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BGOV Transportation

Wednesday, July 22, 2026

Lobbying on FAA Contract, Shipping Law

RTX and Thales are increasing lobbying and campaign contributions while pursuing a multi-million dollar FAA contract to help modernize air traffic control nationwide, **Zach Williams** reports.

A Super PAC tied to Virginia-based RTX spent about **\$259,000 in June compared to about \$39,000** the previous month while the company lobbies on the National Defense Authorization Act, which may include an amendment requiring the FAA to scrutinize a vendor's business links to China and other adversarial countries.

The proposal could disadvantage Thales USA, where a PAC linked to the company increased its campaign spending to nearly \$76,000 in the 2025-2026 period while exceeding the total amount of giving from the previous cycle. Meanwhile, a PAC tied to Virginia-based **Leidos spent \$98,500 in June, a \$23,500 decrease** from the previous month, while the company pushed for the amendment, according to records.

Both Thales and RTX also increased their lobbying spending tied to the common automation contract to \$90,000 in the second quarter of 2026 compared to \$60,000 earlier in the year, according to records. [Read More](#)

There's also been increased spending on lobbying and campaign contributions among unions, oil companies, and other special interests regarding the Jones Act, which restricts foreign carriers from moving cargo inside the US, **Zach** [reports](#).

In other disclosures, **Waymo spent more than \$2 million** on federal lobbying in the first half of the year, including nearly \$1.1 million in the second quarter, a company record for any quarter. The company lobbied on safety and regulation of autonomous vehicles and automated driving systems, **Kate Ackley** [reports](#).

Happening on the Hill

Graves on Highway Bill Vote Timing: House Transportation & Infrastructure Chair Sam Graves said he is “pretty confident” that a House vote on the Surface Transportation Reauthorization can happen by Sept. 30 when current authorities expire. Senate Commerce Chair Ted Cruz has suggested that an extension might be necessary given delays in his chamber, **Zach** reports.

Opposition to Cummins: A major labor group wants the Senate Commerce Committee to reject the nomination of David Cummins to lead the TSA at a meeting scheduled for [today](#), citing his opposition to the current collective bargaining agreement and support for privatizing screening services at some airports, **Zach** reports.

“We urge the administration to nominate a Transportation Security Administrator who values workers’ rights and protects the integrity of the TSA,” said Greg Regan and Shari Semelsberger, president and secretary-treasurer of the AFL-CIO-affiliated Transportation Trades Department.

- The panel will also consider several bills affecting the aviation and auto industries in addition to voting on nominations for the STB, NTSB, and DOT.

More Hearings:

- The House Foreign Affairs Committee’s Asia panel will hold a [hearing](#) on countering China’s dominance in global shipbuilding
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This week's Hill Watch Live unpacked the defense debates on Capitol Hill, with the latest on the [National Defense Authorization Act](#), [budget reconciliation](#), and a [stopgap funding bill](#).

Senior National Security Reporter **Roxana Tiron** and Senior Legislative Analyst **Greg Tourial** shared their reporting and analysis in the conversation, which previewed key votes in the House this week.

[Get the details here](#) and find out more about the series at the [Hill Watch Live hub](#).

Editor's Picks

Trump Lifts Four-Decade Ban on Direct US Flights to Lebanon

President Donald Trump said his administration would move to allow US air carriers to resume flying directly to Lebanon, lifting restrictions that have been in place for more than four decades. [Read More](#)

Hybrids Boom as EVs Fall Out of Favor Even in California

In America's EV stronghold, another type of vehicle is rapidly gaining ground. [Read More](#)

Houthi Threats Give Oil Markets a 'Two Chokepoint Problem'

Ships continue to turn away from the southern end of the Red Sea, after Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels announced an embargo on Saudi exports through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a narrow channel that has become a lifeline for oil exports since the beginning of the US-Israeli war with Iran. [Read More](#)

Tesla Cybertruck Is Becoming the Ford Edsel of the 21st Century

Ford Motor Co. introduced a car almost 70 years ago widely viewed as the greatest automotive flop of all time. Tesla Inc.'s Cybertruck may well be on its way to claiming that title. [Read More](#)

Correction

Yesterday's edition didn't accurately reflect the total number of Republican signatories in a letter to the Federal Railroad Administration. It was five.

This newsletter was edited by Katrice Eborn ✉

Bloomberg Government

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