 2020 Hurricane Season

White House said President Trump would today sign an order on social media. Trump hasn't said whether he'll sign a bill that would sanction Chinese officials over human rights abuses against Muslim minorities

Senate

- 11:00 am – pro forma session

House

- 9:00 am – House meets, set to consider 5 bills under the suspension of the rules which limits debate to 40 minutes, bars amendments and requires a two-thirds majority for passage
 1. **Veterans' COLA:** Disabled veterans and their families would receive a one-time cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in disability and survivors' compensation effective Dec. 1 under H.R. 6168, as long as there's one for Social Security recipients. The House Veterans' Affairs Committee approved the bill by voice vote on March 12.
 2. **Authorize VA Medical Facility Projects:** Several medical facility construction projects at the Veterans Affairs Department would be authorized to receive \$2.27 billion under S. 3414. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on March 5.
 3. **VA Health Officials' Salary Cap:** A salary cap for certain health-care officials at the Veterans Affairs Department would be increased by S. 3084. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on Jan. 16, and the House Veterans' Affairs Committee approved it without amendment by voice vote on March 12.

4. **Small Business Funding & Report:** The Small Business Administration would be required by a [modified version](#) of H.R. 6782 to issue a public report on entities that received more than \$2 million in small business aid under coronavirus relief laws. The modified text also would set a lending total for the SBA's traditional 7(a) small business loan program in fiscal 2020 that's separate from the lending authority for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). That would allow the 7(a) program to continue if PPP funds are exhausted. Phillips introduced the measure on May 8 and it was referred to the House Small Business Committee, which hasn't acted.
5. **Paycheck Protection Program Loans:** Several restrictions on companies that borrow money through the Paycheck Protection Program would be relaxed under an amended version of H.R. 7010. Among other provisions, the measure would give businesses more time and flexibility to make qualifying expenditures for loan forgiveness, and allow businesses with forgiven loans to defer payroll taxes.
 - **FISA Renewal:** The House could vote to on the [Senate amendments](#) to [H.R. 6172](#), to renew through Dec. 1, 2023 the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. For more, see the [BGOV Bill Summary](#) by Adam Taylor.
 - 10:00 am - House Appropriations subcommittee hears from Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie and other VA officials on the agency's response to the coronavirus
 - 10:15 am - House Education and Labor subcommittee holds hearing on the federal government's action to protect workers from Covid-19
 - 1:00 pm - House Small Business Committee holds hearing on small business priorities for the next phase of coronavirus recovery

Trump Aims Executive Order at Tech Donald Trump has been raging against Twitter since the social media platform that helped vault him to the presidency slapped fact-check links on a pair of his tweets.

Now, he's poised to take action today that could bring a flurry of lawsuits down on Twitter, Facebook and other technology giants by having the government narrow liability protections that they enjoy for third parties' posts, according to a draft of an executive order obtained by Bloomberg.

The companies' protections against lawsuits apply when they act "in good faith" in taking down or limiting the visibility of inappropriate tweets, videos and other social media posts, but the law doesn't define bad faith. The draft order would push the Federal Communications Commission to issue rules clarifying the issue, potentially allowing users to sue over takedowns if they were inconsistent with companies' terms of service, did not provide enough notice or meet other suggested criteria.

The White House declined to comment early this morning.

The draft order would also convene, through the Justice Department, a working group of state attorneys general to look into deceptive practices and review executive ad spending on the platforms.

The move could set off a legal battle between Washington and Silicon Valley.

Trump has no legal authority to shut down the service, as he threatened to do yesterday morning, but doing so would mean silencing his loudest megaphone -- as well as what his campaign calls "keyboard warriors" who both amplify his voice and provide him memes and other free content to broadcast to his 80 million followers.

The social media platform has become even more important for Trump as the coronavirus pandemic prevents him from holding his trademark rallies, and he seeks a free outlet to attack his likely Democratic challenger, Joe Biden. [Read more from Ben Brody, Mario Parker and Eric Newcomer.](#)

Twitter's Fact-Checking Stance Sets Hard Precedent: Twitter has entered new territory at a particularly risky time. After flagging Trump's tweets about mail-in ballots as being unsubstantiated, the company, which has 166 million daily users on its platform, has created a standard that might be impossible to enforce. It doesn't have an internal team of dedicated fact-checkers, and instead such reviews fall to the company's trust and safety organization. [Kurt Wagner has more.](#)

- Last night, Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey said the platform will continue pointing out incorrect election information, [Michael Sin reports](#). "Fact check: there is someone ultimately accountable for our actions as a company, and that's me," Dorsey tweeted.

Senators Say Schools Need Aid Guidance: The Education Department should provide more instructions to colleges handling financial aid appeals because of the coronavirus, a bipartisan group of senators said yesterday. And the department should ask about loss of family income from the pandemic in the application for federal student aid, lawmakers said in a [letter](#) to Education Department Secretary Betsy DeVos. [Andrew Kreighbaum has more.](#)

USDA Faces Accusations It Fumbled Rollout of Food Box Program: The Agriculture Department is blundering its attempt to carry out a new food box program for farmers and hungry Americans struggling during the coronavirus pandemic, congressional critics say. "This process failed to protect taxpayers, the hungry, and producers with food going to waste," Rep. [Lloyd Doggett](#) (D-Texas) said in a statement Tuesday. Doggett joins several other Democrats in questioning Secretary Sonny Perdue over a federal program that puts surplus dairy, meat, and produce into boxes for food banks and other nonprofits as part of Congress' coronavirus relief measures. [Read more from Megan U. Boyanton](#)

SBA Program

Trump administration said firms that took loans of more than \$2 million that they didn't need from a small business aid program would be allowed to repay the money without legal consequences ahead of a deadline today

If you're looking for a real-time list of public companies who have received SBA Cares Act loans, AI Margaret from Factsquared has been reading SEC 8-Ks as they're filed.

<https://factba.se/sba-loans>

Healthcare

Wilkie Seeks to Defend VA's Virus Response More than 11,000 veterans have been diagnosed with Covid-19 and "hundreds" have died, but around three-fourths have recovered, Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie plans to brief House appropriators at a subcommittee [hearing](#) this morning.

Thirty-one members of the department staff have died, Wilkie says in prepared [testimony](#) to the House Appropriations Military Construction-VA Subcommittee. He added that the VA is now well-staffed and well-stocked, and is treating 1,600 patients.

Wilkie will testify to the subcommittee later this morning along with three other VA officials. The department is under scrutiny for a variety of reasons, including VA doctors' decision to prescribe hydroxychloroquine, the VA's early struggles to obtain personal protective equipment, and lawmakers' decision to give officials billions of dollars in additional funding.

Lawmakers provided the VA with \$19.6 billion in emergency funding under the CARES Act ([Public Law 116-136](#)) and may press Wilkie on the obligation of those funds. House and Senate appropriators also have opted to exempt some veterans' health funds from the discretionary spending caps under the Budget Control Act, highlighting their willingness to ramp up VA spending in fiscal 2021.

But Wilkie's department has faced some skepticism. VA doctors have prescribed hydroxychloroquine—the anti-malaria treatment that President Donald Trump has repeatedly touted and claims to have taken to ward off the coronavirus—to 1,300 patients with Covid-19, officials said in a [letter](#) to Senate Minority Leader [Chuck Schumer](#) (D-N.Y.). Federal officials haven't endorsed its use to treat the coronavirus, and researchers have linked it to deaths and heart risks.

VA facilities' early struggles to procure enough medical supplies has also drawn some criticism. Out of 54 VA facilities, 33 had insufficient supplies, according to a Veterans Affairs Department Inspector General [report](#) in March. Deficiencies ranged from N95 masks to hand sanitizer, Jack Fitzpatrick reports.

Black Universities Urge Funding to Trace Virus: Historically black colleges and medical groups run by Pacific Islanders asked lawmakers yesterday for funds to help stem the spread of coronavirus in minority communities. Researchers and college administrators asked for billions of dollars to fund programs to expand testing and contact tracing programs they say can be targeted to Americans hit hardest by the virus. They said that they're uniquely positioned as organizations that represent these populations to address the problem.

James Hildreth, president and CEO of Meharry Medical College in Nashville, said four schools including his own want to create a consortium of black medical colleges using \$5 billion in federal funds. That would boost health programs in low-income African American communities, which have seen higher rates of infection and death compared with white communities.

“We can deploy quickly, we know where to go, and we’ll be welcome,” Hildreth told the House Ways and Means Committee during a virtual hearing, the first of its kind according to committee leaders. Congress is debating how to shape the next coronavirus package and there’s been little agreement on how to address the nation’s racial disparities of Covid-19 deaths and infections. Members from both parties have called for funding to expand testing, but have previously sent the funds to states or to the federal government.

Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal (D-Mass.) said he agrees that minority communities are in “desperate need” of better coronavirus testing and contact tracing. He cited a House-passed coronavirus package ([H.R. 6800](#)) that included \$75 billion for public health departments and workforce agencies for testing and other programs as a good solution. [Read more from Alex Ruoff.](#)

\$8 Billion Sought for Food Supplies: Senate Democrats are seeking \$8 billion in the next coronavirus relief package to strengthen the food supply chain and provide more protective gear for food processing and farm employees. “This is to stop the logjam in the supply system and effectively get desperately needed food to families,” Senate Agriculture Committee top Democrat [Debbie Stabenow](#) (D-Mich.), who unveiled the measure yesterday, said. [Mike Dorning has more.](#)

Separately, House Energy and Commerce Chairman [Frank Pallone](#) (D-N.J.), in a letter to Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Stephen Hahn, asked for information on the agency’s efforts to maintain food safety and address food supply disruptions in the U.S. [Read the letter here.](#)

Cuomo Blasts Congress for Delaying Funds: The U.S. recovery can’t happen if Senate Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) (R-Ky.) stifles relief for state and local governments, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) said at the National Press Club in Washington yesterday after meeting with Trump. “There is no nation without the states,” he said. “They tend to forget that in this town.”

Cuomo said the meeting with Trump wasn’t about politics: “It was about how do we supercharge the reopening, especially in New York, which has been hardest hit.” New York state has seen at least 360,000 cases of the illness. The governor, whose briefings have become closely watched nationally, is a leading advocate for more help for states. Unlike the federal government, they must balance their budgets, and falling revenue raises prospects of mass layoffs of public servants. [Stacie Sherman has more.](#)

Worker Protections: The House Education and Labor Workforce Protections Subcommittee today will host a hearing on the government’s efforts to [protect workers](#) from Covid-19.

CDC Unveils Guidelines for Office Buildings: Employers could bring workers back to office buildings more safely with steps including improving ventilation, spacing workers apart and reducing shared objects like communal coffee pots, according to guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The recommendations issued yesterday show how office life may change. Pre-packaged, single-serve beverages may replace water coolers. Open-plan offices may see workers coming in shifts and breaks staggered to minimize gatherings. Employees will likely wear masks and bosses might be much more involved in workers' health as daily health checks may be required to screen for illnesses.

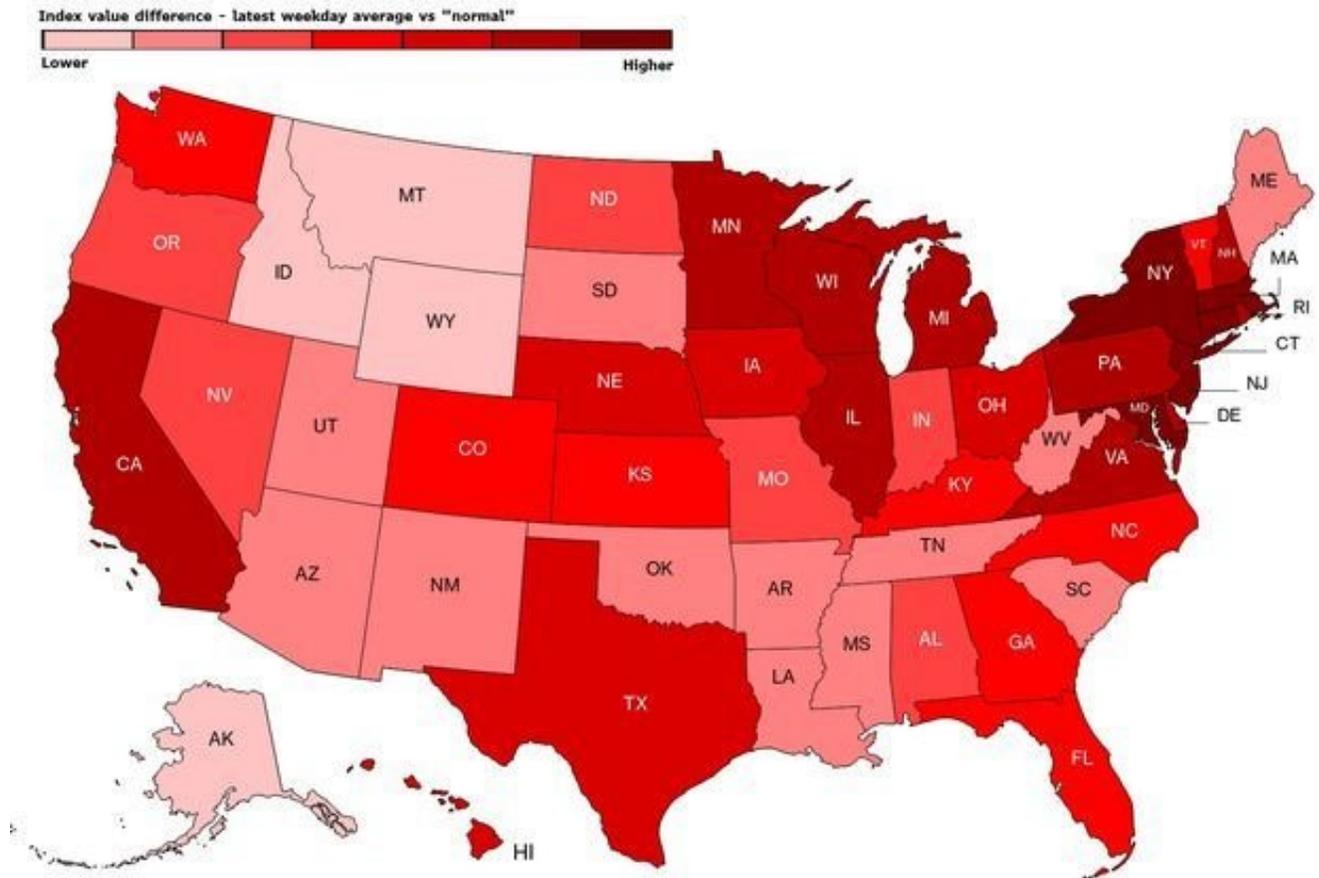
The advice focuses heavily on office ventilation, recommending open windows and doors, HVAC units that use more outdoor air, increased air filtration and exhaust fans in restrooms. They're phrased as suggestions, not requirements, and how many changes are made may depend on external factors, including whether windows can even be opened. [Read the CDC recommendations here.](#)

Americans Starting to Mingle: Americans hunkered down at home for nearly three months and businesses closed in order to help slow the spread of Covid-19. But a new real-time gauge of social distancing shows the nation's economy is beginning to stir back to life once again. After spiking around mid-March, the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas' Social Distancing Index, which tracks the extent of physical distancing and its relationship to the economy, has begun falling as states begin lifting restrictions on business and consumer interactions.

The index uses geolocation data provided by SafeGraph to capture the amount of time that mobile devices are at home or at other locations, and how far they travel. A higher SDI indicates more social distancing efforts. As expected, areas with the largest populations are the furthest from a return to normalcy, even as infections ease nationally. [Read more from Alex Tanzi and Wei Lu.](#)

Tracking Social Distancing

Latest data reveals NJ, NY, MD, CT and MA farthest away from normalcy



Source: Bloomberg analysis of Dallas Fed "Social Distancing Index" data
Note: Based on the difference between each state's weekday average index data pre-Mid March and that of the week ended on May 23. All holidays were excluded.

Bloomberg

D.C. to Start Reopening Tomorrow: The District of Columbia will lift its stay-at-home order tomorrow, making the nation's capital one of the last places in the U.S. to start opening. Prohibitions on groups of 10 or more and other limits will stay in place, said Mayor Muriel Bowser (D), who urged city residents to remain cautious. "This virus is still in our city, still in our region," Bowser said yesterday.[Read more.](#)

Democrats Propose \$50 Billion Child Care Fund: Reps. [Rosa DeLauro](#) (D-Conn.) and [Bobby Scott](#) (D-Va.) and Sen. [Patty Murray](#) (D-Wash.) announced yesterday they had introduced legislation to create a \$50 billion Child Care Stabilization Fund within the Child Care and Development Block Grant program. The [proposal](#) would award grants to child care centers that reopen as workers return to jobs outside of their homes. The legislation would prioritize child care centers for underserved communities and require that centers provide relief on tuition for families struggling with payments.

The Challenge of Making Enough Vaccines: Billions will be clamoring for a coronavirus vaccine once one is ready, putting pressure on drugmakers and federal regulators to boost a production process that will likely take months, even years, to meet global demand. Roughly a

half dozen vaccine candidates are being readied for human testing in the U.S. by year's end. But regulatory and logistical hurdles will affect the timeline for when average Americans can get the shot, according to health-care regulatory lawyers. [Read more from Valerie Bauman.](#)

NIH Eyes Privacy-Protected Contact Tracing Tool: The National Institutes of Health is seeking recommendations from companies on how to build a phone app or other digital tool to collect data and provide coronavirus information to the public while maintaining adequate privacy protections. The office issued a [request for information](#) to explore whether industry partners could develop a contact tracing tool that would also monitor the health of people who've been diagnosed with Covid-19, link people to trials for therapeutics or preventative medicines, assess if individuals are ready to return to work, and calculate risks of infection.

The agency also wants the data collected from the tool to be easily shareable for research purposes. It asked respondents to address how information would be transmitted using best data standards and practices to make it accessible, while also complying with relevant privacy laws. "The collection of large digital health datasets has potential privacy implications," the NIH said. [Shira Stein and Daniel R. Stoller have more.](#)

EPA Eyes Sewage as Tracking Method: Raw sewage may be a new element of states' coronavirus surveillance efforts once the EPA completes a new research pilot project. The Environmental Protection Agency is investigating sewage as a possible signal of the number of both symptomatic and asymptomatic Covid-19 cases across communities. The six-month EPA pilot project, in conjunction with the city of Cincinnati, would contribute to Ohio's growing surveillance apparatus for virus cases, Jay Garland from EPA's Office of Research and Development said in an agency webinar. [Read more from Sylvia Carignan.](#)

FDA Sued to Ease Limits on Abortion Pill: Women's health groups, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, sued the FDA to allow patients to receive a prescribed abortion pill by mail rather than only in person at a hospital, clinic or doctor's office. The restrictions on mail distribution of the drug, mifepristone, is not necessary and only increases health risks for patients during the Covid-19 pandemic, the groups said in their lawsuit, according to the American Civil Liberties Union, which filed the case in a Maryland federal court.

The suit joins others the ACLU has filed to battle abortion restrictions since the spread of coronavirus that has prevented women from being able to terminate unwanted pregnancies. Several states imposed bans by saying abortions were non-essential treatments at a time when medical resources had to be devoted to the virus. [Read more from Cynthia Koons.](#)

Public Option Plan Seen Reducing Premiums: Offering people who purchase their own health insurance the option of buying a government-sponsored plan may lower premiums as much as 27%, but it isn't likely to substantially increase the number of people with coverage. That's the finding of a [study](#) out today by the policy analysis research group RAND Corp., which assessed the impacts of offering a "public option"—a government-designed plan based on lower rates that Medicare or Medicaid pay doctors or hospitals—in the Affordable Care Act market. [Read more from Sara Hansard.](#)

Transportation

Boeing Restarts 737 Max Amid Job Cuts Boeing will send layoff notices Friday, notifying 6,770 employees in the U.S. that their positions would be eliminated, according to the union that represents about 18,000 engineers in the Puget Sound region. About 1,300 members were accepted for buyouts, a spokesman for the labor group said.

The collapse in air travel sparked by the coronavirus pandemic has sapped demand for jetliners, forcing Boeing to scale back its commercial business, CEO Dave Calhoun said. Calhoun unveiled the first and deepest of the company's planned job cuts yesterday, with overseas cuts to be communicated separately. [Read more from Julie Johnsson.](#)

The planemaker has also restarted production of its beleaguered 737 Max jetliner, which has been halted since January, Johnsson [reports](#). While the timing of the regulatory approval is still in question, Boeing has said it's targeting the Max's return in the third quarter.

Boeing's defense business will continue to hire for projects that are deemed critical, and the company is reorganizing and streamlining its services division, Calhoun said.

State of Transportation and Critical Infrastructure: Representatives from industry groups will testify before the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee for a June 3 [hearing](#) on "The State of Transportation and Critical Infrastructure: Examining the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic." The panel will examine the impact of the coronavirus on surface transportation and the supply chain as witnesses relate how they and other stakeholders have responded.

Lawmakers Question FEMA's Hurricane Prep: Democrats, led by Senate Minority Leader [Chuck Schumer](#) (D-N.Y.), want to know how prepared the Federal Emergency Management Agency is to respond to hurricane season. They expressed concern that the coronavirus outbreak will complicate the agency's recovery efforts, as well as other ongoing disaster recovery operations. Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are still recovering from Hurricanes Irma and Maria during the 2017 hurricane season, which laid waste to the electrical grid and infrastructure.

"FEMA must have a comprehensive plan in place to address these compounding factors and ensure that our fellow Americans in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are safe," they wrote yesterday in a [letter](#) to Administrator Pete Gaynor.

Pentagon Withheld Data on Ligado, Pai Says: The Pentagon didn't provide classified test data as the Federal Communications Commission neared approval of Ligado's mobile network, FCC Chairman Ajit Pai said in a [letter](#) responding to House Armed Services Chairman [Adam Smith](#) (D-Wash.). Smith, along with the panel's top Republican [Mac Thornberry](#) (Texas), sent a letter to commissioners on May 21 asking them to reconsider their approval of the company's mobile broadband service.

Nomination: Trump announced he plans to nominate Derek Kan as deputy director at the White House Office of Management and Budget. Kan is currently executive associate director at OMB and has previously served as under secretary of policy at the Transportation Department, a member of Amtrak's board of directors, and general manager for Lyft in Southern California, according to the White House.

U.S. Adds Airports to Virus Restriction List: George Bush Intercontinental Airport and Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport will join the existing 13 airports receiving flights from travel-restricted nations now that Brazil joined the list, which also includes China and parts of Europe, the Department of Homeland Security said in a [statement](#).

States Sue Trump for Car Mileage Rule Rollbacks: California and other states sued to prevent the Trump administration from easing requirements on vehicle miles per gallon starting in 2021. It's the latest salvo by Democratic-led states to undue the federal government's deregulatory efforts by using the courts. A final verdict in the dispute will impact the fate of the auto industry under stress from the U.S. economic shutdown, [Malathi Nayak reports](#).

Gateway Project Scores \$55 Million Federal Grant: The Portal North Bridge project in New Jersey, part of the broader Gateway Program, will receive up to [\\$55 million](#) from the Federal Railroad Administration, Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao said in a statement yesterday. The award is one of a dozen projects in nine states that received more than [\\$302 million](#) in grant funds under the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program to help repair and rehabilitate railroad infrastructure across the country.

The grant was announced on the same day as President Donald Trump's meeting with New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D), where the two discussed the need to fund infrastructure projects, such as Amtrak's \$30 billion Gateway plan that includes new rail tunnel between New York and New Jersey. Trump said he would think about Cuomo's request and the two would talk again next week, according to the governor. [Stacie Sherman recaps Cuomo's comments](#).

N.J. May Increase Highway Tolls: New Jersey highway commissioners voted yesterday to raise tolls as much as 36% starting in September to support a \$24 billion capital program, Elise Young [reports](#). The New Jersey Turnpike Authority long-term capital plan, more than three times the amount approved in 2008, would pay for widening and other changes to the Garden State Parkway and the 117-mile New Jersey Turnpike, key to northeastern U.S. travel and commerce.

Ship Crews Stuck at Sea Pose 'Humanitarian Crisis': More than 200,000 seafarers stuck on merchant ships carrying everything from medical supplies to grain and oil are at increasing risk of mental and physical fatigue as port restrictions and canceled flights snarl the ability of vessels to change crews, according to the International Chamber of Shipping.

While industry bodies like the ICS warn the sector faces a "humanitarian crisis" that jeopardizes the flow of goods and is pushing for governments to ease restrictions, some shippers and crew are taking matters into their own hands by diverting to ports they wouldn't otherwise visit to

swap workers, a practice typically reserved for medical emergencies. [Bloomberg News explains the few options facing seafarers.](#)

Private Jets Opening Doors to Broader Clientele: As strict quarantine conditions have devastated the global airline business over the past 10 weeks, there's been a surge in demand for private air transfers. At a time when pleasure travel has been brought to a near-standstill, these bookings are an encouraging — and critical — lifeline, both for agents and for hotels that are desperate to expand their business beyond a reasonable driving radius. They also signal a broader shift within the private aviation industry, which has long been dominated by corporate travel. [Brandon Presser has the latest on the market.](#)

Related: [China to Allow Charter Flights From Some Countries, But Not U.S.](#)

Low Prices Still Hurting Oil Industry: “Prices still are at historic lows. ... We're still only in the \$30 to \$35 range, and it's very difficult for producers to make money with those kinds of oil prices,” said Mike Sommers, president of the American Petroleum Institute, during a [webinar](#) yesterday hosted by the American Council for Capital Formation. The conversation was under the theme “A Deep Dive on Politics and Economics in the COVID Pandemic” and included Chet Thompson, president & CEO of the American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers. [Read more from The Hill.](#)

NASA Postpones Historic SpaceX Rocket Launch: Bad weather at Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida forced NASA to delay the first crewed mission by Elon Musk's SpaceX, Dana Hull and Julie Johnsson [report](#). The launch window will move to May 30, the U.S. space agency said yesterday. Astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley are set to ride SpaceX's Dragon capsule to the International Space Station in the first launch of American astronauts from U.S. soil since 2011.

“Thank you to @NASA and @SpaceX for their hard work and leadership. Look forward to being back with you on Saturday!” President Trump said in a Twitter [post](#) yesterday.

While Musk is entering uncharted territory, what comes next will be far more difficult. Musk is trying to turn such voyages into a sustainable business that supports a thriving space colony hundreds of miles above the Earth's surface and, ultimately, bankrolls forays to the moon and Mars. [Johnsson underscores the difficulty of the challenge.](#)

Pakistan Jet Grazed Runway at 327 KPH Without Landing Gear: A deadly plane crash in Pakistan is prompting questions about how the crew could touch down without landing gear when their sophisticated jetliner was bristling with equipment to prevent pilots from doing just that.

After an abrupt descent that had unnerved air-traffic controllers, the pilots of the [Pakistan International Airlines Corp.](#) jet on Friday briefly put the aircraft on the runway without the landing gear, grinding along on its two engines at a speed of more than 327 kilometers (203 miles) per hour, according to preliminary data. The pilots aborted the landing attempt, climbing back into the sky, but reported shortly afterward they'd lost power. The [Airbus](#) A320 apparently

glided into a neighborhood as pilots were attempting to return to the same runway, killing 97 of 99 people aboard. [Read more from Alan Levin.](#)

China-U.S. Tensions Seen Putting Lid on Tesla Stock: Political wrangling between Washington and Beijing could contain Tesla's share price for the rest of this year after the stock doubled since January, Joe Easton and Esha Dey [report](#), citing Morgan Stanley analysts. Strained China-U.S. relations pose even more of a risk than factory disruption in Fremont, California or the broader economy, Morgan Stanley added.

International

House Passes Uighur Bill in Rebuke to China: The House voted yesterday to authorize sanctions against Chinese officials for human rights abuses against Muslim minorities, as Congress and the White House ratchet up pressure on the government in Beijing amid rising tensions between the world's two biggest economies. The 413-1 vote comes on the same day the Trump administration said Hong Kong is no longer politically autonomous from China, a move that may have far-reaching consequences on the former British colony's special trading status with the U.S.

The vote was the first conducted under a new House rule allowing members to cast proxy votes for other lawmakers who stayed home because of coronavirus concerns. The legislation, which already passed the Senate, now goes to the president, who hasn't said whether he will sign it into law. [Read more from Daniel Flatley.](#)

China Approves Hong Kong Security Legislation: Chinese lawmakers approved a proposal for sweeping new national security legislation in Hong Kong, defying a threat by Trump to respond to a measure that democracy advocates say will curb essential freedoms in the city. The National People's Congress, China's rubber-stamp legislature, approved the draft decision by a vote of 2,878-1 today at its annual session in Beijing, with six abstentions. Chinese officials could now take months to sort the details of laws banning subversion, secession, terrorism and foreign interference before they're given to Hong Kong's Beijing-backed administration to promulgate. [Iain Marlow has more.](#)

Premier Li Says China Doesn't Want Cold War: China's Premier Li Keqiang struck a conciliatory tone with the U.S., saying the two sides should cooperate and respect each other's interests as tensions escalate on many fronts. "We have all along rejected a cold war mentality. Decoupling between the two economies will do neither side any good and will also be harmful to the world," Li told reporters during his annual news briefing on the sidelines of National People's Congress meetings in Beijing today. [Read more.](#)

China Blocks U.S. Call For UN Security Council Hong Kong Meeting: China blocked a Trump administration effort to hold a United Nations Security Council meeting on the Beijing government's proposed national security law on Hong Kong, as relations between the two powers continued to deteriorate. The U.S. effort to put the Hong Kong issue on the council's agenda came as the Trump administration said yesterday it could no longer certify Hong Kong's

political autonomy from China, a decision that could trigger sanctions and have far-reaching consequences on the former British colony's special trading status with the U.S., [David Wainer reports](#).

Bill Seeks to Block Chinese Students in U.S.: A Republican proposal released yesterday would block Chinese nationals from getting student visas for graduate or post-graduate studies in STEM fields. The bill, titled the SECURE CAMPUS Act, is sponsored by Sens. [Tom Cotton](#) (R-Ark.), [Marsha Blackburn](#) (R-Tenn.), and Rep. [David Kustoff](#) (R-Tenn.).

The bill includes waivers for visa applicants from Taiwan and Hong Kong, as well as certain minority religious and ethnic groups. It would also require universities or labs that receive federal funding to attest that they will not knowingly employ participants in Chinese talent recruitment programs. Any participants in foreign talent recruitment programs would have to register under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, Andrew Kreighbaum reports.

The Trump administration plans to cancel the visas of thousands of Chinese graduate students and researchers in the U.S. with direct ties to universities affiliated with the China's People's Liberation Army, [The New York Times reports](#), citing unidentified American officials with knowledge of the discussions.

U.S.-China Confrontation Risk Is Highest in the South China Sea: China and the U.S. are now at greater risk of careening into physical confrontation. And nowhere are their warships and fighter jets coming as close to each other, with as much frequency, as the South China Sea. A military conflict would probably be devastating for both. There are no signs either side actually wants one. Still, in times of high tension, miscalculations can have unintended consequences. [Read more from Philip J. Heijmans](#).

U.S. Ends Iran Sanction Waivers Allowing Work on Nuclear Sites: The U.S. has ended waivers that allowed Russian, Chinese and European companies to work at sensitive Iranian nuclear sites as the Trump administration keeps up its "maximum pressure" campaign against the regime in Tehran. The administration ended the waivers covering all remaining nuclear projects under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the international agreement that Trump quit in 2018, Secretary of State [Mike Pompeo](#) said in a statement on yesterday. [Read more from Glen Carey](#).

TSMC Makes a Key Washington Hire: Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., a major chipmaker to Apple and Huawei, has hired a new lobbyist in Washington to help stave off the impact of deteriorating U.S.-Chinese relations on its business. Former U.S. Chamber of Commerce executive Nicholas Montella joined the Taiwanese company in May as its director of government relations, just months after Intel's former top lobbyist Peter Cleveland became TSMC's vice president for global policy. The company confirmed the appointment of Montella, who previously focused on Japan, Korea and APEC policy, according to his LinkedIn profile. [Read more from Debby Wu](#).

U.S. to Join G-7 Pact on A.I. Software, Citing Threat From China: The U.S. plans to join an international organization that will advise companies and governments on the responsible development of artificial intelligence, becoming the last of the Group of Seven countries to sign on. The group, called the Global Partnership on AI, will study and provide recommendations to encourage the creation of AI technologies that respect privacy and civil liberties, said Michael Kratsios, the chief technology officer of the U.S. [Read more from Max Chafkin](#)

Campaign Trail

Biden Aims to Select a Running Mate by Aug. 1: Presumptive Democratic nominee Joe Biden hopes to select his running mate by Aug. 1, he told donors at a fundraiser last night. Biden said the commission he appointed to oversee the search process has interviewed a list of potential candidates, and is now making “the basic cut about whether or not they really want it.” [Read more from Tyler Pager.](#)

Guilfoyle’s Influence Rises as Trump Re-Election Race Tightens: Former Fox News personality Kimberly Guilfoyle has built her own power center within Trump’s re-election campaign, helping to bolster fundraising amid the coronavirus pandemic even as the president frets about his standing with voters. Guilfoyle has dated the president’s son Donald Trump Jr. for two years. But since taking a role in mid January as national chairwoman of the Trump Victory Finance Committee -- where she draws a salary of \$15,000 a month -- she’s amassed a team and operates with the authority of a member of the Trump family. She operates mostly independently of campaign manager Brad Parscale and Jared Kushner, the de facto head of the president’s re-election campaign. [Read more from Jennifer Jacobs.](#)

IRS Rule Change Could Aid Foreign Election Meddling: Transparency advocates are looking for a legislative fix after the IRS approved a rule they say opens the door to allow politically active nonprofits to take foreign money to influence U.S. elections, without being detected. Others hailed the move, which was announced Tuesday, saying it would prevent accidental disclosure of information always meant to be confidential. [Read more from Kenneth P. Doyle.](#)

It’s now on states to seek more information about nonprofit donors if they want it, [Sam McQuillan reports](#). The rules heighten what has already been a fraught issue for some states, and come as state governments are already dealing with revenue fallout from the coronavirus.

Other Stories

CDC Unveils Guidelines for Office Buildings: Employers could bring workers back to office buildings more safely with steps including improving ventilation, spacing workers apart and reducing shared objects like communal coffee pots, according to guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The recommendations issued yesterday show how office life may change. [Read the CDC recommendations here.](#)

Trump Announces OMB Deputy Director Nomination: Trump announced he plans to nominate Derek Kan as deputy director at the White House Office of Management and Budget. Kan is currently executive associate director at OMB and has previously served as undersecretary of policy at the Transportation Department, a member of Amtrak's board of directors, and general manager for Lyft in Southern California, according to the White House. The administration yesterday also announced its intent to nominate Lucas Polakowski to be assistant secretary of defense for nuclear, chemical, and biological defense programs.

Former Texas Congressman, Vietnam POW Dies: Former Rep. Sam Johnson (R-Texas) died yesterday at age 89. He served nearly 28 years in Congress and was held captive almost seven years during the Vietnam War, the [Washington Post reports](#). Johnson was the oldest member of Congress when he retired in 2019. He was considered one of the most conservative members of the House and helped found the Conservative Action Team, which later became the influential Republican Study Committee.

Ex-Spy Chief Clapper Hits Back at Trump's Criticism of Agencies: Former Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, a frequent target of Trump's ridicule, said there's a difference between criticism of intelligence agencies and the pattern of disparagement coming from the president. [Read more from Glen Carey.](#)

Oil-Gas Sector Wants Return to EPA Enforcement After Virus: The nation's oil and gas sector favors snapping back to the EPA's pre-coronavirus regulatory regime once the pandemic subsides, its largest trade group said yesterday. The American Petroleum Institute discussed the EPA's temporary relief measures during a webinar addressing the state of the industry. [Read more from Stephen Lee.](#)

Iran Warns U.S. to Watch Out for New Boats in Gulf: Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps unveiled scores of new and upgraded defensive speedboats with a warning to the U.S. that it won't shy away from challenging American naval power, [Golnar Motevalli reports](#).

Yesterday in Congress

1. [H.R.306](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**Kettle Creek Battlefield Survey**
ActSponsor: [Rep. Hice, Jody B. \[R-GA-10\]](#) (Introduced 01/08/2019) **Cosponsors:** ([2](#)) **Committees:** House - Natural Resources **Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 339. ([All Actions](#)) **Tracker:**
2. [H.R.3349](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**Republic of Texas Legation Memorial**
ActSponsor: [Rep. Doggett, Lloyd \[D-TX-35\]](#) (Introduced 06/19/2019) **Cosponsors:** ([11](#)) **Committees:** House - Natural Resources **Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 340. ([All Actions](#)) **Tracker:**

3. [H.R.6509](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**Public Safety Officer Pandemic Response Act of 2020**Sponsor: [Rep. Nadler, Jerrold \[D-NY-10\]](#) (Introduced 04/14/2020) Cosponsors: ([23](#))Committees: House - JudiciaryLatest Action: House - 05/27/2020 Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection. ([All Actions](#))Tracker:
4. [H.R.7022](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To direct the Federal Communications Commission to take certain actions to accelerate the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund Phase I auction, and for other purposes.**Sponsor: [Rep. Clyburn, James E. \[D-SC-6\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) Cosponsors: ([1](#))Committees: House - Energy and CommerceLatest Action: House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. ([All Actions](#))Tracker:
5. [H.R.7023](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To required the Secretary of the Treasury to implement a program that provides financial assistance to sports facilities, museums, and community theaters, and for other purposes.**Sponsor: [Rep. Trahan, Lori \[D-MA-3\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) Cosponsors: ([23](#))Committees: House - Financial ServicesLatest Action: House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Financial Services. ([All Actions](#))Tracker:
6. [H.R.7024](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To direct the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a program to award grants to eligible entities to purchase, and as applicable install, zero emissions port equipment and technology, and for other purposes.**Sponsor: [Rep. Barragan, Nanette Diaz \[D-CA-44\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) Cosponsors: ([21](#))Committees: House - Energy and CommerceLatest Action: House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. ([All Actions](#))Tracker:
7. [H.R.7025](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants to certain public health laboratories to assist such laboratories in meeting the cost of acquiring high-throughput diagnostic equipment, and for other purposes.**Sponsor: [Rep. Bucshon, Larry \[R-IN-8\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) Cosponsors: ([0](#))Committees: House - Energy and CommerceLatest Action: House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. ([All Actions](#))Tracker:
8. [H.R.7026](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To amend the Public Health Service Act to authorize grants for acquiring equipment and supplies capable of performing same-day clinical laboratory diagnostic testing in a point-of-care setting, and for other purposes.**Sponsor: [Rep. DeGette, Diana \[D-CO-1\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) Cosponsors: ([1](#))Committees: House - Energy and CommerceLatest Action: House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. ([All Actions](#))Tracker:
9. [H.R.7027](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**Making additional supplemental appropriations for disaster relief requirements for the fiscal year ending**

September 30, 2020, and for other purposes.**Sponsor:** [Rep. DeLauro, Rosa L. \[D-CT-3\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** (34) **Committees:** House - Appropriations; Budget **Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned. ([All Actions](#)) **Tracker:**

10. [H.R.7028](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **To establish a national commission on United States counterterrorism policy, and for other purposes.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Engel, Eliot L. \[D-NY-16\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** (3) **Committees:** House - Homeland Security **Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Homeland Security. ([All Actions](#)) **Tracker:**

11. [H.R.7029](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **To facilitate the re-opening of schools through study of children's role in transmitting SARS-CoV-2, and for other purposes.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Gonzalez, Anthony \[R-OH-16\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** (1) **Committees:** House - Energy and Commerce **Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. ([All Actions](#)) **Tracker:**

12. [H.R.7030](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **To provide emergency assistance to covered producers for market-ready swine losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and for other purposes.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Hagedorn, Jim \[R-MN-1\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** (1) **Committees:** House - Agriculture **Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Agriculture. ([All Actions](#)) **Tracker:**

13. [H.R.7031](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **To extend public safety officer death benefits to public safety officers whose death is caused by COVID-19, and for other purposes.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Joyce, David P. \[R-OH-14\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** (2) **Committees:** House - Judiciary **Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary. ([All Actions](#)) **Tracker:**

14. [H.R.7032](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a tax credit for training services received by individuals who are unemployed as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Kilmer, Derek \[D-WA-6\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** (3) **Committees:** House - Ways and Means **Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means. ([All Actions](#)) **Tracker:**

15. [H.R.7033](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020) **To secure the research enterprise of the United States from the Chinese Communist Party, and for other purposes.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Kustoff, David \[R-TN-8\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** (0) **Committees:** House - Judiciary; Science, Space, and Technology; Education and Labor; Foreign Affairs **Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on Science,

Space, and Technology, Education and Labor, and Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions... ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

16. [H.R.7034](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To modify the deadline for completing the 2020 decennial census of population and related tabulations, and for other purposes.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Maloney, Carolyn B. \[D-NY-12\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** ([4](#))**Committees:** House - Oversight and Reform; Education and Labor**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the Committee on Oversight and Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee... ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

17. [H.R.7035](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To amend the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 to provide for emergency supplemental funding under local agriculture market program for COVID-19 losses, and for other purposes.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Meng, Grace \[D-NY-6\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** ([1](#))**Committees:** House - Agriculture**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Agriculture. ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

18. [H.R.7036](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To amend the Antitrust Criminal Penalty Enhancement and Reform Act of 2004 to repeal the sunset provision.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Neguse, Joe \[D-CO-2\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** ([4](#))**Committees:** House - Judiciary**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary. ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

19. [H.R.7037](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To provide for quality assurance of COVID-19 reimbursements and reporting.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Posey, Bill \[R-FL-8\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** ([0](#))**Committees:** House - Energy and Commerce; Judiciary**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee... ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

20. [H.R.7038](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To amend title 23, United States Code, to include additional eligible uses of revenue from tolls, and for other purposes.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Rose, Max \[D-NY-11\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** ([0](#))**Committees:** House - Transportation and Infrastructure**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

21. [H.R.7039](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 210 North Missouri Avenue in Lakeland, Florida, as the "Officer Paul Dunn Post Office Building".****Sponsor:** [Rep. Spano, Ross \[R-FL-15\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** ([0](#))**Committees:** House - Oversight and

Reform**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

22. [H.R.7040](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2800 Lakeland Hills Boulevard in Lakeland, Florida, as the "Officer Ken Foley Post Office Building".****Sponsor:** [Rep. Spano, Ross \[R-FL-15\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** (0)**Committees:** House - Oversight and Reform**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

23. [H.R.7041](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**To provide that any termination of a director of a national research institute or national center of the National Institutes of Health be on the basis of malfeasance, neglect of office, or incapacity only.****Sponsor:** [Rep. Welch, Peter \[D-VT-At Large\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** (2)**Committees:** House - Energy and Commerce**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Referred to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

24. [H.Res.981](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**Providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 6172) to amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to prohibit the production of certain business records, and for other purposes.****Sponsor:** [Rep. McGovern, James P. \[D-MA-2\]](#) (Introduced 05/27/2020) **Cosponsors:** (0)**Committees:** House - Rules**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection. ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

25. [S.2746](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**Law Enforcement Suicide Data Collection Act****Sponsor:** [Sen. Cortez Masto, Catherine \[D-NV\]](#) (Introduced 10/30/2019) **Cosponsors:** (7)**Committees:** Senate - Judiciary**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection. ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

26. [S.3744](#) — 116th Congress (2019-2020)**Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020****Sponsor:** [Sen. Rubio, Marco \[R-FL\]](#) (Introduced 05/14/2020) **Cosponsors:** (66)**Latest Action:** House - 05/27/2020 Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection. ([All Actions](#))**Tracker:**

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