

**Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day, Jubilee Day and Cel-Liberation Day**  
[\*Why Juneteenth is so important and why so few people know about it\*](#)

**Congressional Schedule.** The Senate is in session. The House is in a concentrated period of remote committee work, and is expected to come back to DC for votes late next week (June 25). (See more below.)

### **Coronavirus government operations update**

**National perspective.** As of Friday morning, the number confirmed cases in the U.S. [is at least 2,197,000 with at least 117,000 deaths](#). While the total number of new cases and deaths as a national average are declining, cases are now rising rapidly in Southern and Western states. Sharp rises in coronavirus cases are prompting governors and mayors in some states and cities to reconsider their reopening plans, or call for additional restrictions including mandatory face masks in public spaces. All 50 states have now moved to allow some limited reopening. Vice President Mike Pence wrote an [op-ed in the Wall Street Journal](#) headlined: “There Isn’t a Coronavirus ‘Second Wave.’” In the article, Pence said, “The media has tried to scare the American people every step of the way, and these grim predictions of a second wave are no different.” Anthony Fauci, the nation’s top infectious-disease expert who according to an interview with NPR hasn’t spoken to President Trump in two weeks, agreed with one thing the Vice President said: “People keep talking about a second wave. We’re still in a first wave.” Other countries are looking at the U.S. with alarm, [with some experts noting](#) that it feels like the U.S. has given up trying to manage the spread of the virus.

**Washington metro area.** Overall, coronavirus cases in [D.C., Maryland, and Virginia topped 130,293 this morning, with 5,162 deaths](#). D.C., Northern Virginia, and Maryland are all continuing the reopening process, including allowing for restaurants and bars to open patios, rooftops, and terraces for on-site customers, though with more space between tables, limits on the number of people allowed in the space, and other precautions. This morning, D.C.’s Mayor Muriel Bowser announced plans for the city to move into phase two beginning Monday, allowing businesses to reopen and activities to resume under [specified conditions](#). On Thursday, Virginia’s Governor Northam [outlined](#) what phase III will look like, but said that the state is not yet ready for this next step. Maryland remains in phase II of reopening, but [beginning today](#) (June 19), gyms, casinos, and malls will also reopen.

**2020 Fourth of July festivities will go on.** On Friday, the White House [said in a statement](#) that the President will be hosting a “2020 Salute to America” at the White House on July 4, replete with “music, military demonstrations, and flyovers.” Trump is also set to give a speech before a fireworks display over the National Mall. The news of the planned festivities for the second straight year is in spite of opposition from local politicians. On May 26, [Democratic lawmakers from the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia](#) urged Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Interior Secretary David Bernhardt not to hold another celebration to save taxpayer money and to avoid the spread of the coronavirus.

**Unemployment numbers.** On Thursday morning, the Department of Labor reported another [1.5 million people filed for unemployment](#), a drop of 58,000 from the previous week, bringing the total number of unemployment claims during the pandemic to around 46 million. The number of people currently receiving benefits (known as continuing claims) is 20.5 million, a slight drop from last week. Another 760,000 people filed initial claims for

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, a supplemental program created by Congress for self-employed and gig workers.

**Pentagon staff looks at starting to return to normal operations.** The Pentagon has moved to Phase One which means a maximum of 40% of staff allowed on-site. We understand that even before Phase One, office occupancy had grown to as much as 35%, so we do not expect a significant change in the way things have been operating inside the building from the weeks prior. Offices will implement social distancing, including limiting the number and size of meetings. Visitor access is still extremely limited, and all visitors will undergo health screenings at building entrances and will be required to provide personal information for contact tracing. Random temperature checks are being conducted at all entrances.

**NASA also has plans to resume operations.** The space agency is also working on a plan for [resuming operations](#). Administrator Bridenstine said this week that they will follow the [four-stage framework](#) for returning to on-site operations. There is no set timeline, but updates will be posted on the [NASA People website](#).

**The White House.** On a logistical level, the Executive Office of the President (e.g. OMB, National Security Council, National Space Council) remains open for business but is still down to only a skeletal staff. Everyone else has been ordered to telework, and is then rotating into the office in shifts, as necessary, to handle classified materials. Security is checking everyone's temperature before entering the White House complex, and again before entering the West Wing. Press and other visitors are getting tested for the coronavirus before being in close proximity to the President. A change this week: staff are longer required to wear masks while traveling through the West Wing, though they are recommended.

**Access to Congress remains limited.** Access to the congressional office buildings and capitol complex remains limited and open only to open to Members, Congressional staff, and credentialed press as the Congress follows CDC recommendations for social distancing. The Office of the Attending Physician (OAP) has issued very specific guidance for committee meetings for Members and attendees, including continued telework for all congressional offices, and recommends that Members and staff maintain 6-foot social distance spacing as much as practicable when in the offices or the Capitol. However, Members and staff are meeting virtually with interested parties and have worked to create opportunities to hear from constituents.

### **Congressional activities**

**The pending legislative calendar.** There's been some shifting of the legislative calendar, as current events crash into must-pass annual legislation. On Thursday, House Democrats unveiled a [\\$1.5 trillion infrastructure plan](#) called the Moving Forward Act that includes \$25 billion for drinking water, \$100 billion for broadband, \$70 billion for clean energy projects, \$100 billion for low income schools, \$30 billion to upgrade hospitals, \$100 billion in funding for public housing and \$25 billion for the postal service, plus funding for projects related to fighting climate change. A floor vote is expected on the package before the Fourth of July recess; while the bill will most likely pass the House on party lines, the legislation is not likely to find a warm welcome in the Senate. House leadership announced that the vote on the policing package introduced last will be voted on next Thursday.

**Pandemic relief and oversight.** We expect the next pandemic relief bill to be introduced in the Senate in early July, and the White House is already saying what they would like to see in that package. [President Trump wants at least \\$2 trillion in spending](#), including a payroll tax cut and manufacturing jobs, plus an incentive for people to go back to work instead of continuing to apply for unemployment benefits.

Inspectors general at federal agencies have asked Congress for help with monitoring pandemic relief programs. According to a [letter sent to lawmakers](#), the CARES Act allows administration officials to sharply limit how much of the law's spending requirements they must collect and report. And the Treasury Department and Small Business Administration is refusing to release information on who has received loans from the Paycheck Protection Program, an issue that specifically impacts at least four members of Congress. Four legislators – two Republicans and two Democrats – are connected to companies that received funds from PPP. There was an [effort to require disclosure of loans](#) to any one company over \$2 million, but Republicans blocked that provision, including the two Republicans who benefited from the program.

The clamor for oversight occurs at the same time that a [growing number of lenders are no longer taking applications for PPP](#) as the Administration is set to stop approving loans at the end of June. Despite overwhelming initial demand, the \$570 billion program is now set to expire with \$130 billion left unspent. Advocates say that remaining funds do not indicate a lack of need. And, on Wednesday, SBA and Treasury issued a revised PPP loan forgiveness application implementing the extended 24-week “covered period” and the reduction in payroll cost limitation on forgiveness from 75% to 60% of costs, per the PPP Flexibility Act of 2020 (enacted June 5). In addition to revising the [full forgiveness application](#) (and issuing [revised instructions](#)), SBA also published a new [“EZ” version of the forgiveness application](#) (and associated [instructions](#)) intended for borrowers that meet one of three requirements: 1) are self-employed and have no employees; 2) did not reduce the salaries or wages of their employees by more than 25%, and did not reduce the number or hours of their employees; or 3) experienced reductions in business activity as a result of health directives related to COVID-19, and did not reduce the salaries or wages of their employees by more than 25%.

**FY2021 NDAA.** *Passing the NDAA on the Senate floor got more complicated this week*, as the Senate decided to turn to other legislation first and battle lines were drawn on a number of issues. First, Majority Leader Mitch McConnell announced on Wednesday that a floor vote on the NDAA will be delayed until after consideration of the policing bill drafted by Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC). “It will be the very next bill we consider here on the Senate floor,” McConnell said on the floor of Scott's bill. “We will be turning to this bill next week.” And, we’re now hearing word that the NDAA won’t be considered on the Senate floor until after the Fourth of July recess, possibly even mid-July, and the committee-passed bill won’t be available until just before that date. (Part of the consideration may be waiting to see what the House version of the bill will look like.)

It appears there are *four issues being hotly debated in the FY2021 NDAA*: the renaming of military bases, spectrum management, and lobbying restrictions for former officials. An amendment to have the Defense Department change the names of military bases named after Confederate officers passed during the NDAA markup, but at least one Republican senator says that [Members didn’t realize the amendment required renaming](#). “This was unexpected, I think. A lot of people did not know this was even going to be voted on,” Sen. Josh Hawley (R-MO) said. “And then their initial impression was, ‘Oh, this is just a study.’ They don’t realize that actually no, as Sen. Warren said, it’s mandatory language.” We understand there may be a push to soften the language by changing “shall” to “may,” but any change at this point would require 60-votes, plus the House version of the NDAA is expected to likely contain a provision similar to the Warren amendment. Given that several Republicans have said they’re open to renaming bases, it’s not clear any change to the language would pass. Senate Republican Whip John Thune said that the only way to change the language without 60-votes would be to negotiate a deal with Democrats to allow an amendment to pass with a simple majority. There’s still the veto threat from the President if the NDAA passes with this provision.

The *Spectrum IT Modernization Act* ([S. 3717](#)) was added to the NDAA last Friday. The bill would require the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and other federal agencies to outline a plan for modernizing the information technology infrastructure used for the management of federal spectrum. “The federal government is a significant spectrum user, and the management of these spectrum assignments is a

critical responsibility,” said Roger Wicker (R-MS), who chairs the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. “I am pleased that this bipartisan work with my colleagues on the Commerce and Armed Services Committees would establish a whole-of-government approach to spectrum management, and I look forward to seeing this important measure advance.” But not everyone believes in the purpose of the bill. Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) is [concerned](#) that the legislation will have unintended consequences. “If the DoD gains access to bands used by other federal agencies, then it will become more difficult to clear such bands for commercial use in the future.” She added that the bill “moves us closer to a monopolization of federal spectrum. Following closely behind is the potential for nationalization. This is not the American way.”

The original NDAA language included a *Pentagon-approved provision to ease lobbying restrictions by former senior DoD officials* by limiting the restriction so it would just bar interaction with an official's former office, and it would no longer block those officials from lobbying anyone in the Department of Defense. In addition, the Pentagon wanted to do away with the ban on lobbyists providing prepared materials. Sen. Elizabeth Warren offered an amendment to strike the underlying provision; since Warren’s amendment had bipartisan support, the committee adopted it as part of the manager’s package. Democrats on the HASC are also opposing any change to the current rules, so the Department’s requested changes are likely going nowhere this year.

Following the *surprise announcement that the administration is considering resuming nuclear testing*, Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR) introduced an amendment into the NDAA to set aside \$10 million to speed up the nuclear testing process in the event the U.S. decides to move forward with the plan. The measure was adopted on a party-line vote, and there will likely be more debate over the language on the floor. Some of the nation’s leading weapons scientists have written [an open letter to](#) Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell saying they “strongly oppose the resumption of explosive testing of U.S. nuclear weapons” after reports the Trump administration is considering breaking a nearly 30-year moratorium and the Senate Armed Services Committee adopted a provision setting aside funding for preparations.

It’s also likely that even if the provision does pass on the Senate floor, the debate will not be over since the *House almost certainly will not include a pro-nuclear testing provision in their version of the NDAA*. HASC Chairman Adam Smith (WA-09) and Strategic Forces Subcommittee Chairman Jim Cooper (TN-05) led Members, including 22 Members of the moderate NewDem Coalition, in [sending a letter](#) to President Trump urging him not to resume explosive nuclear testing after a 28-year hiatus. The letter comes in response to reports indicating the Administration is considering taking this step. Rep. Steven Horsford (NV-04), also a NewDem, has introduced the Preserving Leadership Against Nuclear Explosives Testing (PLANET) Act. This legislation would prevent the Trump administration from restarting explosive nuclear weapons testing by restricting funds for fiscal year 2021 and all previous years from being used for such a purpose. More information [here](#).

*The HASC is still planning to markup their version of the FY2021 NDAA* in subcommittee on June 22 and 23, and in full committee July 1 to 3. The specific subcommittee markup schedule, with links to the webcasts, are below:

- 6/22 at 11 am, [Subcommittee on Intelligence and Emerging Threats and Capabilities](#)
- 6/22 at 1 pm, [Subcommittee on Strategic Forces](#)
- 6/23 at 11 am, [Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces](#)
- 6/23 at 1 pm, [Subcommittee on Military Personnel](#)
- 6/23 at 3 pm, [Subcommittee on Readiness Markup](#)
- 6/23 at 4:30 pm, [Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces](#)

The HASC held a closed, off-camera briefing today at 3 pm for Members on topics covered by the subcommittee markups, and will hold another on June 22 at 11:30 am. The committee markups will be “hybrid,” with lawmakers being allowed to participate either remotely or in person in both the subcommittee and full committee markups. The full committee markup will take place in the Ways and Means Committee room to allow for better social distancing practices. The HASC subcommittee on military personnel held a hybrid hearing this week on racial disparities in the military justice system, one of two the virtual hearings required under new House rules before a hybrid markup can be held.

**FY2021 Regular Appropriations.** The NDAA isn’t the only legislation being delayed by other priorities. The *Senate Appropriations Committee* was expected to begin marking up spending bills next week, but markups are now on hold because of partisan disagreements over what policy riders are allowed for deliberation and discussion during markup of the legislation. Democrats want to include funding for pandemic response and police reform, while Republicans are planning for those issues to be dealt with through separate legislation. Senate Appropriations Chair Richard Shelby said “Funding the government is a serious responsibility, and I will not allow the appropriations process to be hijacked and turned into a partisan sideshow.” Ranking Member Patrick Leahy said that Democrats are committed to producing bipartisan bills. “Offering and considering amendments related to appropriations to address the most important issues of the day is not partisan, it is the job the committee is here to do,” he said. We understand that committee leadership have told all the subcommittee professional staff to cease their work preparing bills for markup, and to prepare for a continuing resolution that extends past the November election. (However, we believe this last statement may be posturing until a deal is negotiated. Stay tuned.)

On the other hand, the *House Appropriations Committee* [announced this week](#) their plans to hold subcommittee and full committee markups the weeks of July 6 and July 13, with floor votes as early as the week of July 20. On Thursday night, House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Nita Lowery sent the following schedule for markups to Members:

- 7/6: State and Foreign Operations; Agriculture; Military Construction and Veterans Affairs.
- 7/7: Homeland Security; Interior and Environment; Legislative Branch; Energy and Water; Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education
- 7/8: Commerce, Justice, Science; Transportation and Housing and Urban Development; Financial Services and General Government; Defense

**NASA Authorization.** While the uncertain House schedule has pushed to the right any date for a full committee markup of the 2020 NASA Authorization Act, committee staff are still working to incorporate Member concerns and ideas into an updated version of the bill that was [marked up in subcommittee in late January](#). The committee has already held two full committee virtual hearings, and so only has to hold a practice markup before being allowed to schedule a virtual markup under the new House rules. Therefore, we expect a virtual or hybrid markup of the NASA Authorization Act to be scheduled soon after the House reconvenes on June 25.

### **Personnel changes**

Some lawmakers are lining up in opposition to Anthony Tata, President Trump's nominee for defense undersecretary for policy. Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI) said that he plans to oppose the nomination. In a statement, his press secretary said, “Senator Reed’s preference is to wait for the hearing process before commenting on nominees. But in this case, there are real warning signs flashing and if this nomination moves forward, Senator Reed will oppose it.” Five other Democrats on the Senate Armed Services Committee have said they also plan to oppose the nomination based on Tata’s history of offensive comments.



Acting Pentagon Comptroller Elaine McCusker submitted her resignation on Tuesday, effective June 26. The White House pulled her name from consideration for the permanent position after emails were leaked detailing her concern over aid to Ukraine being held up by the administration.

Michael Cutrone has been appointed deputy secretary of defense for security cooperation; he is also currently performing the duties of principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, a position technically held by Kathryn Wheelbarger. Wheelbarger resigned on Thursday after (as we mentioned last week) President Trump announced that he intends to nominate Bradley Hansell, a retired Army Special Forces officer, to be deputy undersecretary of defense for intelligence and security, a position for which Wheelbarger was originally nominated.

The SASC held a confirmation hearing on Thursday for Lt. Gen. Daniel Hokanson to be chief of the National Guard Bureau and Gen. Gustave Perna to be chief operating officer of Operation Warp Speed. at 9:30 a.m. Answers to advance policy questions are here: [Hokanson](#); [Perna](#).

Thomas Alexander, acting secretary of defense for special operations and low intensity conflict, is moving over to the Office of Management and Budget on June 19.

Joel Montalbano has been named as acting manager of the International Space Station program, effective Friday, June 26. Kirk Shireman, who has been in the position since 2015, is retiring from the agency to take a position in private industry.

Mary Elizabeth Taylor, assistant secretary of state for legislative affairs, [submitted her resignation](#) over the president's handling of racial tensions sparked by the killing of George Floyd.

### **National security update**

**Space Force invokes DPA for small launch market.** As mentioned by Lt. Gen. J.T. Thompson, commander, Space and Missile Systems Center, in a Mitchell Institute event on Wednesday (see our event summary [here](#)), the Space Force has indeed [invoked the Defense Production Act](#) to support the small launch market. On Friday morning, SMC announced that it will award rideshare contracts to Aevum, Astra, X-BOW, Rocket Lab USA, Space Vector and VOX Space under the Defense Production Act. Each of the six companies will be awarded sole source contracts for two rideshare missions to be conducted over the next 24 months. The value of the contracts was not included in the announcement.

**Defense Space Strategy.** On Wednesday, the Pentagon released the new unclassified Defense Space Strategy (read the [fact sheet](#) and [summary](#)). The strategy replaces a 2011 version and sets priorities for space over the next decade. The strategy outlines three main goals: to maintain space superiority, provide support to national, joint, and combined operations, and maintain space stability. “The actions, intentions, and military strategies of potential adversaries have transformed space into a warfighting domain. In parallel, growth in allied, partner, and commercial space capabilities has added complexity to the space operating environment while creating an unprecedented level of collaborative opportunities,” states the report. Of note, there is a classified annex to the unclassified summary.

The report lists four lines of effort to accomplish these goals: 1) Build a comprehensive military advantage in space; 2) Integrate military space power into national, joint, and combined operations; 3) Shape the strategic environment; 4) Cooperate with allies, partners, industry, and other U.S. Government departments and agencies. However, the report doesn’t go into detail on the actions DoD might take to support these goals. The document does list as objective that it will “Deter adversary aggression against the space capabilities of the United States

and its allies, partners, and commercial interests.” This idea is supported by comments from DoD leaders recently about the need to protect commercial space systems, not just national security space systems. However, the strategy does not specifically say if placing defensive weapons in space is being seriously considered as a way to protect space interests.

For more on the Defense Space Strategy, here are the media reports. Start with [this excellent in-depth look](#) at whether or not the DSS was coordinated with the Intelligence Community (apparently, it depends on what your definition of “coordinate” is), and then go [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

**Space Force acquisition.** The question of how the Space Force is going to manage acquisition is still in the works. While the final report on acquisition has not yet been sent to Congress (the original was sent, then pulled back for revisions), it may be done soon. [Speaking at an event](#) on Tuesday, Shawn Barnes, deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for space acquisition and integration, said, “We’re very hopeful that we’ll get that report to Congress in short order. We’re just dotting a few i’s and crossing a couple of t’s.” (See our summary of the event [here](#).) Barnes talked about one of the changes he sees as being the most beneficial: moving separate budget line items into broader portfolios. The change would allow funding to be reallocated within the portfolio. Addressing the concern of congressional oversight on funding, Barnes said, “There’s no reason we can’t be as or even more transparent with the Hill with the information they need to have insight which gives them oversight. There’s no reason we couldn’t give them habitual routine access to information.”

Another Space Force issue is the transfer of the Space Development Agency. There was something of a debate this week, via events and op-eds, over the timing of the move. Derek Tournear, director of the Space Development Agency, [said during an event](#), “We want to all have the same mission and go forward but we have to be able to demonstrate that constructive disruption first.” Right now, SDA is a Pentagon agency under the undersecretary of defense for research and engineering; Tournear’s view is that SDA needs at least two years to demonstrate its utility before transferring to Space Force. However, Air Force leadership would like to see the transfer happen more quickly. They’ve committed to the date of Oct. 1, 2022, but during his event Shawn Barnes said, “frankly the Department of the Air Force would like to see that sooner rather than later.”

**Nuclear treaty hearing.** The Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a [closed hearing](#) on Wednesday with the Trump administration’s special envoy for arms control Marshall Billingslea, who is spearheading renegotiation of the New START Treaty.

**Withdrawing troops from Germany.** There was bipartisan criticism of President Trump’s announcement that he plans to [withdraw thousands of troops from Germany](#) unless Germany pays more into NATO. (If you need it, here’s a good [primer on how NATO is funded](#)). Twenty-two Republicans on the House Armed Services Committee publicly urged the president not to commit to a drawdown. Past defense authorization bills have included provisions preventing the president from withdrawing overseas troops; the issue came up after the SASC had completed work on the NDAA, but the HASC could still include a provision in its version of the bill. Or Congress could address the matter in standalone legislation, through a [bill introduced on Thursday](#) by Senate Foreign Relations Committee ranking member Bob Menendez (D-NJ) and House Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Eliot Engel (D-NY) that prohibits funding to implement any troop withdrawal in Europe.

**Space Operations Command.** AFA hosted Maj Gen John Shaw, Combined Force Space Component Commander, U.S. Space Command, and Commander, Space Operations Command, U.S. Space Force. Read our event summary [here](#).

**EPA decides not to regulate oxidizer for solid rocket motors.** Thursday, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [announced](#) that it will not regulate perchlorate, a chemical used as an oxidizer in solid rocket

motors. The agency said in a statement that perchlorate “does not meet the criteria for regulation as a drinking water contaminant” under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The EPA has found that up to 620,000 people might be consuming water that has a perchlorate concentration higher than “levels of concern,” but that this number was too small to present a “meaningful opportunity for health risk reduction.” EPA administrator Andrew Wheeler said in a written statement, “State and local water systems are effectively and efficiently managing levels of perchlorate. Our state partners deserve credit for their leadership on protecting public health in their communities, not unnecessary federal intervention.” Erik Olson, senior strategic director for health at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), said his own organization’s written statement: “Today’s decision is illegal, unscientific, and unconscionable ... The Environmental Protection Agency is threatening the health of pregnant moms and young children with toxic chemicals in their drinking water at levels that literally can cause loss of IQ points. Is this what the Environmental Protection Agency has come to?”

### **Civil and commercial update**

**The FCC responds to Senate questions on Ligado.** The Federal Communications Commission responded to questions from senators about the Ligado decision. Read the letter [here](#). The Congressional Research Service (CRS) also just updated their report on “DOD Concerns About the FCC-Approved Ligado Network.” The updated report is available [here](#).

**NASA’s new human spaceflight head talks to media.** On Thursday, NASA hosted a telecon with NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine and new Associate Administrator for Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate, Kathy Lueders. Read our notes from the event [here](#).

**Maryland senator talks space.** Maryland Senator Ben Cardin spoke to the Maryland Space Business Roundtable this week. Read our notes [here](#).

**Nuclear thermal propulsion.** The Future In-Space Operations (FISO) seminar featured Mike Houts of NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, talking about “High Performance Nuclear Thermal Propulsion.” Our summary is [here](#).

**Earth System Predictability.** On June 4 to 5, the National Academies of Science hosted a [workshop](#) to assess how federal agencies can help scientists explore the limits of Earth system predictability. The proceedings will inform the work of a “fast track action committee” of federal agency representatives tasked with developing a national R&D strategy on the subject. The effort stems from the White House’s latest R&D budget priorities [memorandum](#), which directs agencies to prioritize activities that “quantify Earth system predictability across multiple phenomena, time, and space scales,” as well as to evaluate “how measures of and limits to predictability, both theoretical and actual, can inform a wide array of stakeholders.” Addressing the workshop, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Director Kelvin Droegemeier [said](#) the committee is looking to finish the strategy before the end of the current presidential term, acknowledging that schedule might entail sacrificing some formality. “We don’t want to spend a lot of time writing a document, we could even do this in PowerPoint slides. The key thing is to actually get going and begin doing important work,” he said.

### **Economic relief for businesses during the COVID-19 crisis**

**Small business support.** To help our small business partners as we all navigate our new normal, we’ve also rounded up a few resources you may find useful:

- For more on the Paycheck Protection Program (aka PPP, part of the CARES Act) that helps small businesses retain their workforce, visit this [Dept. of Treasury site](#). *(last updated May 27)*



- Here's the Small Business Administration coronavirus [resources page](#).
- Facebook has set up a [resource page](#) for small businesses.
- Forbes has an excellent list of state-focused and private efforts in this [article](#).

## **2020 Election update.**

The *Commission on Presidential Debates*, a nonpartisan group that manages the debates between candidates for president, released the three debate dates and locations: Sept. 29 at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, Oct. 15 at the University of Michigan, and Oct. 22 at Belmont University in Nashville. A vice presidential debate will be held Oct. 7 at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. However, [President Trump's reelection campaign](#) is calling for more debates starting earlier than usual. It's a change from last year, when Trump threatened to boycott the debates.

*Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)* has [effectively removed herself from consideration to become former Vice President Joe Biden's running mate](#). On Thursday, Klobuchar told MSNBC's Lawrence O'Donnell: "This is a historic moment and America must seize on this moment. And I truly believe as I actually told the vice president last night when I called him that I think this is a moment to put a woman of color on that ticket, and there are so many incredibly qualified women."

In an unusual move, *Eric Fanning, president and CEO of the nonpartisan Aerospace Industries Association (AIA)*, [endorsed Joe Biden](#) for president in the upcoming election. Industry associations tend not to endorse candidates, choosing to stay publicly apolitical during elections. Fanning, who served as Secretary of the Army under President Obama, said "The next president faces a monumental task: repairing our damaged democracy and our eroded moral leadership around the world. I know Vice President Biden will be a commander in chief who leads the world's greatest military by upholding its values."

*Morning Consult* [released a poll](#) this week showing former Vice President Joe Biden with a 9-point edge over President Donald Trump (48% to 39%), his biggest lead so far this year.

And, on Friday afternoon, the *Oklahoma Supreme Court* [denied a legal request](#) to require that social distancing be enforced at President Trump's campaign rally in Tulsa on Saturday. The decision comes in response to a lawsuit brought by two attorneys on behalf of Tulsa city residents, businesses and immunocompromised individuals who claimed that the rally would put the community at increased risk of coronavirus infection.

## **And now for some cool exploration news...**

Happy Summer Solstice! This Saturday marks the official start of summer and the longest day of the year where Earth arrives at a point in its orbit where the North pole is at its maximum tilt towards the Sun. The solstice starts at 9:44 p.m. UTC or 5:44 p.m. ET in North America.

## **Our favorite podcasts**

The Intelligence Community Space Executive is a new office designed to increase collaboration, integration and innovation throughout the IC space enterprise. The person who sits in that office is JP Parker. On the [latest Space Policy Pod](#), hear from Parker about this new position and how space impacts the intelligence community.

And we know we've mentioned Bombshell before, but since [this week's podcast](#) features former deputy administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration Madelyn Creedon discussing the state of arms control today, we are giving them another shout out.

## **Upcoming conferences and other events of interest**

- 6/22, 8:45 am, COMSTAC meeting. The organizers have requested people watch the livestream [here](#) or [here](#).
- 6/22, 1 pm, Tech Talks: Space Command and Control (more info [here](#))
- 6/22 to 6/24, Project on Nuclear Issues Virtual Summer Conference, hosted by CSIS (more info [here](#))
- 6/22 at 12 pm, Air Force Association's Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies, "Aerospace Nation" webcast with Gen. James Holmes, commander of Air Combat Command. Details [here](#).
- 6/23, 3 pm, FCC v. DoD Spectrum Fight: Ligado, GPS and the Future of Spectrum Policy, hosted by Lincoln Policy (more info on how to register for the webinar [here](#))
- 6/24, 1 pm, [The Pitch: A Competition of New Ideas](#), hosted by CNAS
- 7/15, 1 pm, [Closing the Deal: National Security and Investment Scrutiny](#), hosted by CNAS
- 7/15, 2:30 pm, [Is Seeing Still Believing? Synthetic Media and Illiberal Uses of Technology](#), hosted by CNAS
- 7/15 to 7/17, AAS Glenn Symposium (virtual): Powering Innovation from the Sky to the Stars (more information and registration [here](#))
- 7/22, 1 pm, [A Deadly Game: East China Sea Crisis 2030](#), hosted by CNAS
- 8/1 to 8/6 Small Satellite Conference hosted by Utah State University. Registration for the now virtual conference will be free and opens on June 1 (register [here](#)).
- 8/19 to 8/21, NDIA Space Warfighting Industry Forum, Colorado Springs (details and registration [here](#))
- 9/10 to 9/11, Secure World Foundation's 2nd Summit for Space Sustainability, Washington DC (register [here](#), rescheduled from June)
- 9/13 to 9/15, Cipher Brief Threat Conference, Sea Island GA (more info and registration [here](#))
- 9/23 to 9/24, Smallsat & Space Access Summit, Alexandria, VA (more info [here](#))
- 10/15, 35<sup>th</sup> Women in Aerospace Awards Dinner and Ceremony, Arlington, VA (save the date)
- 10/31 to 11/3, Space Foundation's Space Symposium, Colorado Springs, CO

## **What we're reading**

June 9, *The American Conservative*: [The Space Force's Real Mission: Wasting Taxpayer Dollars](#)

June 10, *The Diplomat*: [Taiwan Repels Chinese Fighters After US Military Transport Flies Over Its Airspace](#)

June 11, *Defense One*: [Pentagon Starts Bailing Out Companies That have Lost Business Due to Coronavirus](#)

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