



Information Technology and Communications

2021 Congressional City Conference

Virtual

Sunday, March 7, 2021
3:30-5:00 p.m.

Agenda: Information Technology and Communications

Virtual Congressional City Conference
Sunday, March 7, 2021
3:30-5:00 p.m. eastern

Sunday, March 7

<p>3:30 p.m. – 3:40 p.m.</p>	<p>WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND MEETING OVERVIEW</p> <p>The Honorable John Fogle, Chair <i>Councilor, City of Loveland, Colorado</i></p> <p>Councilmember Fogle will lead introductions and provide an overview of expected outcomes from the meeting, as well as an update from NLC’s Board of Directors.</p>
<p>3:40 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.</p>	<p>FEDERAL ADVOCACY UPDATE: TELECOM ADVOCACY TALKING POINTS</p> <p>Angelina Panettieri <i>Legislative Director, Information Technology and Communications, National League of Cities</i></p> <p>Get ready to talk about broadband, digital equity, and telecommunications issues with your legislators. NLC staff will provide an update on the current status of key ITC priorities, including broadband elements of the American Rescue Plan COVID-19 relief legislation, an anticipated infrastructure package, cybersecurity bills, and litigation and rulemaking progressing through the courts and federal agencies. Committee members will also discuss key policymakers and the best ways to talk about city telecom priorities with their congressional delegations, during and after the Virtual Hill Day.</p>
<p>4:15 p.m. – 4:50 p.m.</p>	<p>MEET YOUR FEDERAL PARTNERS</p> <p>Gregory Cooke <i>Chief, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, Federal Communications Commission</i></p> <p>Matt Hartman <i>Deputy Executive Assistant Director of Cybersecurity, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency</i></p>

	<p>U.S. Department of Agriculture Representative (Invited) <i>U.S. Department of Agriculture</i></p> <p>Federal agency intergovernmental liaisons are key people for local leaders to have on speed-dial. Get acquainted with some of the intergovernmental leaders for critical federal agencies during this session. Agency representatives will provide a look at how they work with local governments, opportunities to provide input to federal agencies, resources available to your community, and how to get future questions answered efficiently.</p>
4:50 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	CLOSING REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT

Next ITC Committee Meeting:
March 18, 2021
3:00PM Eastern
Virtual

Congressional City Conference Highlights for ITC Committee Members *(all times Eastern; all events accessible via conference site)*

Sunday, March 7

- 3:30PM – 5:00PM – Information Technology and Communications Committee Meeting
- 7:00PM – 8:00PM – President’s Reception

Monday, March 8

- 1:20PM – 3:00PM – Opening General Session
- 3:30PM – 4:30PM – Finding Federal Funding for Digital Equity in Your Community

Tuesday, March 9

- 11:30AM – 12:30PM – Public-Private Partnerships Roundtable: Digital Equity
- 12:20 – 1:30PM – General Session
- 2:00PM – 3:00PM – Next Steps for Federal Telecom Policy – And How it Affects You
- 3:15PM – 4:15PM – Federal Agency Round Robin
- 4:30PM – 5:30PM – Closing General Session
- 6:15PM – 7:15PM – Closing Entertainment

Wednesday, March 1

- All Day – Virtual Hill Day (preregistration required)

Attachments:

- NLC Policy Development and Advocacy Process
- NLC ITC Committee Roster
- Congressional Committee Rosters: Senate Commerce Committee, House Energy and Commerce Committee, Senate Homeland Security Committee, House Homeland Security Committee
- Letter to Congressional Leadership on Local Fiscal Relief

NLC POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ADVOCACY PROCESS

As a resource and advocate for more than 19,000 cities, towns and villages, the National League of Cities (NLC) brings municipal officials together to influence federal policy affecting local governments. NLC adopts positions on federal actions, programs and proposals that directly impact municipalities and formalizes those positions in the *National Municipal Policy (NMP)*, which guides NLC's federal advocacy efforts.

NLC divides its advocacy efforts into seven subject areas:

- Community and Economic Development
- Energy, Environment and Natural Resources
- Finance, Administration and Intergovernmental Relations
- Human Development
- Information Technology and Communications
- Public Safety and Crime Prevention
- Transportation and Infrastructure Services

For each of the seven issue areas, a Federal Advocacy Committee advocates in support of NLC's federal policy positions. Members of each Committee serve for one calendar year and are appointed by the NLC President.

Federal Advocacy Committees

Federal Advocacy Committee members are responsible for advocating on legislative priorities, providing input on legislative priorities, and reviewing and approving policy proposals and resolutions. Additionally, Committee members engage in networking and sharing of best practices.

Federal Advocacy Committees are comprised of local elected and appointed city and town officials from NLC member cities. NLC members must apply annually for membership to a Federal Advocacy Committee. The NLC President makes appointments for chair, vice chairs, and general membership. In addition to leading the Federal Advocacy Committees, those appointed as Committee chairs will also serve on NLC's Board of Directors during their leadership year.

At the Congressional City Conference, Federal Advocacy Committee members are called upon to advocate for NLC's legislative priorities on Capitol Hill, as well as develop the committee's agenda and work plan for the year. Committee members meet throughout the year to further the plan, hear from guest presenters, discuss advocacy strategies and develop specific policy amendments and resolutions. At the City Summit, Committee members review and approve policy proposals and resolutions. These action items are then forwarded to NLC's Resolutions Committee and are considered at the Annual Business Meeting, also held during the City Summit.

Advocacy

Throughout the year, Committee members participate in advocacy efforts to influence the federal decision-making process, focusing on actions concerning local governments and communities. During the Congressional City Conference, Committee members have an opportunity, and are encouraged, to meet with their congressional representatives on Capitol Hill. When NLC members are involved in the legislative process and share their expertise and experiences with Congress, municipalities have a stronger national voice, affecting the outcomes of federal policy debates that impact cities and towns.



Information Technology & Communications (ITC) Committee Roster

Leadership

- Chair John Fogle, Councilor, City of Loveland, CO
- Vice Chair Alix Desulme, Vice Mayor, City of North Miami, FL
- Vice Chair Susan Norton, Chief of Staff, City of Fayetteville, AR

Members

- Jason Ashmore, Mayor, City of Sesser, IL
- David Baker, Mayor, City of Kenmore, WA
- Jesse Barlow, Council President, Borough of State College, PA
- Edwin Benson, IT Manager, City of Kingsville, TX
- Chrelle Booker, Mayor Pro Tem, Town of Tryon, NC
- Nathaniel Booker, Village Trustee, Village of Maywood, IL
- Joshua Butler, Councilmember, City of East Point, GA
- Bob Champion, Council Member Position 2, City of Mukilteo, WA
- Cedric Crear, Council Member, City of Las Vegas, NV
- Allan Ekberg, Mayor, City of Tukwila, WA
- Jo Emerson, Mayor, City of White Bear Lake, MN
- Joseph Goldstein, Council Member Ward 7, City of Marietta, GA
- Bob Hart, City Manager, City of Corinth, TX
- Adrian Hayes-Santos, Commissioner, City of Gainesville, FL
- Richard Holt, Council Member, City of Centennial, CO

- Van Johnson, Mayor, City of Savannah, GA
- Charles Jones, Vice Mayor, City of San Jose, CA
- Randy Keating, Councilmember, City of Tempe, AZ
- Nikki Lee, City Councilwoman, City of Tucson, AZ
- Mike Lynch, Director, Broadband & Cable, City of Boston, MA
- David Martin, Council Member, Ward 3, City of Ames, IA
- Brian Merida, Deputy Clerk, City of Martinsville, IN
- Scott Naumann, Alderman, City of Bettendorf, IA
- David Neal, Council Member, Ward 4, City of Merriam, KS
- Susan Noble, Councilmember, City of Commerce City, CO
- Steve Patterson, Mayor, City of Athens, OH
- Julie Pignataro, Councilmember, District 2, City of Fort Collins, CO
- Jarrett Smith, Council Member, Ward 5, City of Takoma Park, MD
- Tracy Stefanski, Alderman, City of West Allis, WI
- Lauren Tolmachoff, Council Member, City of Glendale, AZ
- Jeff Williams, Mayor, City of Arlington, TX
- Bob Yates, City Council Member, City of Boulder, CO

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Joe Buscaino
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Los Angeles, California

**Chief Executive Officer/
Executive Director**
Clarence E. Anthony

January 15, 2021

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

The National League of Cities (NLC) is the nation's foremost resource and non-partisan advocate for municipal governments and their leaders, representing all of America's 19,000 cities, towns, and villages. For nearly a year, local leaders have persevered against unavoidable fiscal decline to maintain essential government operations and services. At the same time, local governments have diligently implemented federal emergency aid to stabilize households and small businesses harmed by the coronavirus pandemic.

We are grateful for programs and funding that have been enacted under prior emergency appropriations packages. The fact remains, however, that most municipalities still have not received meaningful levels of federal aid. By separating, and ultimately dropping, state and local aid from the omnibus appropriations and emergency spending bill, Congress has injected significant uncertainty into the capability of local governments to carry out their operations just as a third wave of COVID-19 infections threaten to spread uncontrollably.

Consequences of Local Government Decline

Without any form of emergency federal aid whatsoever, NLC calculated the worst possible outcome for municipal governments would likely have been a \$360 billion decline in revenues over three years from the start of the pandemic. Fortunately, the three emergency appropriations packages approved by Congress has improved the outlook for local revenues, but they remain far below normal collections. **NLC's revised estimate, based on the most recently available fiscal data and updated survey results, is that municipal governments are still facing a \$90 billion blow to their current year revenues.¹**

¹ [Over Two Thirds of Cities Say Condition Will Worsen Without Federal Stimulus, NLC](#)

For local governments, the unmet urgent need for federal aid strikes at the heart of their capacity to both carry out emergency response and participate in economic recovery. Loss of capacity is directly related to local government job losses. U.S. labor market data reported on January 8th showed that state and local governments are still cutting jobs to offset revenue losses and pay for measures taken in response to new waves of COVID-19. According to the Bureau of Labor Statics December 2020 jobs report, local governments shed 32,000 jobs². Moreover, state and local government employment is still down by 1.385 million jobs compared to February 2020, just before major actions to control the spread of coronavirus went into effect.³

Municipal job cuts, and the resulting loss of capacity, has real-world consequences for residents, households, and small businesses. When residents lose jobs, demand for state and local government services increase. According to a recent Brookings report, COVID-19 triggered unprecedented increases in unemployment that overwhelmed state unemployment programs.⁴ Residents are relying on local governments for stabilization services through the long wait for unemployment assistance. Federal programs such as CDBG, Homeless Assistance Grants, and the Coronavirus Relief Fund under the CARES Act provided cities with additional resources to stabilize residents but did little to ensure local governments had the capacity to carry out those programs quickly or efficiently. Without federal aid for all local governments, there is no question that local capacity to administer emergency stabilization aid such as rent, utility assistance, and anti-hunger programs will decline.

Household services are also being scaled back, resulting in quality-of-life declines. According to NLC's City Fiscal Conditions 2020 report, nearly 8 in 10 finance officers say their cities are less able to meet the needs of their communities in 2020 than in 2019.⁵ A December update to NLC's survey of municipal officials found that 90% of municipal governments have experienced a revenue decrease of 21%, and 76% have experienced an expenditure on average increase of 17%.⁶ For households, among other things this means reductions in waste collection and recycling programs, delays in permitting for home construction and renovation, longer wait times for inspections and licensing, reduced services for households that rely on public transit, and pausing plans for utility build-out and upgrades such as water and sewer lines and broadband infrastructure.

Contractors that do business with local governments are also being harmed by the unavoidable decline in local government operations. NLC research shows that the deepest cuts from the pandemic are not showing on the stock market but on the Main Streets of cities and towns across America. According to NLC's Local Impact Survey⁷, 65 percent of cities have been forced to delay or cancel capital and infrastructure projects because of COVID-19 related revenue losses. Given that local governments contract months and years ahead, this means that the cuts will increasingly reveal themselves to businesses that bid for work in the months ahead. For small businesses that were unable to access Treasury aid like the Paycheck Protection Program, local governments served as their last resort for access to credit. NLC is documenting⁸ steps local governments have taken to support small businesses including halting or deferring the collection of taxes, utility payments, and licensing fees; offering zero-interest loans to those unable to access credit from financial institutions; and offering technical assistance to small-business owners applying for SBA loans. Conversely, slow-downs in inspections means costly opening and re-opening day delays and associated loss of wages for employees.

Direct Intervention for Local Governments

The fiscal decline associated with the coronavirus pandemic has placed unprecedented stress on both states and localities, as evidenced by intergovernmental infighting over CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funds. Of the 19,000 cities, towns, and

² [Bureau of Labor Statics December 2020 Jobs Report](#)

³ [Hilltop Securities Municipal Commentary January 11, 2020: State and Local Government Job Losses in Three of Last Four Months Illustrate Continued Budget Pressures](#)

⁴ [The social safety net: The gaps that COVID-19 spotlights](#)

⁵ [City Fiscal Conditions 2020](#), NLC

⁶ [Over Two Thirds of Cities Say Condition Will Worsen Without Federal Stimulus](#), NLC

⁷ [Congress' Delay Slashes Main Street Investments Amid COVID-19](#), NLC

⁸ [Five Ways Local Governments are Supporting Small Businesses During COVID-19](#), NLC

villages in the United States, only 36 municipalities, each with more than 500,000 residents, were provided direct assistance under the CARES Act CRF. Specifically, the 36 municipalities with populations over 500,000 received about \$7.9 billion of the \$150 billion. As a result, the majority of the 19,000 municipalities below the 500,000-population threshold were excluded from a guaranteed minimum level of assistance. In May, NLC raised the alarm that more than half the states had not at that point allocated any CRF funds to small and rural localities.⁹

The lag in state action to share federal aid with local governments can be attributed to several factors, including unclear authorizing language and inconsistent rolling guidance from the Treasury Department. But the largest factor was likely the fact that the overall aid made available under CRF was less than the pandemic related losses for states alone. As of last November, NLC estimated 29%, or about 6000 municipal governments, had not received any CRF, HUD, or FEMA funds from the CARES Act.¹⁰

The lesson for Congress is that federal aid for localities should not be contingent on time-consuming state determinations and processes. Rather, federal intervention to prevent the decline of local government operations should take the form of direct allocations of aid to all local governments to ensure all cities, towns, and villages have the opportunity to access federal aid where it is needed to maintain essential government operations and services.

Hard-won lessons learned from the opioid addiction crisis reinforce this conclusion. Too often, desperately needed addiction treatment and recovery funds provided by Congress were delayed or made unavailable to local governments as a result of complex or unclear instructions between federal, state, and local authorities. To the extent that federal resources are allocated to state governments for use by states and localities, the federal government should include iron-clad language requiring states to clearly and efficiently pass-through funds to local governments within a defined period of time.

Appropriate, Fair, and Equitable Funding for All Municipal Governments

Federal lawmakers should adhere to the following principles for direct intervention and prevention of local government fiscal decline resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. **Emergency funding should be fair and appropriate for each and every local government, with no minimum population threshold for eligibility.** Residents, households, and small businesses should not tolerate a preventable decline in local government operations as a result of being excluded from emergency federal assistance.
2. **Aid should be directly allocated through familiar and proven government revenue sharing programs.** We recommend an allocation formula based on the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG) as approved by the House in the HEROES Act. Relying on a CDBG framework would eliminate the time-consuming need to stand up a completely new administrative or regulatory framework as was required by the CRF. CDBG is also the most familiar revenue sharing mechanism for states and localities operating at reduced capacities due to staff furloughs and layoffs.
3. **Entanglement of state and local funding should be minimized.** A lack of clarity burdened the Coronavirus Relief Fund from the start, resulting in confusion, delays, and infighting among primary and secondary grant recipients. Federal aid for states and localities should be allocated through three distinct funding streams for state government, municipal government, and county government. Overall federal aid for municipal governments and county governments should be provided at equal levels.

⁹ [Local Governments Report Progress on Coronavirus Relief Funds, But Few Unobligated Dollars Remain for Cities and Towns Waiting for Aid, NLC](#)

¹⁰ [Cities are Essential, The COVID-19 Recession, NLC](#)

4. **Eligible expenditures should be targeted to the widespread health and economic consequences of COVID-19**, including unavoidable revenue shortfalls resulting from federal, state, and local measures to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Appropriate Guardrails

Appropriate guardrails can ensure federal assistance is appropriately allocated and spent to address losses and recovery related to COVID-19.

1. **Congress should enact guardrails to ensure additional federal intervention does not exceed reasonable levels of assistance to any municipal government**; and that the public can be confident that taxpayer funds are appropriately spent.
2. **To safeguard against funding levels greater than appropriate to meet the responsibilities delineated to municipal governments**, allocations for non-entitlement municipalities ought to be capped at 75% of their total annual budget.
3. **To safeguard against incentives to use federal aid as an offset for unwarranted cuts in state or local aid, a maintenance of effort requirement should be included to prevent any level of government** from imposing eligibility standards, methodologies, procedures, or other constraints on any other unit of government that are more restrictive than those that were in place upon enactment of the bill, in order to receive aid under this title.
4. **To safeguard against expenditures for long-standing unfunded liabilities**, pension funds should be designated an ineligible expenditure.

Additional Federal Aid

To help local governments offset the costs associated with the current national emergency response to this ongoing pandemic, Congress should include key provisions within H.R. 8266, the FEMA Assistance Relief Act of 2020, including adjusting the FEMA cost-share for all COVID-19 related Emergency and Major Disaster declarations to 100 percent. Additionally, Congress should include provisions within H.R. 8266 that would adjust the FEMA cost-share for all emergencies and major disaster declared in 2020 to not less than 90 percent federal and 10 percent non-federal, as well as a vital provision that would clarify that FEMA – under COVID-19 declarations – should continue to reimburse for certain expenses including personal protective equipment (PPE) for public schools, public transit, public utilities, courthouses and other government buildings and services.

Lastly, states and localities need more flexibility to use already appropriated CRF funding than is provided by the CARES Act. Amending CARES Act language to enhance flexibility for CRF by making “replacement of lost revenue” an eligible expenditure would meaningfully aid state, county, and municipal governments. We recommend CARES Act language be revised to read: *Title VI, Sec 601 (d):(1) are necessary expenditures or lost revenue incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).*

Conclusion

To be clear, we are not seeking federal assistance to “bail-out” local governments. Local governments do not expect the federal government to make up for every loss of local revenue. Rather, NLC is seeking an additional lifeline for local governments to put off and ultimately avoid options of last resort, including making temporary cuts permanent at a time when communities need local services most, laying-off furloughed municipal employees who comprise a large share of America’s middle class, and indefinitely cancelling capital projects that will further impact local employment, business contracts and overall investment in the economy. In other words, we are seeking federal assistance to save America’s cities, towns, and villages; and to make local leaders part of the solution to economic recovery.

Thank you for considering our urgent request for additional emergency aid to stabilize residents and maintain local government operations. If NLC can be of further help to you, please contact Irma Esparza Diggs, NLC Senior Executive and Director of Federal Advocacy, at 202-626-3176 or diggs@nlc.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clarence', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Clarence Anthony
CEO and Executive Director
National League of Cities

Cc: Office of President-Elect Biden
U.S. House of Representatives

Feb. 2, 2021

House Energy and Commerce Committee

The Energy and Commerce Committee is one of the most powerful standing committees in the House, with the broadest policy portfolio of any other committee. It has jurisdiction over telecommunications, consumer protection, food and drug safety, public health and research, environmental quality, energy policy and interstate and foreign commerce.



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Source: U.S. Congress

By Patterson Clark, POLITICO Pro DataPoint



CHAIR

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Feb. 17, 2021

House Homeland Security Committee

Initially created in 2002 as a non-permanent committee after the events of Sept. 11, 2001, the Committee on Homeland Security became a standing committee of the House in 2005 and provides congressional oversight of U.S. security legislation and the Department of Homeland Security.



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Oversight, management
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Border security,
facilitation and
operations



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Cybersecurity, infrastructure
protection and innovation



Dan Bishop
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Transportation and
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Emergency preparedness,
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Border security,
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Transportation and
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Oversight, management
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Ritchie Torres
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Vice chair of
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Emergency preparedness,
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Intelligence and
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Cybersecurity, infrastructure
protection and innovation

Feb. 22, 2021

Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee

The committee has jurisdiction over all matters relating to science, engineering, technology, oceans policy, transportation, communications and consumer affairs, including interstate commerce, the Coast Guard, and nonmilitary aeronautical and space policy. The committee meets in Room 253 of the Senate Russell Office Building at the chair's discretion.



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AVIATION SAFETY,
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Sources: U.S. Congress, Senate

By Patterson Clark, POLITICO Pro DataPoint

Feb. 16, 2021 | Updated Feb. 25, 2021

Senate Judiciary Committee

The committee oversees the Justice Department and the Department of Homeland Security, including confirmations of nominees to either agency. It also leads confirmation hearings for any nominations to the Supreme Court.



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CHAIRS AND RANKING
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HUMAN RIGHTS &
THE LAW

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FED. COURTS, OVERSIGHT,
AGENCY ACTION & FED. RIGHTS

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PRIVACY, TECH. &
THE LAW

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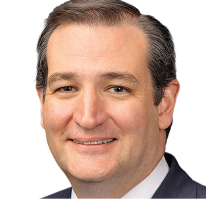


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FED. COURTS, OVERSIGHT,
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Sources: U.S. Congress, Senate, Judiciary Committee, Office of Alex Padilla

By Taylor Miller Thomas, POLITICO Pro DataPoint