
Chicago Schools Come Back to Muni Market in High Yield Rally.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Chicago's junk-rated public school district sold $650 million in bonds for capital projects, including roof repairs and technology upgrades.
- The sale comes as the high-yield market for state and local debt turns positive, with returns for the high-yield muni market improving and bonds rallying on expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut rates.
- The district faces fiscal challenges, including a $734 million deficit and expectations of more shortfalls in the coming years, as it shifts to a fully-elected board and the city seeks to reduce its financial support.

Chicago's junk-rated public school district returned to the municipal bond market after a two-year hiatus, with its sale coming as the high-yield market for state and local debt turns positive.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg CityLab

By Shruti Singh

September 11, 2025

Long Dated Munis Turn Around, Enjoy Best Month Since 2023.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- The long end of the municipal debt market has bounced back from a difficult start to 2025 as investors expect rate cuts from the Federal Reserve.
- Long-dated state and local government bonds have risen nearly 4% since the beginning of September, putting them on track for the best month since November 2023.
- Investors are taking note of the relative value in the long end of the market, with $1.4 billion of inflows into long-term municipal bond funds for the week ending Sept. 10.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Elizabeth Rembert and Amanda Albright

September 15, 2025

Puerto Rico Nears Deadline on Opportunity Zone Changes.

The recently enacted One Big Beautiful Bill Act has permanently extended the federal Opportunity Zone program, adding reforms meant to modernize the initiative, expand community impact and reshape investment strategy — particularly in Puerto Rico.

The law makes the program a permanent part of the U.S. tax code and requires new compliance, reporting and impact measures. It also mandates a nationwide redesignation of eligible census tracts by mid-2026. Without those changes, investments made after Dec. 31, 2026, would have lost eligibility for key tax benefits.

The program, originally created as a short-term tax deferral mechanism, is shifting to a permanent framework. The law preserves the 10-year capital gains exclusion for investments held through Qualified Opportunity Funds but phases out older incentives.

Continue reading.

newsismybusiness.com

by Maria Miranda

September 9, 2025

Puerto Rico Unlocks $1.4B in Opportunity Zone Projects.

Puerto Rico’s Economic Development and Commerce secretary, Sebastián Negrón-Reichard, said Thursday that the agency is unblocking $1.4 billion in eligible investments and more than 2,000 jobs tied to Opportunity Zone projects across 13 municipalities in Puerto Rico.

As News is my Business reported earlier this week, Puerto Rico is approaching a key deadline to redesignate eligible census tracts, a process that will reduce the coverage area from 98% of the island to 25% by the end of 2026.

Speaking at his weekly briefing at the La Fortaleza executive mansion, Negrón-Reichard said that while 38 projects had already secured decrees under the Puerto Rico Economic Development and Opportunity Zones Act of 2019, most had been limited to a basic 5% tax credit. Only three projects had advanced to receive the additional credits available by law.

Continue reading.

newsismybusiness.com

Maria Miranda September 11, 2025

[What Makes DC's Bridge District a Model OZ Project?]

Washington DC's Bridge District is quickly emerging as one of the nation's most ambitious Opportunity Zone projects, transforming vacant land into a thriving new neighborhood. With thousands of multifamily units, new retail, and vital community amenities, the Bridge District is showing how OZ capital can deliver long-term, transformative impact in one of the most underserved parts of the nation's capital.

Jeff Tompkins of Altes Capital and Sohael Chowfla of Redbrick LMD join the show to discuss the outlook for Opportunity Zones 2.0, the unique supply-and-demand dynamics of Washington DC's multifamily housing market, and how Redbrick is using OZ equity to deliver the Bridge District as a model for sustainable, community-driven development.

[Listen to podcast.]

opportunityzones.com

by Jimmy Atkinson

September 10, 2025

[OBBBA Makes OZ Incentive Permanent, With Some Significant Changes.]

When President Donald Trump signed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) into law July 4, it included permanence and modernization of the opportunity zones (OZ) incentive. While much of the OZ incentive is unchanged, there are key modifications.

Road to Permanence

The original OZ incentive was enacted in 2017 as part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) and was scheduled to sunset for capital gains realized after Dec. 31, 2026. Many other provisions of the TCJA were scheduled to expire at the end of 2025, so it was widely expected that major tax legislation would be introduced to address the expiring business and individual tax provisions.

OZ Working Group Recommendations

In anticipation of this expected legislative activity, the Novogradac Opportunity Zones Working Group (OZWG) began work in 2022 to compile an in-depth list of recommendations to enhance and modernize the OZ incentive. These consensus recommendations were shared with numerous OZ stakeholders, the Trump administration's transition team, the Senate Finance Committee and key members of the Senate and House, including Sen. Tim Scott, R-South Carolina. The OZ incentive was originally introduced in the Senate by Sen. Scott, who has consistently been the biggest proponent of the incentive and spearheaded the inclusion of the OZ 2.0 in the OBBBA. We were pleased to learn that several of the OZWG's key recommendations were ultimately included in the OBBBA.

[Continue reading.]

novoco.com

Published by Jason Watkins, CPA on Monday, September 8, 2025

September 2025

S&P U.S. Local Governments Credit Brief: Texas Municipal Utility Districts Means And Medians

Overview

Texas municipal utility districts (MUDs) demonstrated continued stability, as favorable property tax base growth, well-defined debt issuance oversight, and rapid population growth statewide supported improved direct debt metrics and high reserves. Texas MUDs have exhibited stable ratings performance despite economic and event cycles such as the Great Recession, Hurricane Harvey, and the pandemic–which supports our view of a stable outlook despite growing uncertainty with current economic conditions (see "Economic Outlook U.S. Q3 2025: Policy Uncertainty Limits Growth," June 24, 2025). We think Texas benefits from economic growth that outpaces that of the nation, which will likely contribute to ratings stability over time.

S&P Global Ratings maintains general obligation ratings on 320 Texas MUDs. Currently, about 17% of the ratings are in the 'BBB' category, 72% are in the 'A' category, and 11% are in the 'AA' category. From January 2024 through August 2025, there were 20 upgrades (15 in 2024 and five from January 2025 through August 2025), a trend that continued despite substantial rating movement in 2023, when 145 MUD ratings were raised due to robust economic and tax base growth. There were no downgrades in 2024 or in 2025 so far. The continued upward rating movement is reflective of strong property tax base growth, stable finances, and moderating debt burdens as the MUDs continue to reach mature development status.

As Texas MUDs become largely or fully developed and their additional capital needs decrease, direct debt requirements and tax rates decline. MUDs typically exhibit strong credit fundamentals, including favorable tax base growth and maintenance of high reserves, usually above 100% of annual expenses, in operating and debt service funds, providing flexibility to cash-fund ongoing maintenance of infrastructure, particularly during periods when interest rates are high, as is currently the case.

Continue reading.

09-Sep-2025 | 17:10 EDT

Texas Water Development Board: Fitch New Issue Report

The Texas Water Development Board's SWIRFT program received an 'AAA' rating from Fitch, reflecting strong financial structure and default tolerance. The program's cash flow model indicates it can handle defaults up to 45.5%, ensuring bond payments remain uninterrupted.

Access Report

Wed 10 Sep, 2025 – 5:03 PM ET

Houston, Texas: Fitch New Issue Report

Houston's Public Improvement Bonds' 'AA' rating reflects strong financial resilience, with general fund reserves expected to remain above 15% of spending. The Negative Outlook reflects ongoing fiscal pressures and the potential for diminished available general fund reserves as it seeks new revenue sources to fund its recently approved firefighter salary hikes through fiscal 2029.

Access Report

Fri 12 Sep, 2025 – 12:30 PM ET

Texas Water Development Board: Fitch New Issue Report

Texas's 'AAA' rating reflects its strong economy and fiscal flexibility, supported by substantial reserves. The Texas Water Development Board's $809 million GO bonds are rated 'AAA' with a Stable Rating Outlook.

Access Report

Fri 12 Sep, 2025 – 4:32 PM ET

Orrick: Conversations with Leaders Driving Innovation in Public Finance and Infrastructure

Conference | September.29.2025 – September.30.2025

Boston Marriott Long Wharf

As infrastructure needs and costs rise, public finance leaders are adapting to new policies, technologies, and investment demands. The Bond Buyer Infrastructure Conference, co-chaired by Orrick's Christine Reynolds, brings together experts to explore innovative financing strategies for transportation, housing, water and wastewater facilities, airports, hospitals, universities, and more. Attendees will gain insights from investors and policymakers, learning how to build smarter, stronger infrastructure in a rapidly changing environment.

Matthew Neuringer will speak on the panel *"AIAI P3 Bootcamp: Determining Your Project Delivery Options,"* guiding participants through the legal, financial, and operational factors that influence project delivery decisions and identifying when specific models are most effective. He will also moderate the *"P3 Market Growth – Opportunities, Challenges, and Incentives"* panel, where industry leaders will discuss the expanding role of private capital in infrastructure projects, highlight emerging opportunities, and address challenges and incentives in the market.

Devin Brennan will moderate the *"Transit: Ridership and Raising Revenues"* panel, which will focus on how transit agencies are responding to the ongoing challenges in U.S. cities, including declining ridership and the need for sustainable revenue streams. This session will offer practical insights into strategies for maintaining and improving transportation infrastructure amid shifting demands and financial pressures.

American Public Power Association Legal & Regulatory Conference, 2025

Join us **October 12 – 15 at the Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego in San Diego, California** for an unparalleled professional development opportunity where policy and practice take center stage. Connect with public power's policy experts, and get updates and insights on the ever-changing legal and regulatory landscape confronting public power utilities — from the latest at FERC to practical legal issues facing municipal utilities.

NOTE: Attendees can earn up to 12 CLEs (in 60-minute states) or up to 14.4 CLEs (in 50-minute states) for attending the conference, and 3.25 CLEs (in 60-minute states) and 3.9 CLEs (in 50-minute states) for each preconference seminar. Please note that the number of CLE credits varies by states and is decided by each state CLE authority.

REGISTER

APPA Resilience Webinar: Helping Public Power Tackle Wildfire Risk

Event Overview

Wildfire and extreme heat events are growing threats to electric utilities, affecting infrastructure, reliability, workforce safety, and customer service. To help public power utilities proactively plan for these risks, Argonne National Laboratory (ANL) and the American Public Power Association (APPA) have partnered to provide targeted technical assistance to five utilities through a wildfire risk mitigation planning initiative.

This webinar will showcase lessons learned from the participating utilities and introduce new planning resources developed through the project, including APPA's wildfire mitigation plan template and strategies guide. Speakers will demonstrate how utilities can use ClimRR, Argonne's climate data platform, to inform near-term wildfire planning and incorporate localized projections into their risk management strategies. Whether your utility is just beginning to assess wildfire risk or looking to enhance existing mitigation plans, this session offers actionable insights, peer-tested tools, and a data-informed planning framework tailored to the needs of public power.

Webinar Topics:

- Overview of Argonne and APPA's wildfire and extreme heat technical assistance project
- How ClimRR supports utility-specific wildfire risk planning
- Walkthrough of APPA's wildfire mitigation plan template and strategies guide
- Utility experiences and lessons learned from wildfire mitigation planning

Click here to learn more and to register.

S&P U.S. Local Governments Credit Brief: Texas Municipal Utility Districts Means And Medians

Overview

Texas municipal utility districts (MUDs) demonstrated continued stability, as favorable property tax base growth, well-defined debt issuance oversight, and rapid population growth statewide supported improved direct debt metrics and high reserves. Texas MUDs have exhibited stable ratings performance despite economic and event cycles such as the Great Recession, Hurricane Harvey, and the pandemic–which supports our view of a stable outlook despite growing uncertainty with current economic conditions (see "Economic Outlook U.S. Q3 2025: Policy Uncertainty Limits Growth," June 24, 2025). We think Texas benefits from economic growth that outpaces that of the nation, which will likely contribute to ratings stability over time.

S&P Global Ratings maintains general obligation ratings on 320 Texas MUDs. Currently, about 17% of the ratings are in the 'BBB' category, 72% are in the 'A' category, and 11% are in the 'AA' category. From January 2024 through August 2025, there were 20 upgrades (15 in 2024 and five from January 2025 through August 2025), a trend that continued despite substantial rating movement in 2023, when 145 MUD ratings were raised due to robust economic and tax base growth. There were no downgrades in 2024 or in 2025 so far. The continued upward rating movement is reflective of strong property tax base growth, stable finances, and moderating debt burdens as the MUDs continue to reach mature development status.

As Texas MUDs become largely or fully developed and their additional capital needs decrease, direct debt requirements and tax rates decline. MUDs typically exhibit strong credit fundamentals, including favorable tax base growth and maintenance of high reserves, usually above 100% of annual expenses, in operating and debt service funds, providing flexibility to cash-fund ongoing maintenance of infrastructure, particularly during periods when interest rates are high, as is currently the case.

Continue reading.

09-Sep-2025 | 17:10 EDT

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fitch New Issue Report

Philadelphia's financial resilience has improved since receiving federal pandemic aid in fiscal 2022. However, the financial plan assumes deficits from fiscal 2025 through 2029, potentially unwinding these improvements.

Access Report

Tue 09 Sep, 2025 – 5:36 PM ET

Municipal Bonds in a Stressed Fixed Income Environment: Strategic Allocation Amid Fiscal Uncertainty and Policy Divergence

Summary

– The 2025 municipal bond market faces fiscal stress amid surging tax-exempt issuance and a steepening yield curve, mirroring historical dislocations like the 2008 crisis.

– Policy uncertainty from U.S. trade volatility and potential tax reforms disproportionately impacts healthcare, education, and infrastructure sectors with exposed credit fundamentals.

– Investors balance long-dated bond opportunities (3.37%-5.81% yields) with active management, prioritizing strong liquidity buffers and diversified revenue streams to hedge policy-driven risks.

– Despite record-low 2025 defaults (26 year-to-date), credit divergence widens, requiring disciplined selection of high-quality bonds with 15+ year maturities and stable toll-backed infrastructure projects.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Marcus Lee

Tuesday, Sep 9, 2025 3:37 am ET

Fed Rate Cuts and Labor Market Shifts: Navigating Equity Rotations and Bond Strategies in 2025

Overview

– U.S. labor market shifts in 2025 drive equity rotations as healthcare gains jobs while manufacturing declines, reflecting structural trends like automation and aging demographics.

– Fed rate cuts anticipate labor weakness, prompting bond strategies to favor extended duration in municipal bonds and intermediate Treasuries amid a steepening yield curve.

– Investors prioritize healthcare and education sectors for resilience against automation, while construction and manufacturing face underperformance due to labor shortages and skills gaps.

– Strategic allocations balance sector rotations with bond duration flexibility, emphasizing tax-exempt income and hedging against rate volatility through diversified asset classes.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

TrendPulse Finance

Saturday, Sep 6, 2025 8:31 pm ET

Municipal Bonds and the Fed Rate-Cut Outlook in 2025: Strategic Entry Points for Investors.

Summary

– Fed's 2025 rate-cut path (3 cuts by year-end) boosts municipal bond prices, especially long-duration instruments as yields fall.

– Investors advised to extend duration in high-quality municipal bonds, prioritize tax-exempt income, and leverage historical outperformance trends.

– Risks include inflation from tariffs undermining rate cuts and tightening credit spreads, requiring disciplined focus on high-credit-quality bonds.

The Federal Reserve's anticipated easing cycle in 2025 has positioned municipal bonds as a compelling asset class for investors seeking strategic entry points. With the central bank poised to implement a 25-basis-point rate cut in September 2025, followed by further reductions in October and December, the municipal bond market is already pricing in a shift toward accommodative monetary policy. This environment, driven by a deteriorating labor market and inflationary pressures from tariffs, creates opportunities for investors to capitalize on yield advantages and duration positioning.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Victor Hale

Saturday, Sep 6, 2025 6:53 pm ET

Navigating 2025 Municipal Bond Fund Strategies: Investor Timing and Capital Reallocation Opportunities

Overview

– 2025 municipal bond strategies shift as states cut pandemic aid reliance, boost pension/infrastructure spending, and issue $281B in new debt to offset tax cut impacts.

– Steepened yield curves (127bps over 10Y Treasuries) enable "rolling down the curve" tactics, while tax-exempt municipals outperform Treasuries amid $9.2T Treasury refinancing risks.

– $10B YTD inflows reflect investor preference for duration extension and active management, with taxable municipals matching corporate yields and offering geopolitical risk resilience.

– Strategic "barbell" approaches combining short/long-term bonds and sector-specific opportunities in healthcare/transportation highlight market inefficiencies and yield capture potential.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Nathaniel Stone

Monday, Sep 8, 2025 10:44 pm ET

Every State in the Nation has Some Form of a Budget in Place — Except Pennsylvania and Michigan

Just two states in the nation have been unable to pass some form of a budget for the 2025-26 fiscal year – and now, they're staring down significant consequences if their respective legislative bodies fail to act soon.

Pennsylvania has entered its third month without a new budget, while Michigan is just weeks away from a potential shutdown. Meanwhile, lawmakers in other states have figured out their spending plans – or contingencies. North Carolina, for example, has passed a "mini-budget" bill that prevents disruptions in state operations.

Aside from their current budget woes, the Rust Belt states mirror each other in some unique ways. Both are helmed by Democratic governors with presidential ambitions and national profiles to match in Josh Shapiro and Gretchen Whitmer. They are considered battleground states with recently redrawn legislative districts generally regarded as fairer – and that resulted in split legislatures, two of three nationally. Transportation funding has emerged as *the* sticking point in the disparate budget negotiations, for very different reasons.

Continue reading.

michiganadvance.com

By: Emily Previti and Ben Solis
–
September 8, 2025

- MSRB: Major Trends in the Municipal Securities Primary Market
- Tax-Exempt Munis vs. Taxable Bonds: Which Has Higher Returns? – WSJ
- Fitch Affirms Muni Ratings Tied to U.S. Sovereign Ratings at 'AA+'; Outlook Stable
- Municipal Litigation Lottery.
- 2025 Affordable Housing Tax Changes: Understanding LIHTC, Bonds, OZ and 45L Deadlines
- Best Practices in Debt Issuance and Management: GFOA eLearning Course
- GFOA: GAAP Update Early Discounts Available
- And Finally, Nothing To See Here Folks, Move Along is brought to us this week by *State ex rel. Seeman v. Lower Republican Natural Resources District*, which we intended to utilize before realizing that this title contains zero comedic potential. Zero! So on to *Rogers v. Cedar Bluff Volunteer Fire Department*, in which an off-duty fire department medic responded to a car crash. Upon arrival, the citizen performing CPR on the victim asked the medic if he'd take over, only to be told to stop all resuscitative efforts, as the victim was clearly deceased. When the county EMS paramedics arrived a bit later, "They examined [victim] and found that she was warm to the touch,

had a pulse, and had responsive pupils." They then proceeded to diagnose the victim with a syndrome referred to in technical medical jargon as, "Not dead." She was then re-resuscitated but died a couple days later due to anoxic encephalopathy resulting from the cessation of the cardio and pulmonary elements of the acronym. Coincidentally, Your Editor's online dating profile indicates that he's looking for someone who is warm to the touch and has a pulse. Responsive pupils a plus.

IMMUNITY - ALABAMA

Rogers v. Cedar Bluff Volunteer Fire Department

Supreme Court of Alabama - August 29, 2025 - So.3d - 2025 WL 2487426

Administratrix of deceased automobile accident victim's estate brought wrongful-death action against town's volunteer fire department, county association of volunteer fire departments, and volunteer firefighter, alleging that firefighter negligently or wantonly contributed to victim's death after responding to accident scene.

In addition to entering summary judgment for association, the Circuit Court also entered summary judgment for town, determining that department was a political subdivision of town and that, therefore, town, under the Volunteer Service Act (VSA), was immune from liability for the negligence of its volunteer firefighters.

Administratrix appealed after her postjudgment motion to alter, amend, or vacate the summary judgment was denied and the circuit court had entered an order certifying its judgment as final under rule on judgment upon multiple claims or involving multiple parties. The Supreme Court dismissed the appeal. In response to stipulations filed by the parties, the Circuit Court then entered an order of pro tanto dismissal, which dismissed all claims against association, and also entered a final consent judgment in favor of administratrix and against volunteer firefighter. Administratrix appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Volunteer fire department was a political subdivision of town;
- Volunteer firefighter was acting within the scope of his official functions and duties as a volunteer; and
- Even if volunteer firefighter's conduct was wanton, that did not preclude town from having immunity from the wrongful-death claim.

Volunteer fire department was a political subdivision of town and did not exist separately from town, as would support finding under Volunteer Service Act (VSA) that town was vicariously immune from liability for allegedly negligent conduct of volunteer firefighter at scene of automobile accident; department was not a separately incorporated entity, town partially funded department, department's chief reported directly to town's mayor, and state statute expressly authorized municipalities to operate and maintain volunteer fire departments.

Volunteer firefighter was acting within the scope of his official functions and duties as a volunteer when he responded to scene of automobile accident, as required for firefighter to have immunity under Volunteer Service Act (VSA) from wrongful-death claim that administratrix of deceased automobile-accident victim's estate was asserting in regard to firefighter's allegedly negligent conduct at accident scene, even though scene was outside department's service area and department had not dispatched firefighter to scene; firefighter responded to scene after hearing about accident on department-issued radio, and firefighter, after advising that efforts to resuscitate purportedly dead victim should stop, stated over radio that death had occurred.

Even if alleged failure of volunteer firefighter with town's volunteer fire department to provide basic life support and first aid at automobile-accident scene was wanton, which would mean that he lacked immunity under Volunteer Service Act (VSA) from resulting wrongful-death claim, that did not preclude town from having vicarious immunity wrongful-death claim; town could not be liable for the wanton conduct of its servant.

WATER LAW - NEBRASKA

State ex rel. Seeman v. Lower Republican Natural Resources District

Supreme Court of Nebraska - August 22, 2025 - N.W.3d - 319 Neb. 681 - 2025 WL 2423678

Corporate landowner and individual landowner brought separate mandamus actions against board members and general manager of natural resources district (NRD), challenging NRD's cease-an--desist order reducing certified irrigated acres pursuant to Nebraska Ground Water Management and Protection Act as penalty for tampering with flow meters.

The District Court granted mandamus relief and attorney fees to both landowners. Members and general manager appealed and landowners cross-appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- NRD's order was void as to corporate landowner;
- Individual landowner failed to show that NRD's order was void as to him;
- NRD's order was not void as perpetual prohibition against irrigation and upon transfer of title and use of land;
- Individual landowner was not entitled to recover attorney fees; and
- Trial court acted within its discretion in awarding corporate landowner attorney fees.

EMINENT DOMAIN - NORTH CAROLINA

Town of Apex v. Rubin

Supreme Court of North Carolina - August 22, 2025 - S.E.2d - 2025 WL 2427569

Town brought condemnation action to acquire an easement across landowner's property and to connect sewer access to an adjoining parcel.

After town installed sewer line, the Superior Court found the taking was for a private purpose, and entered judgment for landowner, and denied town's motion for reconsideration. Town appealed, and the Court of Appeals affirmed.

Landowner then filed motion to enforce the judgment, and town commenced separate action seeking a declaratory judgment that it had acquired an easement by inverse condemnation when it installed the sewer line.

Landowner filed motion to dismiss town's inverse condemnation action, and town filed motion for relief from judgment in the condemnation action. The Superior Court, Wake denied landowner's motions and granted town's motion for relief from the judgment. Property owner appealed.

In the condemnation action, the Court of Appeals affirmed in part, reversed in part, and vacated in part, while in the inverse condemnation action, the Court of Appeals affirmed in part, vacated in part, and remanded. Town filed petitions for discretionary review and landowner filed conditional petition for review, which were allowed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Prior pending action doctrine precluded town's declaratory judgment action regarding inverse condemnation;
- Court's judgment that taking was for a private purpose revested title in the property to landowner;
- Trial court had inherent authority to order mandatory injunctive relief requiring town to remove sewer pipe; and
- Question of the proper remedy, including whether a mandatory injunction was warranted, required remand to the trial court.

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW - NORTH CAROLINA

Howell v. Cooper

Supreme Court of North Carolina - August 22, 2025 - S.E.2d - 2025 WL 2427597

Bar owners brought action against State, Governor, and other state officials, alleging that the Governor's executive orders issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which closed bars or severely restricted their operations, violated their fundamental rights to earn a living under the "fruits of their labor" and "law of the land" clauses in state Constitution.

The Superior Court denied defendants' motion to dismiss. Defendants appealed. The Court of Appeals affirmed. Defendants' petition for discretionary review was granted.

The Supreme Court held that owners stated a colorable claim for violation of their fundamental right to earn a living under "fruits of their labor" and "law of the land" clauses in the Constitution.

Bar owners' allegations that Governor's executive orders in response to COVID-19 either overtly ordered them to close their facilities or so severely restricted their operations that owners found it no longer practicable to remain open stated a colorable claim against state and state officials for violating owners' fundamental right to earn a living under "fruits of their labor" and "law of the land" clauses in state Constitution; orders to remain closed, and then to not serve alcoholic beverages for onsite consumption and only allowing operation in outdoor seating areas, forced owners to keep doors shuttered either outright or in practice for nine months with no end then in sight.

Bar owners were not required to seek least intrusive remedy to avoid dismissal, based on sovereign immunity, of their claims alleging state and state officials abridged their fundamental right to earn a living under state Constitution's "fruits of their labor" and "law of the land" clauses, when Governor issued executive orders that shuttered their businesses during COVID-19 pandemic; since least intrusive remedy limitation was not incorporated into the test for pleading a valid claim that state action violated a state constitutional right, it could not be the basis for a viable motion to dismiss.

STUDENT HOUSING - SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota Board of Regents v. Madison Housing and Redevelopment Commission

Supreme Court of South Dakota - August 20, 2025 - N.W.3d - 2025 WL 2416180 - 2025 S.D. 50

State university which leased two apartment buildings from city housing and redevelopment commission for student housing brought action against commission, seeking a declaration of its rights under leases and alleging breach of contract regarding university's option to purchase.

Commission counterclaimed for declaratory relief and breach of contract. The Circuit Court granted university's motion for summary judgment, and commission appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Leases did not constitute a single, continuous contract, and thus terms of original lease regarding commission's obligation to maintain reserve account were not still in effect when university exercised its option to purchase, and
- Option to purchase the property "for an amount equal to the then existing mortgage principal and interest balance" referred to the mortgage balance at the time of the exercise of the option.

Multiple leases between state university and city housing and redevelopment commission for two apartment buildings did not constitute a single, continuous contract, and thus terms of original lease regarding commission's obligation to maintain reserve account were not still in effect when university exercised its option to purchase the apartment buildings under lease executed 17 years after original lease; each lease stood on its own, expired on its own terms, and was not dependent upon the execution of another, and addenda to later lease which referenced the original lease were executed to continue the later lease after account dispute arose, and explicitly stated they did not admit any facts and could not be used against the parties.

Student apartment lease between state university and city housing and redevelopment commission which granted university the option to purchase the property "for an amount equal to the then existing mortgage principal and interest balance" referred to the mortgage balance at the time of the exercise of the option, which had been refinanced, rather than the mortgage balance at the time of the original construction of the apartment buildings.

MSRB: Major Trends in the Municipal Securities Primary Market

Read the MSRB Report.

Sept 4, 2025

Tax-Exempt Munis vs. Taxable Bonds: Which Has Higher Returns? - WSJ

There's a clear winner for most people, according to research

Many investors turn to tax-exempt municipal bonds to avoid paying federal and possibly local taxes, sacrificing a bit of yield in the hopes of having a higher after-tax return.

But is this better than investing in taxable bonds and paying taxes on income distributions and capital gains?

Exploring all muni funds in the U.S. over the past 15 years and comparing them with their comparable taxable-bond funds, we find that most investors are better off going with munis. Only in cases where an investor has a low marginal tax rate—below 30%—and is interested in short-term debt does it make sense to invest in taxable funds.

Continue reading.

The Wall Street Journal

By Derek Horstmeyer

Sept. 3, 2025 9:00 am ET

From Stuck to Upgraded: S&P Global Rating’s Insights into Better Municipal Credit Ratings

For cities, towns and villages across the country, a strong credit rating isn’t just a sign of financial health, it’s an important tool for maintaining long term stability, attracting investors and lowering the cost of borrowing (PDF). Local leaders might wonder what separates municipalities with top ratings, often referred to as ‘AAA,’ from those still working toward an upgrade. The criteria used to assess municipal credit worthiness can sometimes feel nuanced. Municipalities may not realize how much weight is placed on their own governance practices, risk management and planning for the future.

Speaking with Daniel Golliday, Associate Director, Local Governments – West at S&P Global Ratings, he explained “issuers with the strongest credit profiles have a lot in common when it comes to management practices and policies. When policies and practices are developed as part of a comprehensive risk management and mitigation plan, they generally enhance a government’s ability to manage through economic cycles and contribute to credit stability.”

Frameworks for Evaluating Local Governments

According to Golliday, S&P uses a specific set of criteria depending on the type of debt being analyzed, which can include general obligation bonds, utility debt, rental housing bonds, tax increment financing and more. Other key agencies, Moody’s Ratings and Fitch Ratings, have similar methodologies they utilize for these purposes. This is with the goal of maintaining consistent application and comparison across ratings in the U.S. and over time. As Golliday noted, “we strive for each rating symbol to represent the same level of credit worthiness for issuers and issues in different sectors at different times.”

S&P local government methodology is centered around a scored framework established for U.S. governments, which has five equally weighted credit factors: economy, financial performance, reserves, liquidity management and debt and liabilities. These factors form what S&P refers to as the individual credit profile.

In addition to these five factors, S&P also analyzes an institutional framework based on the state where the local government resides. This framework, which can be found in table 3-5 of S&P Global Ratings publication Methodology for Rating U.S. Governments, reviews the formal rules, laws, practices and customs of the region focusing on three subfactors: predictability, revenue/expenditure balance and system support and transparency and accountability. Each subfactor includes a criteria table which gives an assessment of 1 to 6 according to where the locality aligns with the standards listed. This could mean that the highest possible rating for a city in one state might be limited compared to a similar city in another state due to strengths or relative weaknesses in their institutional framework.

Key Practices of Top-Rated Municipalities

From Golliday's experience and observations at S&P Global Ratings, the cities that consistently earn and maintain a higher credit rating showcase a set of shared characteristics. While financial performance is an important factor, qualitative factors like a city's management and governance also impact their credit assessment.

Municipalities working towards a higher rating could focus on these practices that Golliday recognized as consistent among highly rated municipalities:

- Structured and balanced budget, including formal reserve policies.
- Strong liquidity management practices.
- Regular economic and revenue updates to identify shortfalls early.
- Establishing rainy day stabilization reserves.
- Prioritizing spending plans and establishing contingency plans.
- Strong long term and contingent liability management.
- Comprehensive multi-year financial planning.
- Formal debt management policy.
- Capital planning process that includes risk mitigation.
- Well defined economic development strategies.
- Common Challenges to Achieving a Rating Upgrade

It might be tempting to assume a healthy fund or balanced budget would guarantee an upgrade for a city. However, Golliday expressed that S&P's analysts take a more holistic view that includes a peer comparison. A municipality could look strong on paper but end up trailing behind its peers due to a lack of formal policies or if the city shows weaker practices in management. The ratings committee will also look at how an issuer compares with regional and national peers, which means that even good finances can be seen as weaker when in a side-by-side review.

Factors that could limit considerations of a rating upgrade can include:

- Use of cash accounting.
- Insufficient contributions to pension plans.
- Weak risk management culture and oversight, including inadequate internal controls.
- Persistent audit findings or unusual financial legal challenges.
- Limited contingency planning.

Additionally, Golliday noted that a limited economic base that is concentrated in one industry, broader macroeconomic conditions, inflation and monetary policy, can impact a local government's credit rating even as they take proactive measures to improve.

Forward Progress

For local leaders hoping to upgrade their credit ratings, the key next steps could include prioritizing governance practices that align with good financial management, plan for the long term, and be proactive. Ratings reflect more than the fiscal condition of your city today: they show what a city has capacity for in the future.

National League of Cities

by Samantha Pedrosa

August 26, 2025

[Fitch Affirms Muni Ratings Tied to U.S. Sovereign Ratings at 'AA+'; Outlook Stable]()

Fitch Ratings – San Francisco – 27 Aug 2025: Fitch Ratings has affirmed at ‘AA+’ the ratings of certain categories of debt directly tied to the creditworthiness of the United States or its related entities, following the affirmation of the United States of America’s Long-Term Foreign and Local Currency Issuer Default Ratings (IDRs) at ‘AA+’/’F1+’ with Stable Rating Outlooks.

Affected debt categories include:

–Pre-refunded bonds whose repayments are wholly dependent on ‘AA+’-rated United States government and agency obligations held in escrow;

–Municipal housing bonds that are primarily secured by mortgage-backed securities guaranteed by Ginnie Mae, Fannie Mae and/or Freddie Mac, whose ratings are currently linked to the U.S. sovereign rating.

[Continue reading.]()

[S&P U.S. Community Colleges Fiscal 2024 Medians: Enrollment Rebounds, But Federal Policies Create Longer-Term Uncertainty]()

Key Takeaways

- Enrollment at U.S. community college districts (CCDs) continues to rebound from COVID-19 pandemic lows; however, enrollment volatility could persist given uncertainty around federal funding and changing immigration policies.
- CCD operating margins have remained healthy without the support of one-time Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) revenues, which temporarily boosted margins from fiscal 2021 through fiscal 2023. However, we expect to see moderating operating performance for fiscal years 2025 and 2026 given continued high expenses.
- Financial resource ratios have remained relatively consistent over the past three years, whereas total debt per full-time equivalent (FTE) has moderated due to growing enrollment.
- While overall debt metrics have remained unchanged in the most recent fiscal year, we have observed a trend of increasing new issuance par amounts, driven by elevated construction costs and prevailing market conditions.

Continue reading.

03-Sep-2025 | 11:55 EDT

Smarter Investing and Savings Through Blockchain Bonds.

Local governments in the United States could save billions of dollars by using a blockchain-based system to issue bonds. SmartLedger Blockchain Solutions Inc. this week published a proposal for its "Strategic Blockchain Infrastructure Matrix" (SBIM) that would introduce massive cost savings and efficiency gains to the municipal bond market, freeing up valuable taxpayer funds for other vital projects like education, health, and public infrastructure.

There is currently $4 trillion worth of debt in the U.S. municipal bond market. However, a percentage of this money, vital for public use, is wasted on inefficiencies in the legacy systems used for issuing and administering the process. The results of this, SmartLedger says, are higher taxes, delayed infrastructure, and limited opportunities for everyday investors to become involved.

Using the SBIM instead would make the municipal bond market more transparent and efficient, compliant by design. It would also introduce more liquidity with narrower spreads and allow fractional ownership, which would mean even small investors could invest directly in their local communities. Blockchain inherently provides a secure and permanent record of transactions that are public and auditable.

Continue reading.

coingeek.com

By Jon Southurst

1 September 2025

Unlocking Inclusive Growth: How Tokenization is Transforming Public Works Investment

Summary

- Tokenization lowers barriers to entry for infrastructure investment by reducing the minimum investment required in bonds.
- Benefits extend beyond financial returns to the community level, where they benefit from improved infrastructure or greater transparency, reducing corruption.
- Challenges remain around viability and accessibility, as not all public works generate revenue, returns can be uncertain and access requires digital literacy and infrastructure.

Continue reading.

webforum.org

Sep 4, 2025

GFOA Explores Creation of Public Finance Innovation Lab, Seeks Visionary Leader to Guide Effort.

This week, GFOA announced that it is exploring the creation of a Public Finance Innovation Lab, a new initiative designed to accelerate how local governments adopt innovative practices and technologies.

To help lead this exploration, GFOA is launching a search for an Innovator-in-Residence, a visionary leader who will shape the Lab's initial strategy, partnerships, and business model.

Read more

Municipal Litigation Lottery.

Growing judgments against cities are helping bust budgets.

One of the underlying narratives of this year's Los Angeles wildfires is that just before the flames broke out, the city had cut fire department funding during a budget crunch. What drove that fiscal emergency? Hundreds of millions in unexpected legal payouts. This year alone, lawsuit liabilities will cost the city more than the wildfires themselves.

But Los Angeles isn't alone. A wave of litigation—unleashed by bad legislation, unfavorable court rulings, and officials' eagerness to settle—is driving liability costs sky-high in cities across the country. New York City paid out nearly $2 billion in claims last fiscal year, a one-year jump of almost $500 million. Chicago's payouts are nearly double what the city budgeted for settlements and judgments. Because most cities are self-insured, it's taxpayers who ultimately foot the bill.

Los Angeles illustrates how a mix of factors, including a state law that makes it easier to sue, has driven payouts to new heights. In 2018, California passed legislation allowing workers to file claims for harassment or a hostile work environment based on a single incident. Backed by a powerful group of plaintiffs' attorneys, the law has triggered a surge of lawsuits against municipalities. Over the past five years, the LAPD alone has had to pay $68.5 million in settlements to its own employees. The city's police chief has accused officers of turning the disciplinary system into a litigation lottery, where even a single reprimand can lead to a harassment claim and a payout.

Continue reading.

city-journal.org

Summer 20225

State Debt: How and Why US States Borrow Money.

Learn the types of public projects that states fund by issuing debt, how states take on debt and why journalists should cover state debt — plus, explore a state-by-state debt database.

When states take on debt, it's usually for large infrastructure projects that may benefit multiple generations — for example, replacing bridges, building hospitals, or expanding highways and transit systems.

"Unlike the federal government, states generally limit the use of debt to support capital projects, not operating expenditures," says Kathryn Vesey White, director of budget process studies at the National Association of State Budget Officers and co-author of a recent paper on federal and state fiscal processes.

News reporters are often assigned to cover big capital projects, and that includes understanding the debt that funds those projects. While interest rates on state debt are low overall, if those rates rose that could lead to tough choices for state leaders, including potentially scaling back or scraping capital investments.

Continue reading.

journalistsresource.org

by Clark Merrefield | September 4, 2025

Big Cities Are Running Deficits. Can States Help Them Balance the Books?

At least 20 of the nation's 25 largest cities face budget gaps in 2026. As cities lean on reserves and costs outpace revenues, experts warn state flexibility will be critical.

Fiscal stress in the U.S.' largest cities is widespread. In a five-month span from December 2024 to April 2025, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington all experienced credit rating downgrades. And while these cities have grabbed most of the headlines for the unique setbacks they have faced—wildfires in Los Angeles and federal cuts in Washington, for example—a diverse mix of cities that includes Dallas; Denver; Houston; and Jacksonville, Florida, also face daunting budget challenges.

Since January, at least 20 of the nation's 25 most populous cities have reported budget gaps for fiscal year 2026—and often beyond—based on a review by The Pew Charitable Trusts of news reports, budget documents, and communications with city officials.

To better understand the causes of these challenges, their severity, and their likelihood of lingering, Pew researchers interviewed national experts, fiscal watchdogs, and city officials. Although the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a serious economic and demographic shock to big cities, the interviews suggest that the budget problems cannot be attributed to an abrupt reversal of fortunes in 2020.

Continue reading.

governing.com

Sept. 4, 2025 • Josh Goodman, Pew Charitable Trusts

Modernize Public Finance with Microsoft AI: Informed Budgeting for Economic Growth

Government finance leaders today face a new budgeting imperative: moving from economic recovery to resilience. As trillions of dollars are spent on economic growth, the public expects transparency from their leaders and wants to see the measurable impact of funds spent.

To make every budgeted dollar count towards economic growth, finance leaders should shift towards informed budgeting. Informed budgeting uses performance metrics, citizen needs, and economic forecasts to allocate resources more effectively. Here's how this approach can benefit public finance agencies and economies:

Continue reading.

Microsoft

By Adam Carter, Senior Product Marketing Manager

Sept 3, 2025

New AI Tools to Cut Workload in City Budgeting.

A set of beta AI features has been introduced to help city finance teams cut down on manual tasks and improve the way municipal budgets are presented to the public.

The tools, developed by ClearGov, focus on reducing repetitive work, supporting compliance with recognised standards, and making complex financial information easier for citizens to understand.

Speaking to *Cities Toda*y, Chris Bullock, CEO of ClearGov, said the developments build on existing digital budgeting platforms that already save local governments "hundreds of hours compared to traditional methods".

"With just a few clicks, they can build a budget book complete with best-practice content and any chart or graph they need," he added. "New features like Narrative Generation and Document Import extend these time savings even further–automatically drafting narratives and making it easy to add external content. By offloading these tedious tasks to AI, Finance Directors can spend less time on manual work and more time focusing on strategic priorities."

Narrative Generation is designed to produce draft explanations to accompany charts and graphs. The aim is to give readers clearer context on financial trends while allowing finance teams to refine and expand on the text.

"Narratives are paired with graphs to provide readers with context around the data and trends they're viewing," Bullock said. "These narratives are essential for translating financial data into something the average citizen can understand–without them, meaningful public engagement is difficult to achieve."

Another feature, Document Import, enables externally created PDFs to be uploaded and automatically converted into a digital format, extracting and embedding tables, text and images into financial reports.

The free Budget Book Evaluator, also in beta, is intended to help municipalities benchmark their reports against US Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) standards. Bullock explained: "The tool provides municipalities with feedback directly aligned to GFOA best practices, helping them identify gaps and opportunities for improvement before submitting for award consideration."

Bullock confirmed that further AI features are in development but declined to provide details.

"Our focus is clear: delivering solutions that make municipalities more productive and help them build trust and support," he said. "AI will play an integral role in how we continue to accomplish this in new and increasingly impactful ways."

cities-today.com

by Jonathan Andrews

06 September 2025

Data Center Developments: 7 Key Considerations - Ballard Spahr

Summary

Whether from the perspective of a developer, user or tenant, debt or equity financing provider, the government, or the broader community, the development of a data center project requires a host of considerations to assess its viability and position the project to become an operational and financial success that complements and enhances the surrounding community.

The Upshot

The attorneys of Ballard Spahr's Data Centers team examine and explain these seven important areas of consideration for data center development projects:

- Zoning and Land Use Entitlements
- Government Affairs Strategy
- Infrastructure
- Energy Regulatory Approvals and Long-Term Capacity
- Staged Development and Scalability
- Financing Structure and Capital Stack
- User/Tenant Commitments and Creditworthiness

The Bottom Line

A careful analysis of each of these considerations is critical when first evaluating a data center project and throughout its development lifecycle, particularly to manage key timing, regulatory, financing, infrastructure, and counter-party risks. Ballard Spahr's Data Centers team brings together the range of legal and business experience across land use, complex real estate, construction and development, finance, energy, and government affairs and public policy necessary to guide stakeholders through every stage of a data center's lifecycle.

Continue reading.

by Bruce F. Johnson, Alicia B. Clark, Dominic J. De Simone, John P. Smolen, Matthew N. McClure, and Stacey C. Tyler

August 25, 2025

Ballard Spahr LLP

Get 100% Federal Support for Developing Infrastructure Asset Financing Strategies.

ften the beginning of a large infrastructure project can be daunting. Local governments regularly know they need to advance a financing plan for the project, but there are preparatory steps that need to be taken to even understand if a project is a candidate for innovative financing like a public-private partnership or if it is a candidate for low-cost federal loans rather than grants. Local governments may want to hire a financing expert or technical advisor to assess the project and offer the local government more informed options. This is where the Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant Program (IFAC) at the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Build America Bureau may be able to help.

Topline Summary

- The Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant Program (IFAC) applications are now open for your community to consider
- IFAC helps communities facilitate and evaluate public-private partnerships in which the private sector partner could assume a greater role in project planning, development, financing, construction, maintenance, and operation
- Grant applications close on **Oct. 1, 2025** at midnight

Continue reading.

National League of Cities

By: Kyle Funk & Brittney D. Kohler

August 29, 2025

What are CDFIs and Why Do They Matter to City Leaders?

Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) are mission-driven establishments with the main goal to support underserved communities in economic development and financial opportunity. This consists of financial assistance to both individuals and businesses through community banks, credit unions, loan funds and venture capital funds.

The Riegle Community Development and Regulatory Improvement Act of 1994 established the CDFI Fund and official CDFI Certification through the Department of Treasury. Certified CDFIs are recognized for their prioritization of promoting community development, specifically providing “financial services in low-income communities and to people who lack access to financing.” Certified

CDFIs are eligible to apply for programs and awards through the CDFI Fund.

While regulated on the federal level, these institutions bridge the gap between public and private even at the local level.

Continue reading.

National League of Cities

By: Safaya Fawzi

September 2, 2025

The Economic Development Paradigm – City-Created Problems and Taxpayer-Funded Fixes

Economic development departments are often celebrated as promoters of prosperity and local employment. Each year, local governments spend tens of billions of dollars on economic development incentives—tax abatements, fee waivers, and direct subsidies—intended to lure private investment. Cities across the nation tout their ability to entice marquee employers, generate buzz with ribbon-cuttings, and implement incentive programs designed to attract private capital. Even small-city councils establish these departments to signal support for economic growth and to boost city revenues.

Yet beneath the surface of city branding, press releases, and fiscal sustainability strategies lies a more troubling reality: economic development departments, far from facilitating genuine development and demonstrating the appropriateness of their spending, entrench inefficiency, distort markets,1 and perpetuate the very obstacles they purport to overcome.

Incentives, Barriers, and the Illusion of Progress

Development incentives—tax rebates, fee waivers, and similar carrots—are meant to attract business investment. However, these incentives negate the tax and fee structures that cities themselves have painstakingly devised, often at great expense and through a protracted political process. For example, cities pay development and impact fee consultants tens of thousands of dollars to analyze and implement fee structures—purportedly based on the true cost of municipal services.2

Continue reading.

California Policy Center

by Mark Moses
Senior Fellow

September 4, 2025

TAX - CALIFORNIA

[Sceper v. County of Trinity]

Court of Appeal, Third District, California - August 8, 2025 - Cal.Rptr.3d - 113 Cal.App.5th 548 - 2025 WL 2267738 - 2025 Daily Journal D.A.R. 7534

After passage of proposition expanding ability of certain taxpayers to transfer base year property values between counties, taxpayer brought action against county, alleging breach of contract and fraud in the inducement in connection with decision of county tax assessor to decline to adjust base year value of property that taxpayer had purchased in one county to base year value of property that taxpayer had purchased in another county for real property tax purposes, notwithstanding settlement agreement between taxpayer and county Board of Supervisors providing that county would allow transfer if it later adopted ordinance or if any change in law required county to accept transfers, and fact that new enactment was a qualifying change in the law under the settlement agreement.

After bench trial, the Superior Court found county in breach of settlement agreement and ordered county to specifically perform agreement and pay taxpayer damages. County appealed.

The Court of Appeal held that:

- Settlement agreement was void and unenforceable, but
- County was not entitled to prevailing-party attorney fees.

County Board of Supervisors lacked authority to grant agreed-upon relief in settlement agreement between taxpayer and Board related to exercise of judgment as to value of property for real property tax purposes by agreeing to transfer of base year values inter-county upon change in law allowing such transfers in certain circumstances, and thus settlement agreement was void and unenforceable; transfer of base year values was a duty assigned to county tax assessor, and Board's supervisory authority over tax assessor did not permit Board to control how tax assessor performed any duties of office of tax assessor.

County was not entitled to prevailing-party attorney fees associated with successful defense on appeal of taxpayer's action alleging breach of contract and fraud in the inducement in connection with settlement agreement by county Board of Supervisors to transfer property base year values inter-county upon change in law allowing such transfers in certain circumstances, although costs were typically awarded to the prevailing party on appeal.

TAX - NEBRASKA

[State ex rel. Douglas County School District No. 66 v. Ewing]

Supreme Court of Nebraska - August 22, 2025 - N.W.3d - 319 Neb. 663 - 2025 WL 2423559

County school district brought action against county treasurer for a writ of mandamus directing treasurer to correct erroneous distributions of payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) funds that resulted in school district being underpaid.

The District Court issued the writ, but later vacated it after city school district, which had been overpaid, moved to intervene. School district renewed its motion for a writ of mandamus. The District Court denied school district's motion, granted treasurer's motion to enforce settlement agreement that was intended to rectify underpayments, and then dismissed the case. School district appealed, and city school district's motion to intervene was granted.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Constitutional and statutory provisions created a ministerial duty to properly distribute PILOT funds;
- Initial writ specifying when, where, how, and in what amounts reimbursements were to be made exceeded treasurer's ministerial duty;
- Renewed motion for writ of mandamus was not foreclosed by settlement agreement;
- Renewed motion for writ of mandamus was not foreclosed by its substance;
- Intervenor city school district was judicially estopped from arguing that other adequate relief was available; and
- School district had no other plain and adequate remedies available.

County treasurer's obligation under relevant constitutional and statutory provisions to properly distribute payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) funds to school districts was a "ministerial" duty enforceable by writ of mandamus, in county school district's suit seeking treasurer's corrections of erroneous distributions that resulted in its underpayment by millions of dollars; both provisions plainly and clearly required treasurer to collect and distribute PILOT funds, and they provided an exact and detailed formula to be followed in calculating amount of such distributions, leaving no room for discretion in the process.

Best Practices in Debt Issuance and Management: GFOA eLearning Course

December 9, 10 & 11 2025 – 1-5 pm ET

This course, focused on GFOA's Best Practices in Debt Management, will help participants better understand how to develop appropriate policies and procedures for issuing debt and overall debt management. In addition to the best practices, the course will feature practical examples, details on recent federal rulemaking, including how it impacts governments, and interactive discussion on the following topics:

- Debt Issuance
- Selecting Municipal Finance Professionals
- Disclosure Practices and Investor Relations
- Financing Instruments and Techniques
- Federal Securities and Tax Laws Applicable to Issuers of Municipal Debt
- Ongoing Debt Management

Who Will Benefit: An entity's debt management program staff or those interested in public finance debt best practices

Learning Objectives:

- Identify key challenges facing government in the area of debt management
- Learn how to develop appropriate debt management policies and procedures based on the best practices
- Review current market conditions, trends, and practices
- Learn how to evaluate if issuing debt is the right option for your local government
- Review the relationship between debt financing and the organization's capital improvement plan
- Learn the different types of debt and financing instruments available for local governments
- Gain an understanding of the bond issuer's responsibilities before, during, and after bonds are

sold, including managing relationships with external resources and disclosure requirements
- Evaluate the different types of fees charged in a bond transaction
- Learn how to comply with continuing disclosure, securities law, and tax law requirements

Member Price: $475.00
Non-member Price: $900.00

Click here to learn more and to register.

State of Ohio: Fitch New Issue Report

The State of Ohio's fiscal 2025 general revenue fund (GRF) revenues exceeded estimates by $1.2 billion, following a $1.0 billion shortfall in fiscal 2024. The state's 'AAA' Long-Term Issuer Default Rating reflects high financial resilience, robust fiscal reserves and superior budget management.

Access Report

Fri 05 Sep, 2025

A Small Wisconsin Town Bet Big on a Biodigester. Now the Project Is Defaulting on Its Loans.

Pitched as a boon to small towns, the biodigester financed $41.5 Million via the town of Gillett, promising jobs and future tax revenue.

Zahn's Farms LLC, an approximately 11,500-head dairy operation in Gillett, Wisconsin, is the site of WI RNG Hub North, a manure methane digester project funded using $41.5 million worth of tax-exempt municipal bonds financed by the town. On June 1, the project, developed and run by Aerogy LLC, missed their $1.7 million principal payment, raising questions about the fate of the project and its impact on Gillett.

Methane digesters, like the one at Zahn's Farms, are frequently pitched as climate-smart solutions to one of the biggest environmental critiques of animal farming: the emissions and pollution caused by manure. According to the non-profit World Resources Institute, manure from cows and pigs constitutes one percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Biodigesters are a technology for processing the manure by allowing microbes to break down the organic material. The result is biogas, a mix of primarily methane and carbon dioxide, that is touted by the booming biogas industry as renewable energy.

Continue reading.

sentientmedia.org

by Nina B. Elkadi

August 27, 2025

[Chicago Public Schools’ Debt Has Hit Over $28,000 per Student. Here’s What That Means.]

Chicago Public Schools’ outstanding debt is roughly the same size as its annual budget: almost $10 billion. The district owes more per student than it spends per pupil in many of its schools.

Its massive obligations appear even more sobering compared with other cities.

Among the 25 largest school districts by student enrollment, CPS has the third-most outstanding debt, according to a Chalkbeat analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data for fiscal year 2023, the most recent available. That data shows CPS owes more than $28,000 per student, up from roughly $17,000 in 2013.

Continue reading.

chalkbeat.org

By Mila Koumpilova | August 26, 2025, 2:34pm PDT

Chicago Schools Plan First Bond Sale After Divisive Budget Vote.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Chicago’s junk-rated public school district intends to sell an undisclosed amount of bonds for capital projects.
- The district is considering the issuance of general obligation, tax-exempt bonds the week of Sept. 9, but may change the financing plan based upon market conditions.
- The budget includes more than $600 million in new debt to pay for capital projects and to reimburse the district for past infrastructure spending.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Shruti Singh

September 2, 2025

Chicago School Board Passes Budget Without Controversial Loan.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

The Chicago Board of Education approved a $10.25 billion budget that makes a pension payment to the city contingent on additional state and local money.
The budget cuts costs at the central office, expects a greater surplus from the city’s economic development funds, and taps into a $25 million donation given by MacKenzie Scott.

The board voted 12 to seven to approve the spending plan, which is designed to close a $734 million deficit for the fiscal year that started July 1.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Business

By Shruti Singh

August 29, 2025

Chicago Schools CFO Makes Last Ditch Plea Against Risky Loan.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Chicago Public Schools' Chief Financial Officer Miroslava Mejia Krug argues that more borrowing is a bad idea for the district.
- Krug says including an additional $200 million loan in the budget will result in an immediate hit to the District's credit rating and increase the cost of borrowing.
- The district is trying to close a $734 million budget hole, while the city is facing a roughly $1 billion hole, and the board of education is scheduled to vote on a budget.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Shruti Singh

August 27, 2025

Casino in NY Catskills Bets on $561 Million High-Yield Muni Deal.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- A local economic development agency in upstate New York plans to borrow $561 million of high-yield debt to buy part of a struggling casino resort in the Catskills.
- The purchase will put the resort on firmer financial footing, allowing it to retain jobs and consider future developments, according to Meghan Taylor, a spokesperson for the resort.
- The new bonds are unrated and backed by revenues from the non-gaming parts of the resort, with warnings outlined in the bond documents including the possibility of bankruptcy and liquidity issues for the debt in the secondary market.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Erin Hudson and Aashna Shah

August 25, 2025

High-Yield Muni Deal for Casino in Upstate New York Is Delayed.

A high-yield municipal bond transaction that would fund the purchase of businesses related to a casino in upstate New York has been delayed, people familiar with the matter said.

The unrated deal, managed by KeyBanc Capital Markets, was expected to price on Aug. 27, according to investor roadshow documents. The transaction has been postponed for the hiring of legal counsel to advise investors in the transaction, said the people, who were not authorized to speak publicly because the matter is private. The move is known in the market as the hiring of purchaser's counsel.

Proceeds of the sale are expected to fund the purchase of the non-gaming businesses at Genting Group's Resorts World Catskills in Sullivan County, New York. The bonds are issued by the Sullivan County Resort Facilities Local Development Corp., a not-for-profit organization created under New York's economic-development law.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Erin Hudson and Aashna Shah

August 26, 2025

BART Plans $930 Million Muni Bond Sale as Budget Deficits Loom.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- San Francisco Bay Area Transit District is selling $930 million of bonds to improve infrastructure and refinance outstanding debt.
- The proceeds from the sale are intended to help fund a $3.5 billion system renewal project that includes 90 miles of track upgrades and control system replacements.
- BART is looking for fresh funding sources, including a ballot measure in 2026 that would impose a new local sales tax, as it faces a projected annual budget deficit of $400 million.

One of California's largest public transit systems is tapping the municipal bond market as it contends with a looming fiscal cliff created by dwindling federal aid and ridership that's stuck at about half its pre-pandemic level.

San Francisco Bay Area Transit District is selling $930 million of bonds to improve infrastructure and refinance outstanding debt, according to bond documents on MuniOS. The deal is set to price for retail investors on Tuesday.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Maxwell Adler and Sri Taylor

August 26, 2025

[BART's $930M Bond Sale: A Microcosm of Municipal Bond Market Risks and Opportunities]

Overview

– BART’s $930M 2025 bond sale highlights municipal market risks amid fiscal strain, declining ridership, and expiring federal aid.

– Moody’s downgraded BART from Aaa to Aa1, exposing gaps between credit ratings and operational risks like political uncertainty and revenue volatility.

– Investors face a dispersed market: high-rated bonds offer tax advantages but require deeper scrutiny of liquidity, debt coverage, and contingency plans.

– Strategic diversification, active management, and fiscal policy monitoring are critical as municipalities navigate post-pandemic fiscal headwinds.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Clyde Morgan

Tuesday, Aug 26, 2025 2:40 pm ET

Municipal Bond Risks Amid Fiscal Mismanagement: Navigating Governance Failures and Systemic Defaults

Summary

– Municipal bond markets face systemic risks from governance failures and fiscal mismanagement, highlighted by Puerto Rico’s PREPA and higher education defaults.

– Distressed credits like TSFC bonds (Cusip 88880NAU3) show declining revenues and structural weaknesses, trading at steep discounts despite no full default.

– Rising municipal yields (30-year bonds >5.5%) reflect increased default risks, while policy shifts and volatility demand active hedging via CDS, futures, and duration management.

– Investors must prioritize credit discipline, sector diversification, and liquidity analysis to balance income potential with capital preservation in a destabilized market.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Theodore Quinn

Wednesday, Aug 27, 2025 2:17 pm ET

[College Plans Sale of Manhattan Real Estate to CUNY to Pay Debt.]

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- A struggling college in New York City is planning to sell its Manhattan campus to The City University of New York, providing a reprieve for its bondholders.
- CUNY intends to purchase the real estate for $40 million, with proceeds of the sale to be used to redeem a portion of Metropolitan College’s outstanding bonds and pay past debt service.
- The sale still needs approval from entities including Metropolitan College bondholders and the school’s accreditor, according to a regulatory filing.

A struggling college in New York City is planning to sell its Manhattan campus to The City University of New York, providing a reprieve for its bondholders.

CUNY intends to purchase the real estate located in the Financial District from the Metropolitan College of New York for $40 million, according to a regulatory filing dated Aug. 26.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg

By Amanda Albright and Elizabeth Rembert

August 27, 2025

Fitch Rates Texas Water Development Board's $809 Million GO Bonds 'AAA'; Outlook Stable.

Fitch Ratings – New York – 28 Aug 2025: Fitch Ratings has assigned ‘AAA’ ratings to the following state of Texas general obligation (GO) bonds to be issued by and on behalf of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB):

–$491.53 million water financial assistance bonds, series 2025E;

–$317.065 million water financial assistance bonds, taxable series 2025F.

The bonds are expected to be sold via negotiation on Sept. 25, 2025. Proceeds will finance water conservation and infrastructure projects.

The Rating Outlook is Stable.

Continue reading.

[Muni Investors Brace for ‘Bumpy’ Fall Despite Expected Rate Cuts.]

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Municipal bond investors face an uphill battle this fall season due to technical headwinds, including a deluge of new state and local government debt.
- Roughly $10.5 billion of new issuance is expected over the next 30 days, with actual supply likely to be much greater, while local governments pay bondholders $22 billion in redemptions this month.
- Retail investors could help the muni market, as they are expected to return from summer vacations and put money to work, potentially driven by cuts from the Federal Reserve or volatility in stocks.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Elizabeth Rembert

September 8, 2025

[Munis Rise as Bonds Rally on Job Data Cementing Rate-Cut Bets.]

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Municipal bonds rallied after weaker-than-expected job growth raised expectations that the Federal Reserve will start lowering interest rates this month to support the economy.
- Yields on top-rated state and local government debt fell alongside those on Treasuries, with rates on 10-year benchmark tax-exempt bonds dropping to 3.05%, the lowest since April.
- Investors now see a quarter-point rate cut at the Fed’s Sept. 16-17 policy gathering as a sure thing and anticipate a total of three such cuts this year, according to futures contracts.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Danielle Moran and Aashna Shah

September 5, 2025

[BlackRock, Nuveen Set to Exit Puerto Rico Utility Debt Deal.]

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- The debt-cutting plan for Puerto Rico’s power utility is at risk of falling apart after investors including BlackRock Financial Management threatened to pull out of the deal.
- The Trump administration’s move to fire nearly all of the board that oversees the island’s finances

may lead to a new board that is more favorable to creditors, rather than seeking the best outcome for the commonwealth.
- The investor group will end its support for the financial oversight board's existing restructuring plan unless it is confirmed by a bankruptcy court by Oct. 1, according to a filing.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Michelle Kaske

August 26, 2025

2025 Affordable Housing Tax Changes: Understanding LIHTC, Bonds, OZ and 45L Deadlines

With the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) on July 4, 2025, Congress enacted the most significant expansion of housing incentives in more than two decades. For developers, investors and capital providers, this means new tools, more flexibility and a broader opportunity set.

At the heart of the legislation are updates to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program, alongside permanent extensions to the Opportunity Zone (OZ) and New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) incentives. Analysts estimate these changes could support the creation of up to 1.2 million additional affordable housing units over the next decade. According to Novogradac, the LIHTC enhancements alone could finance 1.22 million new affordable rental homes between 2026 and 2035.

Opportunity doesn't always mean simplicity, though. These changes introduce new tools, but also new complexities.

Continue reading.

northmarq.com

September 1, 2025

Novogradac: A Deeper Dive into Opportunity Zones 2.0

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), signed into law July 4, made the opportunity zone (OZ) incentive a permanent part of the Internal Revenue Code. In this episode of the Tax Credit Tuesday podcast, Michael Novogradac, CPA, and Novogradac partner Jason Watkins, CPA, review the changes to OZs instituted by the OBBBA. They explore the Opportunity Zones (OZ) 2.0 Mapping Tool, which Novogradac launched Aug. 19. Novogradac and Watkins also discuss the emphasis on investing in rural areas for the next set of OZs, nominations which begin July 1, 2026. Finally, the pair the new reporting requirements for OZs and the upcoming "dead zone" for investments, which is projected by some to occur next year.

Watch video.

Published by Michael J. Novogradac, CPA on Aug. 26, 2025, 12:15 p.m.

[Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts Financing Authority (CA): Fitch New Issue Report]

The district's leverage was exceptionally low at 4.0x in fiscal 2024 and is projected to peak at 5.6x in fiscal 2026. The district's financial profile remains very strong, with rates unchanged since fiscal 2020 and planned capital needs funded on a pay-go basis.

[Access Report]

Thu 28 Aug, 2025 – 12:02 PM ET

[Fitch Ratings Expects No Immediate Effect on State of Nevada Ratings from Cyberattack.]

Fitch Ratings-New York/San Francisco-29 August 2025: Fitch Ratings does not currently anticipate any immediate effect on the state of Nevada's credit ratings from a recent cyberattack that continues to disrupt state operations, given the state's strong fiscal position and prudent management practices including a pre-existing cyber incident response plan. Nevada has been experiencing a ransomware-based cybersecurity attack since Sunday, August 24. However, with many details pending, Fitch will monitor the situation for material financial or operational developments.

Nevada's IT staff detected unusual activity on its network late Sunday night, which it later confirmed as a cyber breach. The attack, suspected to be a ransomware attack, has had a widespread effect on state operations. Upon detecting the breach, state officials immediately activated their established cybersecurity incident response plan, including containing the threat by isolating systems and taking them offline.

Many state offices have been closed since Sunday and systems remain offline. However, some agencies are beginning to resume operations to continue providing some service and benefits. The state notes that some data has been accessed and moved outside of the state's network but details on the type of data at risk are still being analyzed. Based on other entities' experience with cyber incidents, full resolution may take weeks.

Nevada's 'AA+' Issuer Default Rating (IDR) and GO rating reflect the state's well-managed and low liability position, strong revenue and expenditure frameworks, and historically responsive financial practices, as well as its success in managing rapid population growth and development. The Rating Outlook is Stable. Fitch anticipates Nevada will maintain financial resilience in the face of costs arising from the cyberattack.

Cyberattacks that cause system outages may disrupt operations, potentially challenging liquidity and resilience. Additionally, cyber breaches where information is stolen can elevate cost and litigation risk. Fitch currently views Nevada as well-positioned to mitigate these risks, though details of the extent of the cyber incident are still being investigated. Nevada is working with internal and external experts, as well as the appropriate federal authorities, to resolve the issue.

The cyberattack against Nevada highlights historic increases in the number, severity and frequency of cyber assaults for public sector issuers, as well as the increasing sophistication of threat actors. In rare cases, cyberattacks have led to downgrades for U.S. Public Finance issuers, often when those issuers were already facing fiscal or management challenges.

Why Active ETFs Are Winning the Municipal Bond Race.

Thanks to higher yields and rising uncertainty in the equity markets, investors have once again started to consider bonds for their portfolios. Leading the way has been the municipal bond market. Interest in new fund launches and fund flows into muni ETFs has surged over the last year as investors look to realize lower taxes and high-income potential. But not all muni ETFs are the same. And investors may be leaving some returns on the table if they choose a passive ETF for their muni exposure.

Active is the way to go.

That's according to a new report by Goldman Sachs. It turns out that active ETFs are the best vehicle for muni bond exposure. Thanks to several benefits inherent to active management, investors can achieve better outcomes in an active muni ETF than by simply holding the index. For investors, the choice is clear: active ETFs for muni bonds.

Continue reading.

dividend.com

by Aaron Levitt

Aug 28, 2025

The Strategic Case for Extending Duration in Municipal Bonds Amid Escalating Treasury Volatility and Trump-Era Uncertainty

Summary

– Municipal bonds offer 4.73% tax-exempt yield (6.1% effective return) via NMI ETF, outperforming Treasuries by 200 bps in 10–20-year durations.

– Declining Treasury bid-to-cover ratios (2.35–2.53) and flattening yield curves highlight structural fragility, pushing investors toward short-duration assets.

– Duration extension in munis leverages 50 bps steeper yield curves and inflation hedges, with lower equity correlation (0.35) amid Trump-era policy risks.

– Strategic blends of long-duration munis (3.96% yield-to-worst) and short-maturity ETFs like MEAR (3.30%) balance yield capture with risk mitigation.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Nathaniel Stone

Thursday, Sep 4, 2025 5:40 am ET

Munis Rise as Bonds Rally on Job Data Cementing Rate-Cut Bets.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Municipal bonds rallied after weaker-than-expected job growth raised expectations that the Federal Reserve will start lowering interest rates this month to support the economy.
- Yields on top-rated state and local government debt fell alongside those on Treasuries, with rates on 10-year benchmark tax-exempt bonds dropping to 3.05%, the lowest since April.
- Investors now see a quarter-point rate cut at the Fed's Sept. 16-17 policy gathering as a sure thing and anticipate a total of three such cuts this year, according to futures contracts.

Municipal bonds rallied after weaker-than-expected job growth raised expectations that the Federal Reserve will start lowering interest rates this month to support the economy.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Business

By Danielle Moran and Aashna Shah

September 5, 2025

Municipal Bond Risk in Politically Polarized, High-Crime U.S. Cities: Navigating Fiscal and Governance Challenges

Summary

– Political polarization and high crime rates in U.S. cities like Memphis and Detroit amplify municipal bond risks, with partisan narratives skewing public perception despite mixed crime data.

– Federal troop deployments and militarized policing strategies introduce fiscal uncertainties, while racial disparities in majority-Black cities like Detroit raise borrowing costs due to systemic inequities.

– Studies show political gridlock increases bond yields by 7.81 basis points per polarization unit, with governance instability and inconsistent policing further destabilizing markets in polarized urban centers.

– Investors must assess beyond crime statistics, prioritizing local leadership dynamics, policy coherence, and racial equity impacts to mitigate risks in politically fragmented high-crime municipalities.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Albert Fox

Friday, Sep 5, 2025 5:06 pm ET

Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority (OK): Fitch New Issue Report

OMPA plans to add 124 MW of generating capacity over the next five years to meet higher reserve requirements. Fitch Ratings expects disciplined rate adjustments to keep coverage ratios above 1.2x and moderate leverage below 10x.

Access Report

Fri 29 Aug, 2025 – 2:27 PM ET

Muni ETF Inflows Are Beating Mutual Funds by Two-to-One in 2025

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Municipal bond exchange-traded funds drew more than double the amount of cash this year compared to traditional mutual funds focused on the asset class.
- Muni ETFs have nabbed around $19.6 billion in net inflows year-to-date, compared to $8 billion for mutual funds, according to data compiled by CreditSights Inc.
- Demand for municipal-bond ETFs has grown steadily since their introduction in 2007, with their popularity attributed to factors such as lower costs and the potential for diversification.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Aashna Shah

September 2, 2025

GFOA: GAAP Update Early Discounts Available

GFOA's Annual *GAAP Update* is a must for public sector accountants and auditors. Get up to speed on key GASB changes, including GASB 103 and updates on 102, 104, and upcoming standards. Plus, don't miss a preview of GASB 105, *Subsequent Events,* and a Special Feature on Accounting and Financial Reporting for Capital Assets.

Join us online November 6 or December 17 to earn 4 CPE credits and stay audit-ready. Register early to save!

[Read more](#)

[Ohio’s Growing Non-Profit Healthcare Bond Market: A High-Yield, Low-Risk Opportunity for Municipal Investors?](#)

Summary

– Ohio’s non-profit hospitals, including the Cleveland Clinic, issued high-rated bonds (Aa2/AA) in 2025, attracting investors with strong credit metrics and $14.5B in unrestricted revenue.

– Robust market demand for these bonds persists, driven by infrastructure spending plans and alignment with ESG goals, despite rising Medicaid risks and 2024 sector downgrades.

– Investors must weigh Medicaid revenue vulnerabilities, labor costs, and macroeconomic risks against yields and geographic diversification in Ohio’s healthcare ecosystem.

– The bonds offer a nuanced opportunity: high yield with investment-grade safety for discerning investors who assess individual issuers’ resilience to systemic pressures.

[Continue reading.](#)

ainvest.com

by Eli Grant

Thursday, Aug 28, 2025 8:48 pm ET

[3 Municipal Bond Funds for Reliable Income and Stability.](#)

The debt securities category will always be the first choice for risk-averse investors because this class of instruments provides a regular income at low levels of risk. Income from regular dividends helps to ease the pain caused by plunging stock prices.

When considering the safety of capital invested, municipal bond mutual funds are second only to those investing in government securities. In addition, interest income earned from these securities is exempt from federal taxes and, in many cases, from state taxes.

[Continue reading.](#)

Zacks Equity Research

August 28, 2025

[Willkie Represents JPMorgan in Municipal Bond Commodity Prepayment](#)

Transaction.

Willkie represented the commodities business of JPMorgan Chase & Co. in its first municipal bond commodity prepayment transaction using a special purpose vehicle – Pierpont Energy Prepay 1.

The transaction involved the issuance of $700 million of municipal bonds by The Black Belt Energy Gas District, the proceeds of which were used by Black Belt to prepay Pierpont Energy Prepay 1 for the delivery of natural gas over a 30 year period. The gas delivered to Black Belt is then sold to the Louisiana Community Development Utility Commission, which in turn sells the gas to BASF Intertrade Corporation.

In connection with its delivery obligation over the 30 year period, Pierpont Energy entered into a natural gas swap with BP Energy Company, a funding agreement with National Western Life Insurance Company, and a natural gas purchase, sale and service agreement with J.P. Morgan Ventures Energy Corporation. The municipal bonds were assigned a rating of A- by S&P. The transaction priced and closed in July.

The Willkie team was led by partner John R. Thomas and associate Kara Ryczek.

August 27, 2025

Fitch Affirms Oklahoma Muni Power Authority's Revs at 'A'; Outlook Stable.

Fitch Ratings – Austin – 27 Aug 2025: Fitch Ratings has assigned an ‘A’ rating to Oklahoma Municipal Power Authority’s (OMPA) $328.1 million Power Supply System Revenue and Refunding Bonds, Series 2025A.

Proceeds of series 2025A and the anticipated issuance of Power Supply System Revenue Bonds Series 2026A will fund capital expenditures including new generating capacity, finance the refunding and purchase of certain outstanding debt maturities for debt service savings and refinance an outstanding line of credit balance. The bonds are expected to price on Sep. 16, 2025.

Fitch has also affirmed OMPA’s Long-Term Issuer Default Rating (IDR) and $438.8 million outstanding power supply system revenue bonds (series 2014B, 2016A, 2019A, 2021A and 2021B) at ‘A’.

Fitch does not rate the authority’s $70 million of outstanding series 2010B revenue bonds.

The Rating Outlook is Stable.

Continue reading.

Municipal Bond Income and Tax-Advantaged Yield in a High-Rate Environment: AFB's Strategic Dividend Increase and Its Implications for 2025 Investors

Overview

– AllianceBernstein's AFB raised monthly dividends by 17.6% to $0.0466/share in August 2025, enhancing income for investors in a high-rate environment.

– The fund allocates 75% to investment-grade municipal bonds and 25% to high-yield municipals, balancing risk while leveraging tax-exempt yields across 37 states.

– AFB's 4.73% forward yield outperforms corporate bonds after-tax for high-bracket investors, with active duration management and geographic diversification mitigating rate volatility.

– Strategic leverage (48.58% of assets) amplifies returns but increases sensitivity to rate cuts, requiring investors to weigh risk tolerance against potential capital appreciation.

– AFB's disciplined approach to tax-advantaged income and active management positions it as a resilient option amid fiscal uncertainty and shifting monetary policy in 2025.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Marcus Lee

Tuesday, Aug 26, 2025 11:36 am ET

---

2 ETF Options as Muni & Corporate Bonds See Global Appeal.

Muni and corporate bonds trading activity has been reaching record levels through the first half of 2025 at the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE). This certainly speaks to the attractiveness of both, which offer yield and strong fundamentals in the current market landscape.

According to data from ICE, corporate bonds hit a national volume of $120 billion, while muni bonds totaled $109 billion. The rise represented an increase of 20% and 35%, respectively, from the previous year.

"We're pleased to see the strong activity in the first half of the year, which marks the fourth consecutive year of volume increases in our corporate and municipal bond markets," said Peter Borstelmann, president of ICE Bonds. ICE has been expanding its trading platforms, while building out its institutional and wealth management network. That's a potential window into the activity of institutional and accredited investors regarding muni and corporate bonds.

Fixed income investors looking to diversify their portfolios that mainly hold Treasuries may want to consider either munis, corporates, or both. Active funds have been garnering a lot of attention this year. Vanguard has a pair of ETFs worth looking at for those who want simple, core exposure to either munis or corporates in a cost-effective investment vehicle.

Continue reading.

etfdb.com

by Ben Hernandez

Aug 26, 2025

- **Ed. Note**: We will be off next for memorializing purposes. Be back 9/9.
- California, Other States Begin to Implement New 25% Test for 4% LIHTC and Bond Developments
- Local Governments Could Be Flying Blind as Federal Data Disappears.
- How AI Helped a California City Insure Against Flood Risk.
- Identifying Component Units: GFOA Webinar
- And Finally, Peanut Abutter Allergy is brought to us this week by *Town of Concord v. Rasmussen*, which concerns a private road and those who own property abutting that road, defined by the court as, "abutters." We are determined to repopularize this term. Where better to begin than with the next generation? Consequently, we kindly request that you dedicate this upcoming holiday weekend to spreading the word. Kindly – yet emphatically – inform all yutes in your general vicinity that siblings in the next bedroom are abutters. That all occupied school desks are infested with abutters. That anyone in the back seat with them is also an abutter. Neglect not to inform them that their parents are, whilst abed, bona fide abutters. Use your worst judgment. Just spread the word. Abutter.

IMMUNITY - FLORIDA

Huggins v. School District of Manatee County

United States Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit - August 15, 2025 - F.4th - 2025 WL 2374371

Community member, who was allegedly removed from public school-board meeting at which he intended to speak about approval of funds for charter school, brought state-court action against public school board and, in their individual and official capacities, school superintendent, board's chief of security, board's communications director, and city police officer for speech restriction and retaliation under the First Amendment, and for violations of the Fourth Amendment, the equal-protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, the equal-benefit clause of § 1981, and state laws.

Following removal, defendants moved to dismiss for failure to state a claim. Member moved to amend his complaint. The United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida denied motion to amend and granted motion to dismiss as to federal claims and declined to exercise supplemental jurisdiction over state-law claims. Member appealed.

The Court of Appeals held that:

- Superintendent was not entitled to qualified immunity from member's First Amendment claims;
- Member stated First Amendment speech-restriction claim against superintendent;
- Member stated First Amendment retaliation claim against superintendent;
- Chief of security and police officer were entitled to qualified immunity from member's First Amendment claims;
- Communications director was entitled to qualified immunity from community member's First Amendment retaliation claim;
- Member failed to show that board had opportunity to review superintendent's decision to remove him from board meeting and agreed with both decision and decision's basis, precluding member's Monell claim against board based on ratification theory; and

- Member was not entitled to leave to amend.

ROADS - MASSACHUSETTS

Town of Concord v. Rasmussen

Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, Suffolk - August 15, 2025 - N.E.3d - 2025 WL 2370204

Town brought action against abutters of disputed road, seeking declaration that public had access and use rights to road.

Following bench trial, the Land Court Department entered judgment in favor of town. Abutters appealed. The Appeals Court modified judgment and affirmed. Abutters sought further appellate review, which was granted.

The Supreme Judicial Court held that:

- Direct, as opposed to circumstantial, evidence documenting that a public way was laid out is not required to support a finding that a particular way is public on basis of layout by a public authority in accordance with statute;
- Evidence was sufficient to support finding that particular portion of road was properly laid out and thus was a public way;
- County commissioners' adjudication that road should be a "private way," pursuant to statute providing for adjudication of way as a private way whenever common convenience and necessity no longer required such way to be maintained in a condition reasonably safe and convenient for travel, did not eliminate public access to road but rather simply removed the requirement that town maintain the road; and
- Trial court acted within its discretion in excluding abutters' proffered evidence as to status of other public roads which had been adjudicated "private ways" pursuant to same statutory provision as was at issue in instant case.

CONTRACTS - MISSISSIPPI

Retro Metro, LLC v. City of Jackson by and through City Council

United States Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit - August 7, 2025 - F.4th - 2025 WL 2249348

Commercial property lessor brought breach-of-contract action against city which leased the property after city purportedly terminated the lease.

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi granted summary judgment to city. Lessor appealed.

The Court of Appeals held that:

- Under Mississippi law, lease was not sufficiently placed in minutes of city council and thus, pursuant to "minutes rule," was not an enforceable contract;
- Mississippi law rather than federal law applied to determination of whether city was judicially estopped from asserting that lease was invalid based on "minutes rule";
- Under Mississippi law as predicted by Court of Appeals, city's admission in prior litigation between same parties that city had entered into lease could not judicially estop city from arguing that lease

was invalid based on "minutes rule"; and

- Under Mississippi law as predicted by Court of Appeals, the "minutes rule" is not an affirmative defense that can be waived but rather goes to the issue of whether a contract was ever formed in the first place.

NEGLIGENCE - NEW YORK

Harris v. New York City Transit Authority

Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Second Department, New York - August 13, 2025 - N.Y.S.3d - 2025 WL 2326682 - 2025 N.Y. Slip Op. 04635

Subway passenger brought action against city transit authority to recover damages for injuries that she allegedly sustained after slipping and falling on snow and ice that accumulated on uncovered staircase at subway station.

The Supreme Court, Kings County, denied transit authority's motion for summary judgment dismissing the complaint. Transit authority appealed.

The Supreme Court, Appellate Division, held that pursuant to storm-in-progress rule, transit authority was not liable for passenger's injuries.

At the time that subway passenger slipped and fell on snow and ice that accumulated on uncovered staircase at subway station, less than five hours had passed since the end of an extraordinary snowstorm, and thus, pursuant to storm-in-progress rule, city transit authority was not liable for injuries that passenger allegedly sustained as a result of her fall.

MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE - OHIO

Huron v. Kisil

Supreme Court of Ohio - August 20, 2025 - N.E.3d - 2025 WL 2404306 - 2025-Ohio-2921

City charged property owner with violating city ordinances requiring properties to be maintained and kept in clean, safe, and sanitary condition.

The Municipal Court granted property owner's motion to dismiss two of the six counts as unconstitutionally vague. City appealed. The Sixth District Court of Appeals reversed, and certified conflict. Property owner filed notice of certified conflict and notice of appeal.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Alleged condition of owner's property clearly fell within proscriptions of city ordinance requiring vacant structures and land be maintained in clean, safe, secure and sanitary condition, and
- Alleged condition of owner's property clearly fell within proscriptions of city ordinance requiring exterior property be maintained in clean, safe and sanitary condition.

IMMUNITY - UTAH

[Armenta v. Unified Fire Authority]

Supreme Court of Utah - August 7, 2025 - P.3d - 2025 WL 2265589 - 2025 UT 26

Patient, who suffered a heart attack one week after being treated for chest pain and shortness of breath by emergency medical technicians (EMTs) for governmental entity who told him everything looked normal, brought negligence action against governmental entity, alleging that failure of EMTs to properly diagnose his condition caused him injuries.

The Third District Court granted governmental entity's motion to dismiss, and patient appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- As matter of first impression, having immunized entities engaged in activities involving emergencies of certain type, what legislature had in mind when it enacted the "providing emergency medical assistance" exception to waiver of immunity under Utah Governmental Immunity Act (UGIA) is government's ability to respond to those types of emergencies, and
- As matter of first impression, the "providing emergency medical assistance" exception to waiver of immunity under UGIA did not apply.

[US Banks Cut Back Muni Exposure to Lowest Since Financial Crisis.]

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- US banks hold nearly $295 billion of municipal securities and around $190 billion in direct loans from municipalities, making up about 1.18% of total bank assets.
- Banks remain "highly diffident" buyers of municipals, according to MMA strategists led by Matt Fabian, despite attractive valuations and a low default rate.
- Banks and insurance companies have scaled back municipal-bond purchases, says Shannon Rinehart, co-head of municipal investments at Columbia Threadneedle, and Eric Kazatsky, a client portfolio manager at MacKay Municipal Managers, attributes their absence to uncertainty around federal tax policy.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Aashna Shah

August 20, 2025

[S&P: U.S. Budget Bill Is Negative For Health Care Services Although Financial Impact Will Likely Unfold Over Time And Vary By State And Issuer]

Key Takeaways

- The recently passed U.S. tax and spending bill's provisions, largely targeting the Medicaid program, are generally negative for health care service providers, although the financial effects will occur over time.

- The most impactful changes for the sector are likely reduced individual insurance coverage and cuts to supplemental payments.
- Not-for-profit acute health care providers could be more affected by the changes, but the legislation will create headwinds for all health care service companies to varying degrees.

Overview

S&P Global Ratings believes the recently passed U.S. tax and spending bill, particularly provisions tied to Medicaid (the joint state- and federal-funded program for low-income individuals that is managed largely at the state level), will have more impact on the not-for-profit acute health care sector compared with for-profit health care services because a greater percentage of the issuers are exposed to a higher Medicaid revenue mix.

We view not-for-profit health care organizations that could be more exposed to changes from the recent bill to include safety-net providers, district hospitals, children's hospitals, and smaller stand-alone providers. However, there could be pockets of exposure for other not-for-profit acute health care organizations, as well as specific for-profit health care service providers that incorporate a more diverse set of health care service organizations beyond acute-care hospitals.

Continue reading.

19-Aug-2025 | 15:51 EDT

Medicaid Cuts 'Blow Up' Financing Options for Rural Hospitals.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Columbia Threadneedle Investments says Medicaid cuts could push rural hospital systems out of the municipal bond market, according to Shannon Rinehart, the firm's co-head of muni investments.
- Rural hospitals depend on bond-market financing to build new facilities, upgrade existing property or buy new equipment, but investors have been getting nervous about the sector since Republicans passed their budget bill cutting about $1 trillion from Medicaid.
- The National Rural Health Association says the legislation will limit access to care for all rural patients by ending their health-care coverage and putting financial strain on the facilities they rely on.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Elizabeth Rembert

August 22, 2025

How AI Helped a California City Insure Against Flood Risk.

Floods are frequent, unpredictable and expensive. Fremont, Calif., is one of the first cities

to secure flood insurance designed using AI.

In Brief:

- A series of damaging floods in recent months has brought financial hardship to local governments.
- Scientists are developing new maps and tools that allow insurers to cover entire areas for disasters such as flooding, rather than coverage for specific buildings.
- A Bay Area city is among the first to buy this form of insurance, which is driven by insights from artificial intelligence.

Sitting high and dry on a hill, the police complex in Fremont, Calif., was the one municipal facility with flood insurance. This was because the hill was technically in a flood plain and the building served as collateral for a bond.

Steven Schwarz, Fremont's risk manager, found this frustrating. "I have to insure a building for flood that's never going to be flooded, whereas I've got other places in the city that potentially could be flooded," he says.

When Schwarz brought this up in a conversation with his insurance broker, the broker introduced him to another option: A policy that could protect the city in the event of flooding anywhere in Fremont's entire geographical area.

Continue reading.

governing.com

by Carl Smith

August 22, 2025

Local Governments Could Be Flying Blind as Federal Data Disappears.

State and local governments depend on federal data for everything from community planning to disaster response. What happens if it goes away?

In Brief:

- Following a series of announcements about new federal priorities, the Trump administration removed data tools crucial to state and local governments.
- Some have been restored, but questions remain about the long-term availability of federal data once taken for granted.
- Local governments don't have the ability to duplicate most of the data sets they rely on to plan for the future and create new policy.

State and local governments have long understood they'd have to adjust to shifting federal priorities under the Trump administration. But many did not recognize they might have to adapt to a world where it's harder to access crucial data.

Recent changes in federal data collection and distribution will make it harder for state and local governments to plan for things like disease outbreaks, disasters, crime prevention, transportation and housing policy, says Brian Castrucci, the president and CEO of the de Beaumont Foundation, a public health nonprofit.

[Continue reading.](#)

governing.com

by Carl Smith

August 21, 2025

[Nossaman: EPA Updates WIFIA Program Requirements](#)

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has updated the federal requirements for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Program through more than a dozen changes to the [WIFIA Borrower Guide to Federal Requirements](#) (Borrower Guide) and the WIFIA Specification Package and Bid Contract Language (Bid Contract Language). While some changes are minor, others will likely have major impacts on project owners and developers.

Guidance for Collaborative Delivery Projects

The EPA added a new section, "Collaborative Delivery Projects," to the Borrower Guide, which focuses on WIFIA compliance for alternative delivery projects such as design-build, progressive design-build, construction manager at risk, and construction manager/general contractor. The new section makes clear that, for alternative delivery projects, it is the responsibility of the WIFIA borrower, not the project delivery firm, to ensure proper communication regarding compliance with WIFIA Program requirements to the entities developing the project and to define the roles and responsibilities between those entities for compliance documentation and reviews.

[Continue reading.](#)

By Kyle Howe on 08.20.2025

Nossaman LLP

[Judicial Constraints on Trump's Sanctuary City Funding Cuts: Assessing Risks to Municipal Bonds in a Divided Federal System](#)

Overview

– Trump's funding cuts to sanctuary cities blocked by courts, highlighting federal-state legal clashes over immigration enforcement.

– Judicial rulings like Orrick's protect municipal grants, reducing credit risk but creating uncertainty for investors amid political divides.

– Historical precedents show mixed impacts on credit ratings, while investors favor resilient jurisdictions with diversified revenue and legal defenses.

– Investors advised to prioritize cities with strong fiscal discipline and legal resilience, avoiding high-risk areas facing direct funding threats.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Harrison Brooks

Friday, Aug 22, 2025 10:49 pm ET

Trump's Federal Policies and the Municipal Bond Market: Navigating Political Risks and Credit Uncertainty

Overview

– Trump-era policies reshaped municipal bond markets and local governance spending through deregulation, tax reforms, and funding cuts.

– The 2017 TCJA increased borrowing costs by $824B over a decade by eliminating tax exemptions for advance refunding bonds and threatening PABs.

– Medicaid and education funding cuts, plus climate risks, exposed fiscal vulnerabilities in states like Kansas and Washington, D.C., triggering credit downgrades.

– Deregulation and policy uncertainty heightened political risks, forcing investors to prioritize diversification and hedging against credit stress.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Cyrus Cole

Saturday, Aug 23, 2025 3:14 am ET

Assessing Risk and Opportunity in U.S. Municipal Bonds and Real Estate Amid Trump's Law-and-Order Agenda.

Overview

– Trump’s law-and-order policies risk municipal bond credit ratings via federal grant cuts to sanctuary cities like NYC and Chicago.

– Federal workforce reductions and immigration restrictions threaten urban real estate markets in D.C., LA, and Chicago through reduced demand.

– Proactive cities leveraging bonds for housing/education and adaptive reuse tax incentives may offer resilient investment opportunities.

– Investors must prioritize diversified portfolios, monitor legal challenges to sanctuary policies, and target resilient urban centers with strong governance.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Harrison Brooks

Friday, Aug 22, 2025 2:47 pm ET

Federal Overreach and Municipal Bonds: Navigating Credit Risk in a Politicized Landscape

Overview

– Trump's federal interventions in local governance, including military deployments and sanctuary city policies, have heightened municipal credit risk and triggered legal challenges.

– Credit agencies like Moody's and Fitch have downgraded or placed jurisdictions (e.g., D.C., Kansas) on negative outlook due to federal overreach disrupting budgeting and governance.

– The 2025 OBBBA Act preserved tax-exempt bond status but introduced Medicaid cuts and delayed disaster aid, exposing municipalities to fiscal shocks in high-risk regions.

– Investors now prioritize states with fiscal discipline (e.g., Oklahoma) while avoiding politically vulnerable jurisdictions, as credit risk increasingly depends on policy shifts over pure financial metrics.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Isaac Lane

Saturday, Aug 23, 2025 10:01 pm ET

Bloomberg Masters of the Muniverse: Inside Muni Strategy with Jason Hannon

The record-breaking pace of muni issuance and investors' risk-off tone toward duration have been key drivers of the municipal yield curve's sharp steepening, leading to its underperformance relative to other fixed income asset classes. In an environment also marked by market volatility and shifting policy dynamics, the case for active management in munis has never been stronger.

In this episode of Masters of the Muniverse, Bloomberg Intelligence analyst Karen Altamirano is joined by Jason Hannon, Head of Municipal Strategy and Senior Portfolio Manager at Wilmington Trust, to discuss how this year’s market developments are shaping muni investment decisions. This is part of BI’s FICC Focus podcast series.

Listen to audio.

Aug 19, 2025

Beverly Hills Resort Wins Tax Status to Set Up Muni Bond Sale.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- The City Council voted 4-0 to support the creation of a community facilities district to raise as much as $550 million through the municipal bond market for an ultra-luxury resort in Beverly Hills.
- Vice Mayor John Mirisch said “this result truly is the definition of win-win” after the city council extracted concessions from developer Cain International valued at $140 million.
- The proposed community facilities district would levy a new tax on properties within the designated improvement areas to pay for improvements, including streets, parks, and other public infrastructure for the One Beverly Hills development.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By John Gittelsohn and Maxwell Adler

August 20, 2025

University of California Pulls Bond Deal Amid Trump Spat.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- The University of California pulled its planned $1.5 billion municipal-bond sale due to the standoff between the Trump administration and the University of California at Los Angeles.
- The bond sale was expected to fund various projects at the university’s 10 campuses and six academic health centers, according to Fitch Ratings.
- The Trump administration is seeking a $1 billion settlement from UCLA to restore its frozen research funding, which was suspended over allegations of antisemitism and bias on campus.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Danielle Moran, Maxwell Adler, and Elizabeth Rembert

August 21, 2025

[Fitch Withdraws Louisiana Local Gov Environmental Facilities & CDA Taxable Rev Rfdg Bonds Ratings.]

Fitch Ratings – New York – 19 Aug 2025: Fitch Ratings has withdrawn the 'A+' rating on the following bonds as they did not sell.

— Louisiana Local Government Environmental Facilities and Community Development Authority (LA) (LCTCS ACT 360 PROJECT) revenue refunding bonds (taxable) ser 2020A. Previous rating: 'A+'/Stable Outlook.

For other ratings on outstanding debt of this entity, please visit www.fitchratings.com.

Fitch has withdrawn the ratings as the bonds were cancelled.

Continue reading.

California, Other States Begin to Implement New 25% Test for 4% LIHTC and Bond Developments

State housing agencies have begun the work of implementing federal legislation signed July 4, which–among other things–lowers the minimum eligibility requirement for 4% federal low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs) from 50% to 25% thereby expanding the volume cap of tax-exempt bonds.

This blog post focuses on regulations adopted Aug. 5 by the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC) and the California Debt Limit Allocation Committee (CDLAC) and the impact they will have. At the time of this writing, Georgia and Wisconsin have also issued revised guidance related to this change.

Background

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act was signed into law July 4, 2025. Among many other things, the bill permanently lowers the private activity bond (PAB) financing threshold from 50% to 25% of land and building costs for properties placed in service after Dec. 31, 2025, as long as at least 5% of the aggregate land and building costs are financed with PABs issued after Dec. 31, 2025. This change expands the volume cap of tax-exempt bonds.

Continue reading.

novogradac.com

Published by Thomas Stagg, CPA on Monday, August 25, 2025 – 8:17AM

TAX - CALIFORNIA

Sceper v. County of Trinity

Court of Appeal, Third District, California - August 8, 2025 - Cal.Rptr.3d - 2025 WL

2267738

After passage of proposition expanding ability of certain taxpayers to transfer base year property values between counties, taxpayer brought action against county, alleging breach of contract and fraud in the inducement in connection with decision of county tax assessor to decline to adjust base year value of property that taxpayer had purchased in one county to base year value of property that taxpayer had purchased in another county for real property tax purposes, notwithstanding settlement agreement between taxpayer and county Board of Supervisors providing that county would allow transfer if it later adopted ordinance or if any change in law required county to accept transfers, and fact that new enactment was a qualifying change in the law under the settlement agreement.

After bench trial, the Superior Court found county in breach of settlement agreement and ordered county to specifically perform agreement and pay taxpayer damages. County appealed.

The Court of Appeal held that:

- Settlement agreement was void and unenforceable, but
- County was not entitled to prevailing-party attorney fees.

County Board of Supervisors lacked authority to grant agreed-upon relief in settlement agreement between taxpayer and Board related to exercise of judgment as to value of property for real property tax purposes by agreeing to transfer of base year values inter-county upon change in law allowing such transfers in certain circumstances, and thus settlement agreement was void and unenforceable; transfer of base year values was a duty assigned to county tax assessor, and Board's supervisory authority over tax assessor did not permit Board to control how tax assessor performed any duties of office of tax assessor.

Chicago Schools Seeks $1 Billion of Short-Term Debt as Cash Gone.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- A delay in local property-tax bills is exacerbating Chicago Public Schools' cash crunch, leading the district to rely more on short-term borrowing.
- The district plans to seek authorization to issue $1.25 billion in tax-anticipation notes to handle expenses, according to budget documents.
- The district's treasurer, Wally Stock, said the district may need to use the notes to handle payroll 80% of the time this fiscal year, and that it has "no wiggle room" and "no rainy-day funds".

Continue reading.

Bloomberg CityLab

By Shruti Singh

August 18, 2025

San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District, California: Fitch New Issue Report

The Negative Outlook on the IDR, sales tax bonds and TIFIA loan reflects ongoing financial pressures associated with a looming fiscal cliff. Resolution of the Negative Outlook is dependent on either ridership materially increasing or the state legislative authority allowing the district to seek voter authorization for a new revenue source to fund operations.

Access Report

Fri 22 Aug, 2025 – 3:43 PM ET

Identifying Component Units: GFOA Webinar

September 25, 2025 | 1 p.m.-2:30 p.m. ET

Details:

The scope of public sector external financial reporting often extends beyond the reporting government to encompass one or more additional legally-separate organizations. This seminar examines the scope of the public sector financial reporting entity.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the criteria used in establishing a primary government's financial accountability for a potential component unit
- Identify the two types of fiduciary component units and the criteria for their inclusion in a primary government's fiduciary funds financial statements

Click here to learn more and to register.

Continual Engine Collaborates with Colorado Municipalities to Advance Document Accessibility Compliance

AUSTIN, Texas, August 19, 2025 — (BUSINESS WIRE)–States and local governments face increasing pressure to make public-facing documents accessible, but must do so at scale, with limited budgets and internal resources. Colorado municipalities are now turning to PREP, Continual Engine's AI-powered platform, to bridge that gap.

Continual Engine, a leader in AI-powered digital accessibility solutions, has announced a collaboration with municipalities across Colorado to streamline document accessibility compliance. Through this partnership, Continual Engine's platform, PREP (PDF & Document Remediation Platform), is helping local governments to remediate public-facing documents more efficiently and cost-effectively, supporting compliance with Colorado's HB 24-1454 and broader accessibility standards such as the ADA, Section 508, WCAG, updated Title II regulations, and more.

Continue reading.

Vanguard: Opportunities in Today’s Municipal Market

In this Q&A, Mathew M. Kiselak, Vanguard’s head of active municipal portfolio management, shares his insights on the municipal bond market, opportunities for investors in the current environment, and why munis may be particularly suitable for rigorous active managers.

Munis were volatile earlier this year. What was driving that?

It’s been a bifurcated market between short and long munis. At the short end of the curve, yields have been falling because of expectations that the economy will slow by year-end and that the slowdown will lead to easing by the Federal Reserve. At the long end of the curve, yields have been rising because of uncertainty surrounding tariffs, inflation, and deficit spending, while supply has been increasing. The yield curve has sharply steepened, creating opportunities with longer munis.

Can you elaborate on why long munis are attractive now?

Munis have strong credit fundamentals—defaults are rare among munis with credit ratings of A and higher. And long munis are providing compelling after-tax returns. A yield of 4.80%, for example, is equivalent to 7.62% for someone in the 37% tax bracket—that’s on par with historical average equity returns of 7% to 9%, but with less risk.

Given the current combination of attractive risk characteristics and high after-tax yields—and the richer valuations of other asset classes like U.S. equities—high-quality, intermediate- to long-term munis may be something to consider. The breakeven tax bracket is lower than it generally has been in the past, even with current tax brackets that will be extended past 2025 under recent legislation.

Continue reading.

Vanguard

by Mathew M. Kiselak
Vanguard Head of Active Municipal Portfolio Management

August 19, 2025

Forbes: 2 ‘Bargain Bin’ Muni Bonds That Will Slash Your Tax Bill.

What if I told you we’ve got a shot at grabbing 2 cheap muni bonds that kick out huge dividends—I’m talking 7.5% and higher—and those payouts are *tax-free* too?

What I’m talking about might be the last bargain available to us in this (overheated) stock market. Stocks’ roll higher since the Liberation Day tariffs were put on hold has meant fewer income opportunities from S&P 500 names (as yields and share prices move in opposite directions).

That’s added even more appeal to the tax-free dividends (two, in particular) we’re going to talk about below. They deal in *municipal bonds*, which are issued by state and local governments to fund infrastructure projects. “Munis” also tend to offer healthy yields, typically 200 basis points above those on a 10-year Treasury note.

Continue reading.

Forbes

By Michael Foster,Contributor. *Michael writes on high income assets that help people retire early.*

Aug 19, 2025, 07:12am EDT

Record First Half at ICE Bonds for Corporate and Municipal Bond Trading.

Registers first spread-based click-to-trade corporate bond order

ATLANTA & NEW YORK–(BUSINESS WIRE)– Intercontinental Exchange (NYSE: ICE), a leading global provider of technology and data, today announced record trading volume in the first half of 2025 for corporate bond and municipal bond trading on the ICE Bonds’ electronic execution platforms.

Trading on ICE Bonds reached record notional volume of $120 billion for corporate bonds in the first half of 2025, up 20% from the first half of 2024. Municipal bond trading reached record notional volume of $109 billion in the first half of 2025, up 35% from the first half of 2024.

“We’re pleased to see the strong activity in the first half of the year, which marks the fourth consecutive year of volume increases in our corporate and municipal bond markets,” said Peter Borstelmann, President of ICE Bonds. “This growth is in line with the progress we’ve made over the last few years expanding the functionality on our platforms and building out our institutional and wealth management network of customers.”

ICE Bonds also recently recorded its first spread-based click-to-trade order, which blends the spread-based pricing protocol that institutional investors use with the click-to-trade execution protocol that is predominantly used by retail investors and wealth managers. This offers our market participants the risk management benefits of quotes priced at a spread to Treasuries, along with the ease of use and access that click-to-trade offers investors of all types. It also allows market participants to leverage the most efficient technology to access the growing volume of smaller-sized trades that we have seen become more prevalent in the fixed income market.

ICE Bonds offers deep liquidity pools that support multiple trading protocols including click-to-trade, sweeps, auctions and request for protocol (RFQ), with a vast breadth of fixed income data. ICE Bonds recently launched a new RFQ protocol for Mortgage-Backed Securities (MBS), which sits alongside ICE Bonds’ existing MBS Click-to-Trade marketplace and allows clients to send MBS RFQs within ICE TMC’s anonymous trading pool.

ICE’s evaluated pricing and analytics power those protocols, offering transparency and support across pre-trade, trade and post-trade workflows. Focused on execution efficiency, ICE Bonds enables both anonymous and disclosed counterparty interactions, and trading from odd-lots to blocks for Corporates, Municipals, Agencies, Treasuries and Certificates of Deposit.

For more information about ICE Bonds, please visit https://www.ice.com/fixed-income-da-a-services/fixed-income/ice-bonds.

Aug 18, 2025

[Ultra-Short Municipal Bonds: A Tax-Advantaged Haven in a Rising Rate World.]

Overview

– FUMB offers ultra-short municipal bonds to balance yield and rate risk in a high-interest environment.

– Its 0.61-year duration and 77.6% holdings maturing within 1 year minimize principal erosion from rate hikes.

– Tax-exempt income and active management (0.35% fee) enhance appeal for high-tax-bracket investors.

– The fund's diversified, short-duration strategy provides stability amid Fed policy uncertainty and yield curve shifts.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Rhys Northwood

Friday, Aug 22, 2025 4:53 am ET

University of California Pulls Bond Deal Amid Trump Spat.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- The University of California pulled its planned $1.5 billion municipal-bond sale due to the standoff between the Trump administration and the University of California at Los Angeles.
- The bond sale was expected to fund various projects at the university's 10 campuses and six academic health centers, according to Fitch Ratings.
- The Trump administration is seeking a $1 billion settlement from UCLA to restore its frozen research funding, which was suspended over allegations of antisemitism and bias on campus.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Danielle Moran, Maxwell Adler, and Elizabeth Rembert

August 21, 2025

[Public Lighting Authority of Detroit, Michigan: Fitch New Issue Report]

The Public Lighting Authority of Detroit's 'A-' revenue bond rating reflects solid resilience to economic downturns. Revenue growth is expected to be stagnant or below inflation upon normalization of recent trends.

[Access Report]

Fri 22 Aug, 2025

- **Ed. Note**: Due to a tech glitch, last week's newsletter picked up articles from 2020 & 2021. It took us a few days to identify and correct the issue. Our sincere apologies.
- [FINRA Fines Wells Fargo Clearing Services $137.5k for Alleged Violations Related to Unregistered Advisor Activity.]
- [S&P Sustainable Finance FAQ: Sustainable Bond Impact And Transparency In Post-Issuance Reporting]
- [Treasury Department Sets Limits on Remaining Wind and Solar Tax Credits.]
- [AMT: One Big Beautiful Opportunity in the Municipal Bond Market]
- [Disclosure Update: GFOA Webinar]
- [Public Utility Accounting: APPA Webinar]
- *[Vianello v. City of Prairie Village, Kansas]* – In citizen objector's challenge to city's issuance of GO bonds, US District Court denies city's motion for expedited briefing and ruling, holding that city's assertions of the cost associated with delay were speculative at best and that city's assertion that the lawsuit operated as an injunction preventing it from issuing bonds that it was legally entitled to issue called for a decision on the merits.
- And Finally, And That's Why You Always Incorporate A Little Powdered Hospitality is brought to us this week by *[Liquid Hospitality, LLC v. Board of City Commissioners of City of Fargo]*, in which a bar patron was just a wee bit overserved. "The report included a description of the patron's behavior throughout the evening which included the patron arriving at the Windbreak at 10:47 p.m. without appearing intoxicated; at around 12:12 a.m., approximately five drinks later, the patron was observed dancing in an exaggerated and slower manner followed by resting her head on the stage…" She was eventually escorted out to her car, which she immediately crashed. A BAC 0.291, accrued in about an hour, is kinda impressive, but for the whole motorized transport thing. Much more importantly, what the Fosse is a dance that is both exaggerated *and* slower? And how do you rest your head on a stage? Can someone please get some otherwise useless Junior Associates to start workshopping this? We'd genuinely appreciate it.

PUBLIC UTILITIES - CALIFORNIA

[Center for Biological Diversity, Inc. v. Public Utilities Commission]

Supreme Court of California - August 7, 2025 - P.3d - 2025 WL 2253765

Environmental and utility ratepayer advocacy groups petitioned for writ of review challenging the Public Utilities Commission's decision adopting a tariff that reduced the price utilities pay for customer-generated power, arguing the tariff was inconsistent with the Public Utilities Code.

The First District Court of Appeal granted the petition and affirmed the Commission's decision. Supreme Court granted review.

The Supreme Court held that Court of Appeal erred by upholding Commission's decision under unduly deferential standard of review instead of applying its independent judgment; disapproving *Southern Cal. Edison Co. v. Public Utilities Com.*, 117 Cal.App.4th 1039, 12 Cal.Rptr.3d 441, *The Utility Reform Network v. Public Utilities Com.*, 166 Cal.App.4th 522, 82 Cal.Rptr.3d 791, and *Ames v. Public Utilities Com.*, 197 Cal.App.4th 1411, 128 Cal.Rptr.3d 702.

Court of Appeal, in performing inquiry required by statutory amendments governing judicial review of Public Utilities Commission decisions when making its conclusion on Commission's adoption of successor tariff that utilities paid for energy from solar panel power systems, was required to independently review whether tariff was based on costs and benefits of renewable electrical generation facility as required by customer-generator provision of PUC, rather than apply unduly deferential standard of review, because amendments retained "regularly pursued its authority" standard, to which uniquely deferential review applied, only for decisions pertaining solely to water corporations.

EMINENT DOMAIN - GEORGIA

Fulton v. Fulton County Board of Commissioners

United States Court of Appeals, Eleventh Circuit - July 31, 2025 - F.4th - 2025 WL 2166416

Property owner brought action against county, alleging county took his horses without justification and without paying for them in violation of the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment.

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia denied owner's motion to amend complaint to substitute county for board of commissioners and to add alternative claim directly under the Takings Clause, and dismissed claim against board of commissioners without prejudice. Owner appealed.

The Court of Appeals held that:

- District court had federal question jurisdiction to independently evaluate merits of Takings Clause claim that was not patently without merit;
- Owner's state-law claim for recovery of personal property taken by county seven years previously was barred for not providing that notice to county under state procedural requirement
- Four-year statute of limitations applied to claim directly under Takings Clause in Georgia for recovery of personal property taken by county;
- On issue of first impression, a litigant in Georgia can sue a county, a political subdivision of the state, directly under the Takings Clause to obtain just compensation for a taking;
- On issue of first impression, direct cause of action against county under Takings Clause was available to horse owner;
  Georgia, as exclusive forum, unilaterally and unconstitutionally imposed procedural bar on horse owner's Takings claim, assuming owner could have ever sought relief in Georgia courts, because of Monell; and
- On issue of first impression, sovereign immunity did not bar direct cause of action against county under Takings Clause by horse owner.

BOND ISSUANCE - KANSAS

Vianello v. City of Prairie Village, Kansas

United States District Court, D. Kansas - August 4, 2025 - Slip Copy - 2025 WL 2208041

Plaintiff Marc Vianello filed an action challenging Defendant City of Prairie Village's issuance of general obligation bonds associated with building a new City Hall. Plaintiff challenged the City's ability to issue general obligation bonds without voter approval, bringing claims under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 and Kansas law.

The dispute centered in large part around the City Council's approval of a resolution, which passed on June 16, 2025. The resolution authorized the issuance of general obligation bonds in the amount of up to $30,000,000.00 to pay for improvements to certain City buildings, including City Hall.

Defendant moved to dismiss for lack of jurisdiction and for failure to state a claim.

Defendant asked the Court to expedite its decision on the motion to dismiss, i.e., give it priority over other pending motions, because it claimed that this action functioned as an injunction and prevented it from issuing bonds and moving forward on its improvement plans. It asserted that "delays on the project would result in an increase in costs of $120,000 per month, or approximately $28,000 per week; expediting briefing by even a week could save $28,000 in taxpayer funds." In contrast, Defendant asserted that Plaintiff would suffer no damage if briefing was expedited.

The premise of Defendant's motion was that it "prevent[s] Defendant from issuing bonds that it is legally entitled to issue." This is because Defendant is required to obtain a non-litigation certificate prior to issuing the bonds authorized by the June 16, 2025 resolution. Defendant contends that "[w]ithout an expedited hearing, Defendant would be prevented from making an offering of bonds, effectively being enjoined from issuing bonds even without a court order that it should be enjoined." And Defendant contended that it would be prevented from issuing bonds in the current market, which it contemplated when preparing to issue them, which could increase the cost of the bonds and construction materials.

The US District Court denied the motion for expedited briefing and ruling on Defendant's motion to dismiss. The Court found the City's assertions of the cost associated with delay are speculative at best, particularly given the short period of time that had passed since the resolution was passed. And Defendant's assertion that the lawsuit operated as an injunction preventing it from issuing bonds that it was legally entitled to issue called for a decision on the merits.

"According to Defendant's own brief, it passed the resolution authorizing these bonds on June 16. Plaintiff filed his federal lawsuit one month later. Defendant quickly moved to dismiss. The normal schedule for briefing on this motion is 21 days to respond and 14 days to reply. Defendant asks the Court to shorten this period to 14 and 7 days, respectfully. Given how quickly this case was filed after the bond resolution, the Court cannot find that expediting the briefing schedule by two weeks is warranted. It is not true that Plaintiff would suffer no damage from expediting deadlines. Plaintiff would be denied an extra week of briefing on this dispositive motion. Once fully briefed, the Court will endeavor to decide the motion to dismiss as soon as practicable given the demands of its caseload."

MUNICIPAL ORDINANCE - NORTH DAKOTA

Liquid Hospitality, LLC v. Board of City Commissioners of City of Fargo

Supreme Court of North Dakota - July 31, 2025 - N.W.3d - 2025 WL 2166077 - 2025 ND 136

Saloon brought action against city board of commissioners, challenging board's decision to uphold city liquor control board's determination that saloon violated municipal ordinance prohibiting service of alcoholic beverages to obviously intoxicated or impaired persons.

The District Court reversed, finding the ordinance unconstitutionally vague. Board appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Ordinance placing restrictions on serving of obviously intoxicated or impaired persons was not unconstitutionally vague on its face in violation of due process, and
- Evidence supported determination that saloon had served an obviously intoxicated person in violation of city ordinance.

City ordinance placing restrictions on serving of obviously intoxicated or impaired persons was not unconstitutionally vague on its face in violation of due process; whether a person is intoxicated or impaired by alcohol or drugs is something a reasonable person can determine, and the criteria for obvious intoxication was clearly set forth in the ordinance.

REFERENDA - UTAH

Mathews v. Tooele County

Supreme Court of Utah - August 7, 2025 - P.3d - 2025 WL 2265330 - 2025 UT 30

Sponsors of referendum to repeal site specific zoning ordinance, which had rezoned parcel in unincorporated area of county from agricultural to planned-community zoning, brought action against county and governor after county clerk rejected referendum petition due to lack of signatures.

After ordinance went into effect, and parcel became part of newly-incorporated city, the Third District Court granted summary judgment for county and granted governor's motion for judgment on the pleadings. Sponsors appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Action was moot in light of incorporation of town and the parcel's location within the new town's boundaries, and
- Potential impact on developer's alleged vested rights in zoning ordinance did not save action from mootness.

Action by sponsors of referendum petition rejected by county clerk, which proposed to repeal site specific zoning ordinance rezoning parcel in unincorporated area of county from agricultural to planned-community zoning, in which sponsors sought declaration that petition was legally sufficient and that Governor's actions imposing COVID-19 restrictions, which allegedly hampered signature-gathering, violated their constitutional rights, and sought order requiring placement of the measure on the ballot, was moot in light of incorporation of town and the parcel's location within the new town's boundaries; town, not county, was the current entity regulating the parcel, and had enacted zoning ordinances affecting the property.

Issue of whether nonparty developer had vested rights under county site specific zoning ordinance, which had rezoned parcel in unincorporated area of county from agricultural to planned-community zoning, was not before the Supreme Court on appeal by sponsors of referendum to repeal the ordinance following summary judgment on their claim that county clerk improperly rejected their referendum petition due to lack of signatures, and thus alleged vested rights could not save appeal from being moot after town was incorporated and took over zoning of the parcel.

Referendum sponsors failed to establish that potential impact on developer's alleged vested rights in zoning ordinance, which had rezoned parcel in unincorporated area of county from agricultural to planned-community zoning, precluded finding that sponsors' action to repeal the ordinance was moot on grounds that town had been formed which encompassed and governed the parcel; sponsors made no legal argument in support assumption that any future successful referendum would strip developer of vested rights, or that vested rights would not remain intact if referendum would repeal the ordinance prospectively only, and any successful referendum would not have retroactive effect.

ZONING & PLANNING - VERMONT

In re Costco Wholesale Administrative Decision

Supreme Court of Vermont - August 8, 2025 - A.3d - 2025 WL 2264346 - 2025 VT 44

Retail store appealed, and commercial neighbors cross-appealed, state and municipal determinations that amendment to land use permits was not necessary for retail store to begin operating gas station on its property at full-time hours.

Following two-day merits hearing in four coordinated proceedings, the Superior Court, Environmental Division, issued final judgment order stating that store had satisfied all conditions in existing permits and that it did not need an amendment to operate gas station at full-time hours. Neighbors appealed, and store cross-appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Issues related to full-time operation of gas station were not moot;
- Environmental court had jurisdiction to review issues;
- Environmental court addressed all related matters raised in neighbors' statement of questions; and
- Store was not required to obtain permit amendments before it began operating gas station full-time.

Environmental court's determination that traffic mitigation conditions in retail store's state-level land use permit contemplated full-time operation of gas station on the property as part of initially approved project, such that amendment to permit was not required, did not create an invalid condition subsequent; conditions were not open-ended and they did not purport to vest state commission with authority to continuously amend the permit as necessary to redress future state permit violations, thus expropriating another agency's enforcement authority, but instead, they were type of reasonable, evidence-based conditions with prospective application that courts recognized as permissible.

Disclosure Update: GFOA Webinar

September 11, 2025 | 1 p.m.-3 p.m. ET

Issuers of municipal securities have numerous disclosure responsibilities related to their bond transactions. This includes mandated filings of annual financial information and material event notices in the MSRB's EMMA system, and other types of voluntary disclosures. Industry experts will discuss these issues as well as recent SEC activities related to disclosure. A review of GFOA's best practices and the importance of developing and maintaining disclosure policies and procedures will also be addressed.

Learning Objectives

Those completing this seminar will be able to:

- Understand the requirements related to primary market and continuing disclosure
- Develop new or review existing disclosure policies and procedures
- Learn about recent SEC activities related to disclosure
- Review GFOA best practices on disclosure and making voluntary disclosures

Click here to learn more and to register.

NASACT Webinar: Fraud in the School District – A Case Study

10/7/2025 2:00 PM EDT

School districts are central to communities around the nation and are tasked with an important mission: educating the next generation. Often, resources are limited and districts must ensure that funds are protected and used effectively. Unfortunately, fraud in school districts does occur, and the impacts can be felt for years after.

In this webinar, the FBI special agent responsible for investigating a fraud scheme that lasted several years, and even included leveraging a position in a local church, will share insights on the case.

Click here to learn more and to register.

Tough Challenges for Counties in a New Era of Fiscal Federalism.

Cuts in funding don't change counties' obligations to their residents. They will have to figure out how to raise new revenue, cut services or both. But success in navigating this new landscape won't come from austerity alone.

For decades, the federal government played a familiar role in the intergovernmental fiscal landscape: a partner that stepped in during times of extraordinary need. During natural disasters, agencies like the Federal Emergency Management Agency provided rapid emergency assistance.

During economic crises, major legislation — most recently the American Rescue Plan Act — delivered flexible funding to help local governments respond, recover and rebuild.

Today, we are entering a new phase of fiscal federalism, one in which local governments are not just shouldering more of the work but are increasingly responsible for funding and delivering programs originally designed as federal commitments. With its administrative actions and the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, the federal government is stepping back from its traditional support role. And in doing so, it is placing county governments in particular under intensifying fiscal pressure while leaving in place the legal and programmatic obligations to provide mandated services such as SNAP food benefits or ensuring that county hospitals offer medical care to all regardless of insurance status.

This shift in responsibility was the focus of intense discussion at the recent annual conference of the National Association of Counties (NACo). Across panels and roundtables, the sense was clear: This is not a momentary squeeze, but the beginning of a lasting change in how counties are expected to govern.

Continue reading.

OPINION | August 15, 2025 • Jed Herrmann and Teryn Zmuda

governing.com

Impacts from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act: A Guide for City Leaders - Brownstein

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) was signed into law on July 4, 2025. Its primary objective is to extend key provisions of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA), including individual and corporate tax cuts. Beyond tax policy, the bill significantly reshapes federal spending and regulatory frameworks. Cities will likely feel the impact most acutely in four key areas:

1. **municipal funding**, as the federal government shifts financial responsibility to state and local governments;
2. **environmental impact**, with rollbacks to renewable energy tax incentives;
3. **health care and social safety net reductions**, including stricter Medicaid eligibility requirements and cuts to Affordable Care Act subsidies; and
4. **modifications to opportunity zones (OZs)**, which alter investment incentives and eligibility criteria.

Continue reading.

Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck LLP – Douglas J. Friednash, Bart Reising, Daniel Joseph, Greg Sileo and John S. LaLime

August 12 2025

[S&P U.S. Not-For-Profit Health Care Rating Actions, July 2025]

In July 2025, S&P Global Ratings maintained 28 ratings without revising the outlooks, took six positive ratings actions, and took eight negative rating actions in the U.S. not-for-profit health care sector. In addition, we revised two outlooks favorably and revised two outlooks unfavorably without changing the ratings.

The month's activity also comprised 14 new sales. Those reviews included:

- Bonds issued by 10 systems and four stand-alone hospitals.
- An affirmation on the entity's outstanding debt for most of the organizations.
- Raising the rating on one organization's outstanding debt.
- Lowering the rating on two organizations' outstanding debt.
- Revising the outlook to positive on one organization's outstanding debt.
- Removing the rating from CreditWatch on one organization's debt.
- Two new issuers: Phelps County Regional Medical Center, Mo., and Roswell Park Cancer Institute, N.Y.

The 18 rating changes and outlook revisions consisted of the following:

Continue reading.

15-Aug-2025 | 17:37 EDT

S&P U.S. Not-For-Profit Health Care System Median Financial Ratios--2024

View the S&P report.

07-Aug-2025 | 10:07 EDT

S&P U.S. Not-For-Profit Acute Health Care 2024 Medians: Positive Operating Performance Resumes

Key Median Takeaways

- Operating and cash flow margins improved, supporting a return to pre-pandemic maximum annual debt service (MADS) coverage. That said, profitability measures remain well below the decade's historical baseline, with some unevenness in certain organizations.
- Unrestricted reserves increased, yet days' cash on hand were flat. Median absolute unrestricted reserves rose faster than in the previous year, with improvement in cash flow and strong investment returns. However, expense growth continued to pressure operating liquidity, with median days' cash on hand remaining near 200, but still down relative to most years in the past decade.
- Leverage remained sound, with strengthening median debt-related metrics. Median debt measures continued to improve in fiscal 2024 with stronger median debt to capitalization, debt burden, and unrestricted reserves to long-term debt. Defined-benefit pension plan funding levels remain strong. We anticipate some worsening in debt metrics in the coming year as providers increase borrowing.

- Sector view is stable. Supported by median operating income and debt service coverage improvements as well as sound reserve and liquidity metrics, our sector view remains stable, but headwinds could exacerbate the sector’s slow recovery and future stabilization in performance.

Continue reading.

07-Aug-2025 | 09:51 EDT

S&P U.S. Not-For-Profit Health Care Stand-Alone Hospital Median Financial Ratios--2024

View the S&P report.

07-Aug-2025 | 10:21 EDT

S&P U.S. Not-For-Profit Health Care Children’s Hospital Median Financial Ratios--2024

View the S&P report.

07-Aug-2025 | 10:28 EDT

S&P U.S. Not-For-Profit Health Care Small Stand-Alone Hospital Median Financial Ratios--2024

View the S&P Report.

07-Aug-2025 | 10:34 EDT

S&P U.S. Not-For-Profit Acute Health Care Speculative-Grade Median Financial Ratios--2024

View the S&P Report.

07-Aug-2025 | 10:40 EDT

Fitch: U.S. Higher Education Credit Profiles Pressured by Key Person Risk

Fitch Ratings-New York/Chicago-13 August 2025: U.S. higher education institutions are increasingly vulnerable from high turnover of key administrators and significant staff reductions at the

Department of Education (DOE), Fitch Ratings says. These challenges are particularly acute amid rapidly evolving federal policy issues and long-term sector dynamics such as changes in demographics.

University leadership stability and effectiveness have a direct influence on a university's operating stability and financial risk. Leadership gaps—especially among college presidents, chief financial officers, board members, and other senior executives—can amplify existing risks and lead to negative credit rating actions. Fitch has observed that frequent executive turnover and weak board engagement often create ongoing risks for strategic direction and financial planning, particularly hurting lower-rated universities' credit profiles. In two of the four downgrades of private institutions thus far YTD, president and other leadership turnover within the prior two years were contributing factors.

According to the American Council on Education's (ACE) 2023 survey, approximately 25% to 40% of public and private higher education institutions have seen their presidents retire or move on to new roles in the past three years. The average tenure for a college president is now only about 5.9 years. Executive search timelines often extend over 9-12 months, hindering fundraising efforts, delaying necessary reforms, creating uncertainty around institutional direction, and causing unease among employees and faculty. Leadership changes also trigger further turnover, resulting in gaps in oversight or financial stewardship.

Continuity issues extend beyond executive leadership. Turnover among admissions and financial aid staff, who are responsible for executing recruitment and retention strategies, can disrupt enrollment planning and impact student demand and institutional reputation. During operational stress, Fitch evaluates enrollment strategies with particular attention to demographic shifts. Mismanagement of financial aid can lead to enrollment volatility, further affecting prospective student demand and donor support. Administrative decisions on academic offerings and program relevance also affect the ability to attract and retain students in order to support sustainable student-generated revenue.

External pressures can compound internal challenges. The DOE's workforce has shrunk by about 50% since March, which is likely to increase operational challenges by delaying funding, limiting resource availability, and slowing oversight and approvals. Further, a flurry of federal actions directed at higher education have often required rapid, clear analysis and responses across institutional departments. Turnover in key decision-making roles can delay or muddle these responses, increasing uncertainty and reputational risk.

Fitch's credit analysis incorporates operational and revenue stability in a forward-looking framework. As such, an expectation for stable leadership and effective and consistent plan execution are key components in our ratings and outlooks. Leadership's approach to liquidity management and reserve policies is critical during financial and operating stress. Turnover that erodes institutional controls or destabilizes an institution's finances may impact ratings. Missteps in regulatory compliance can jeopardize funding and operational continuity, increasing operational and reputational risks that subsequently affect enrollment and future viability.

S&P U.S. Public Finance Housing Rating Actions, Second-Quarter 2025

S&P Global Ratings' U.S. public finance housing rating actions (including outlook revisions) for second-quarter 2025 consisted of 18 positive rating actions, three negative rating actions, and 61 affirmations.

Second-Quarter Rating Actions

We took positive rating actions on 14 rental housing bond (RHB) credits, which consisted of 10 upgrades and four outlook changes (see table 1). Eight of the upgrades were in the military housing subsector. Of the eight upgrades, four reflected improved and sustained financial performance due to completion of repairs from the damage of Hurricane Florence, while another four reflected improved net cash flow, with effective gross income increasing at a higher rate than operating expenses. The remaining two upgrades were in the age-restricted housing subsector, reflecting improved net cash flow as a result of additional properties being included in the obligated group, as well as higher occupancy rates and ongoing expense management, which ultimately resulted in stronger maximum annual debt service (MADS) coverage.

Two of the positive rating actions were outlook revisions to positive on the first and second lien of an RHB in the military housing subsector as result of increases in occupancy and the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) rates, leading to improved MADS coverage and the likelihood that coverage will continue trending positively, which, all else being equal, could lead to higher overall credit quality. The remaining two outlook revisions to positive from stable occurred in the military housing and mobile home subsectors. The military housing outlook revision was due to increases in net rent collections from higher occupancy and rising BAH rates, while the mobile home outlook revision was due to ongoing expenditure management.

Continue reading.

13-Aug-2025 | 16:12 EDT

S&P: Solid Rent Growth Leads To Upgrades Across The U.S. Military Housing Sector In 2024 And First-Half 2025

Key Takeaways

- The U.S. military housing sector is stable and has demonstrated improved credit quality over the past year, primarily due to steady growth in federal operating subsidies.
- Demand for military housing remains high, with occupancy levels averaging 94% across rated entities.
- Challenges to the sector center on future recruitment for military personnel, as the active-duty workforce based in the U.S. has been shrinking steadily since 2020; however, all of the service branches have reported rising recruitment numbers in 2025.

Continue reading.

14-Aug-2025 | 15:17 EDT

S&P Default, Transition, and Recovery: 2024 Annual Infrastructure Default And Rating Transition Study

(**Editor's Note:** Previous versions of this study included project finance issues as well as infrastructure issues that we analyzed under our corporate methodology. We have now changed our approach to focus exclusively on infrastructure issuer credit ratings that use the corporate criteria. For this reason, previous years' findings will not be consistent with this year's.)

Key Takeaways

- There were five infrastructure defaults in 2024, the same as in 2023, with the default rate stable at 0.54%.
- Three of the defaults were from utilities, one from oil and gas, and one from power.
- Upgrades outpaced downgrades 70 to 49, up from 55 and 43 in 2023.

The default tally among infrastructure entities rated by S&P Global Ratings was five in 2024, the same as in 2023 (see table 1). The default rate remained stable at 0.54%.

While investment-grade (rated 'BBB-' or higher) defaults remain rare, there was one (confidentially rated) investment-grade default in 2024, along with three speculative-grade (rated 'BB+' or lower) defaults and one default from an issuer with a withdrawn rating. Investment-grade defaults have averaged 0.2 per year since 1981, compared with 1.7 speculative-grade defaults per year. The investment-grade default rate was 0.2% in 2024, up from zero in 2023, while the speculative-grade default rate fell to 1.5% from 2.0%.

Continue reading.

13-Aug-2025 | 17:17 EDT

USDOT Notice of Funding Opportunity: Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant Program

$45.98 Million Now Available – Applications Due October 1, 2025

Today, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Build America Bureau (Bureau) announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant Program (IFAC) making up to $45.98 million available to help public entities scan their existing assets to unlock their value and explore innovative financing, alternative delivery, and public-private partnership opportunities. Grants up to $2 million are available, with the first million requiring no local match.

Two types of grants are available under the program: Technical Assistance Grants and Expert Services Grants. Applicants can apply for either type of grant but must choose one for this round of funding.

Applications must be submitted through grants.gov, and are due October 1, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. ET.

The Build America Bureau will hold a free informational webinar for interested applicants on August 27, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. ET. Register for the webinar. Participation is not required, but is strongly recommended for applicants to learn more about the program and its requirements. For accommodations, please contact InnovativeFinanceTA@dot.gov by August 20, 2025. The recording and a copy of the presentation slides will be posted to IFAC's webpage following the event.

Please email InnovativeFinanceTA@dot.gov with any questions and subscribe for email updates.

The Build America Bureau advances investment in transportation infrastructure by lending Federal funds to qualified borrowers; clearing roadblocks for credit worthy projects; and encouraging best practices in project planningﬁ ,nancing, delivery, and operations. The Bureau draws on expertise across DOT to serve as a point of coordination for states, municipalities, private partners, and other project sponsors seeking federal ﬁnancing and technical assistance.

If you are interested in exploring federal financing with the Build America Bureau, please contact us at BuildAmerica@dot.gov.

Upcoming Window 2 CDFI Certification Deadline and Service Request Cutoff.

In June 2024, the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI Fund) released the General Reapplication Submission Deadlines for the CDFI Certification Application for all Certified CDFIs. The second reapplication submission window, Window 2, closes on September 30, 2025. To avoid delays or loss of Certification, organizations must act now to prepare their submissions and resolve outstanding issues.

Cut-off for Service Requests and Help Desk Questions

The CDFI Fund has been receiving a heavy volume of inquiries from CDFI Certification Applicants. In order to ensure a timely response to questions from Window 2 Applicants before the September 30 deadline, the CDFI Fund is implementing a cut-off for CDFI Certification Application-related Service Requests and Help Desk questions. The CDFI Fund will answer questions from Window 2 Applicants about the CDFI Certification Application submitted before **11:59 p.m. ET on September 12, 2025**. After that time, Application questions from Window 2 Applicants received via Help Desk calls, Help Desk e-mails, and Service Requests will not be answered.

Technical support for AMIS will still be available for Window 2 Applicants until **5:00 p.m. ET on September 30, 2025**.

Continue reading.

Friday, August 15, 2025

Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PA): Fitch New Issue Report

The ‘AA-‘ and ‘A’ ratings on PTC’s oil franchise tax senior and subordinate lien revenue bonds reflect Fitch’s expectations for declining long-term pledged revenue growth prospects due to the commonwealth’s declining trend in fuel consumption. Following the current sale, Fitch expects debt service coverage to be modestly above the ABT for both liens, but declines in pledged revenue over time may gradually reduce coverage.

Access Report

Fri 15 Aug, 2025 – 9:39 AM ET

[Children's Health System of Texas: Fitch New Issue Report]

Children's Health System of Texas was downgraded to 'AA–' from 'AA' on Aug. 1, 2025, with a Stable Rating Outlook. The organization has invested heavily in expanding care, including a new $5.2 billion pediatric campus in partnership with UT Southwestern.

Access Report

Mon 11 Aug, 2025 – 4:03 PM ET

New York City Transitional Finance Authority: Fitch New Issue Report

The New York City Transitional Finance Authority's $1.36 billion Building Aid Revenue Bonds are rated 'AA' with a Stable Rating Outlook. The bonds are supported by state building aid appropriations, ensuring minimal appropriation risk due to strong state support for education.

Access Report

Mon 18 Aug, 2025 – 12:27 PM ET

U.S. Department of Transportation Announces $46 Million Available for Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grants.

Grants will empower communities to generate additional value from existing assets and deliver infrastructure faster and at lower cost using private sector innovative solutions and financing

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Build America Bureau (Bureau) today released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant Program (IFAC), making $45.98 million available to assist public entities in facilitating and evaluating public-private partnerships and exploring innovative financing and alternative delivery opportunities for Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA)-eligible projects. Grants are available for up to $2 million, with the first $1 million requiring no local match. This is the second NOFO for IFAC, with funds allocated from fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026 (if available). Applications are due no later than October 1, 2025.

Two types of grants are available under the program: technical assistance and expert services. Technical assistance grants enable recipients to build organizational capacity and identify a portfolio of underutilized assets by hiring qualified employees or procuring advisors. Expert services grants enable recipients to procure expert professionals in connection with the development of a specific asset or assets. Applicants must choose one of the grant types to apply for in this round of funding.

Eligible applicants include state, Tribal, or local governments; special purpose public authorities; or agencies chartered by a state, Tribal, or local government.

"This novel program is promoting efficient and effective use of publicly owned assets, by

> enabling communities to find answers to this basic question: do they have underutilized assets that can be leveraged to address their infrastructure needs?” said Bureau Executive Director Morteza Farajian, Ph.D. “The Bureau is constructing a bridge between our state, tribal, and local partners who have valuable underutilized assets and private partners who have expertise and financial capital to generate additional value from those assets to address community needs faster and at lower cost.”

The Bureau will host a free informational webinar about the IFAC NOFO and program on August 27, 2025, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET ([register here]()). Accommodation requests must be submitted to InnovativeFinanceTA@dot.gov by August 20, 2025. While participation in the webinar is not mandatory to receive funding, the Bureau encourages potential applicants to learn about the application process and activities that can be funded before applying.

The Bureau will post a recording of the webinar and a copy of the presentation on the [Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grant Program website]().

This program, along with the Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program, Regional Infrastructure Accelerator Program, and other technical assistance resources at USDOT, helps ensure communities have tools to access federal funding and financing for delivering transformative infrastructure projects faster and at lower cost.

Friday, August 15, 2025

###

The Build America Bureau accelerates investment in transportation infrastructure by lending Federal funds to qualified public and private borrowers; clearing roadblocks for creditworthy projects; providing technical assistance services and grants to build regional and local capacity and implement best practices and innovative solutions in project planning, funding, financing, delivery, and operations. The Bureau draws on expertise across USDOT to serve as the point of coordination for states, municipalities, private partners, and other project sponsors seeking Federal financing.

[Florida Municipal Power Agency Closes $208 Million Bond Transaction.]()

Home periodical article Florida Municipal Power Agency Closes $208 Million Bond Transaction

Florida Municipal Power Agency has closed on the sale of $208,830,000 in municipal bonds for its All-Requirements Project (ARP) to finance capital projects, refinance existing project debt and tender a portion of Series 2016A Bonds, FMPA said on Aug. 13.

The sale netted nearly $13.1 million in gross savings.

The ARP, FMPA’s largest power supply project, provides all the wholesale power needs of 13 Florida municipal electric utilities including Bushnell, Clewiston, Fort Meade, Fort Pierce, Green Cove Springs, Havana, Jacksonville Beach, Key West, Kissimmee, Leesburg, Newberry, Ocala and Starke. The savings will reduce future power costs for these cities.

The savings begin at approximately $0.4 million in 2025, steadily rising to $3.2 million in 2029 and

2030 and peaking at $4.4 million in 2031. The final maturity date for the refunding bonds is the same as the original issues being refunded, with new money proceeds maturing in 2034 and 2035.

"Our team is dedicated to identifying and analyzing the best opportunities for savings for our ARP members, so they can best serve their residents and customers," said Rich Popp, FMPA's chief financial officer. "This tender transaction speaks to the team's dynamic thinking and is strategic to our mission of providing affordable and reliable power to the members we serve."

The bonds received strong credit ratings of AA- from Fitch Ratings and A2 from Moody's Investors Service. Both rating agencies cited the All-Requirements Project's very strong financial profile, prudent financial management, and well-maintained and diverse portfolio of generating assets.

FMPA's All-Requirements rates have decreased over 20% since 2022, and for FY 2025, they will be the second lowest inflation-adjusted energy costs to ARP Members in FMPA's history.

The bonds' lead underwriter was JP Morgan in a negotiated sale.

publicpower.org

by Paul Ciampoli

August 14, 2025

Oil-Waste Recycling Business Backed by Muni Bonds Goes Bankrupt.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Aleon Metals LLC filed for Chapter 11 in US Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Texas after the venture was marred by equipment failures and commodity price volatility.
- Aleon said it secured $188 million of financing from bondholders to continue operations while it seeks a buyer during the bankruptcy proceedings, according to the company.
- Tarun Bhatt, the chief executive officer of Aleon, said "We've worked diligently to streamline our operations and position Aleon for continued growth," in a statement.

The owner of a Texas facility that recycles metals extracted from oil-refinery waste filed for bankruptcy after the venture was marred by equipment failures and commodity price volatility.

Aleon Metals LLC, which is responsible for $294 million of municipal debt that financed the construction of the recycling plant and another under development, filed for Chapter 11 Sunday in US Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Texas.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Industries

By Martin Z Braun

August 18, 2025

Tilting for Windmills: Illinois Court Reverses Village Ban on Wind Farm Construction - K&L Gates

On 1 August 2025, the Illinois Appellate Court for the Third Circuit struck down a local ordinance purporting to ban construction of a wind farm as outside the village's statutory authority and contrary to Illinois public policy. Following up on a state law prohibiting county level bans on renewable resource facilities, this decision will significantly clarify the authority of towns and villages to regulate the construction of wind and solar farms. For developers of renewable resource facilities, this decision will provide an important guidepost when dealing with units of local government.

Hickory Winds, LLC (Hickory) planned to build a large wind farm in LaSalle County, Illinois. Several of the turbines were located on land within 1.5 miles of the boundaries of the Village of Cedar Point (Cedar Point), which were within the village's jurisdiction for zoning purposes. In response to the plans, Cedar Point adopted an ordinance prohibiting the construction of wind energy conversion structures or wind turbines, which would provide more than 120% of the electrical demand on the parcel on which they were constructed. To make the intent of its ordinance crystal clear, Cedar Point's ordinance incorporated a recital stating "it was to be in the best interests of the Village and its citizens, to prohibit wind farms, wind energy conversion systems or electric-generating wind devices" within Cedar Point's jurisdiction. Hickory sued Cedar Point but lost on summary judgment in the trial court.

In *Hickory Winds, LLC v. Village of Cedar Point et al*, the appellate court reversed the trial court and affirmed the summary judgment in favor of Hickory. The Court held that Cedar Point was a nonhome rule unit of government, meaning its powers were controlled by statute, and that the legislature expressly granted Cedar Point the power to regulate wind energy conversion systems within its jurisdiction. However, the Court emphasized that "regulation and prohibition are not the same thing." The Court held that the ordinance was a prohibition because the ordinance prohibited all wind farms, wind energy conversion systems, and electric-generating devices; and cited Illinois zoning law to hold that the power to regulate a legal use did not include the power to prohibit that use.

In addition, the Court noted Cedar Point's ordinance undermined the strong Illinois policy in favor of developing renewable resources and reducing carbon emissions, citing both the legislature's declaration to rapidly transition to 100% clean energy by 2050 and the legislature's statement that it is necessary to improve the process for procuring electricity to serve Illinois residents. As a result, Cedar Point's ordinance was held to be an invalid exercise of its regulatory authority.

The Court's decision clearly requires local municipalities to exercise their zoning authority thoughtfully with respect to renewable-resource facilities. An Illinois law setting out requirements for counties to consider in exercising their zoning authority could provide useful guidance in evaluating municipal zoning decisions and procedures. Since the law in question did not apply to local units of government such as towns and villages, it was not directly relevant to all other units of government, but the decision still evidences both the state's commitment to the construction of renewable resources and the need for local municipalities to exercise caution when regulating renewable resource facilities through statutorily given authority. They must keep in mind the Court's direction that regulation is not the same thing as prohibition.

K&L Gates LLP – David L. Rieser and Petr Bartos

August 13 2025

[Los Angeles County, California: Fitch New Issue Report]

Los Angeles County's 'AAA' Long-Term Issuer Default Rating reflects its strong financial resilience, maintaining reserves above 15% of spending. The county plans to use reserves and budgetary savings to finance a $4 billion legal settlement over five years starting in fiscal 2026.

[Access Report]

Fri 15 Aug, 2025 – 12:56 PM ET

[University of Chicago, Illinois: Fitch New Issue Report]

The University of Chicago's 'AA+' rating reflects its exceptional demand profile and excellent fundraising track record. Despite ongoing macro headwinds, management improvement initiatives resulted in gains in FY 2025, although operating deficits persist.

[Access Report]

Tue 12 Aug, 2025 – 10:53 AM ET

[Chicago's Fiscal Crossroads: Navigating Political Turbulence and Bond Risks]

Aime Summary

– Chicago's 2025 municipal bond ratings are split among agencies, with Moody's at Baa3 (positive) and S&P at BBB, highlighting fiscal uncertainty.

– Political instability and failed policies, including a rejected tax hike, eroded trust and raised borrowing costs post-S&P downgrade.

– Despite falling homicides, crime perception gaps and unresolved pension disputes persist, complicating budget stability and investor confidence.

– Investors face a dilemma: balancing Chicago's innovation-driven growth potential against structural risks like underfunded pensions and political fragmentation.

– Strategic advice emphasizes diversification, monitoring fiscal reforms, and assessing federal policy shifts that could amplify borrowing costs.

[Continue reading.]

ainvest.com

by Wesley Park

Saturday, Aug 16, 2025 7:36 pm ET

Los Angeles County to Sell $826.3M of Bonds for Harbor-UCLA Medical Center.

The Los Angeles County Public Works Financing Authority plans to sell $826.3 million of municipal bonds to help pay for new construction that is related Phase 2 of the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Torrance, Calif.

The Lease Revenue Bonds Series J are special obligations of the authority and are backed lease revenue pledged under a 2015 master sublease, according to documents posted on MuniOS.

Retail investors interested in buying the bonds can place their order on Aug. 19. Institutional pricing is scheduled for Aug. 20, and closing is set for Sept. 10.

The authority will offer serial and term bonds that mature starting later this year through 2054. Interest payments will made starting on Dec. 1 and again on June 1.

Proceeds will be used to help pay for construction of a 346-bed, 465,000 square-foot inpatient tower facility for Harbor-UCLA, according to the roadshow document. The facility will also have 36 psychiatric beds, a psychiatric emergency room and a rooftop helistop.

Los Angeles County owns and operates the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, a public teaching hospital and general acute-care facility. Once completed it will help to provide services to more than 700,000 residents in the southwestern part of the county, and act as teaching hospital for the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA.

S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings both assigned the bonds a rating of “AA+.”

BofA Securities and Ramirez & Co. are senior managers on the sale.

By Adam L. Cataldo

Write to Adam L. Cataldo at adam.cataldo@wsj.com

(END) Dow Jones Newswires

August 14, 2025 18:58 ET (22:58 GMT)

Brightline Rail’s Rough Stretch Sinks Muni Transit Debt Broadly.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- The struggles of Florida’s Brightline private railroad are affecting the municipal-bond market, with junk-rated transportation debt having its worst performance in a decade.
- According to Miguel Laranjeiro, investment director at Aberdeen Investments, “How Brightline

moves is how the transportation high-yield sector moves," and the company's issues have put pressure on the transportation sector of high yield.
- Dan Solender, director of tax-free fixed income for Lord, Abbett & Co, said that after initial worries that Brightline's woes could spread to the rest of the high-yield market, he is seeing more people park money in lower-rated securities.

The struggles of Florida's Brightline private railroad are rippling through the municipal-bond market, sending junk-rated transportation debt to its worst performance in a decade.

Taxable and tax-exempt bonds of the money-losing rail company, which runs from Miami to Orlando, shed $870 million in market value last month after it delayed an interest payment on about $1.2 billion of debt. Ridership and revenue in Florida are trailing projections, and S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings have cut its senior municipal bonds deeper into junk.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Elizabeth Rembert

August 13, 2025

Longtime Muni Analyst Tom Doe Steps Back From Firm He Founded.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Tom Doe, founder of Municipal Market Analytics, is taking a step back from his career analyzing the state and local-government debt market.
- Doe has transitioned ownership to Timothy Holler and Matt Fabian, but will remain involved in the firm, according to a note to clients.
- Doe plans to spend his time researching the late Bud Collins, a tennis commentator and journalist, with the goal of turning that into a book or exhibit, he said in an interview.

Tom Doe, founder of research firm Municipal Market Analytics, is taking a step back from his decades-long career analyzing the state and local-government debt market.

Doe founded what is now known as Municipal Market Analytics in 1995, and the firm has become known for its research on market trends, risky sectors and distress in the asset class. Its clients include investment firms, banks, security dealers and financial advisers, its website says.

Doe has transitioned ownership to Timothy Holler and Matt Fabian, he said in a note to clients on Friday. He will remain involved in the firm.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Industries

By Erin Hudson

August 18, 2025

University of California to Tap Bond Market for $1.5 Billion.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- The University of California is prepping a $1.5 billion municipal bond sale to foot the bill for various projects at its campuses and academic health centers, according to Fitch Ratings Inc.
- Fitch assigned the debt an AA rating, pointing to record-breaking enrollment numbers and a vast research enterprise, and analysts expect UC's operating performance will remain healthy.
- Fitch analysts said UC's plans to expand its clinical enterprise will boost exposure to Medi-Cal, but also increase capacity for unmet demand, and they expect UC's operating performance to remain healthy despite near-term pressures.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Elizabeth Rembert

August 12, 2025

US Municipal Bond Market Posts Negative Returns in Q2 2025 Amid Inflation and Monetary Policy Uncertainty.

The US municipal bond market experienced negative returns in Q2 2025 due to inflation and monetary actions by the Federal Open Market Committee and fiscal actions by the Trump administration. These broader themes impacted the market, with a focus on interest rates and economic uncertainty.

The US municipal bond market experienced negative returns in the second quarter of 2025, primarily driven by inflation and monetary actions by the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) and fiscal actions by the Trump administration. These broader themes significantly impacted the market, with a focus on interest rates and economic uncertainty.

Inflation, which has been a persistent issue, has led to higher interest rates, making municipal bonds less attractive to investors. The FOMC's recent monetary policy actions, aimed at controlling inflation, have further exacerbated this trend. Additionally, the Trump administration's fiscal policies, including the proposed takeover of the Washington, DC, police force, have contributed to economic uncertainty, further impacting the market [1].

Continue reading.

Ainvest.com

Sunday, Aug 17, 2025

Capital Group Junk Muni ETF’s Assets Jump 639% After Inflow.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- A high-yield municipal-bond fund run by Capital Group saw an inflow of $1.54 billion on Friday.
- The fund’s assets jumped to $1.78 billion, a 639% gain, after the influx of cash, according to the data.
- The increase was due to the ETF being added to Capital Group’s tax-aware portfolio series and model portfolios, a spokesperson said.

A high-yield municipal-bond fund run by Capital Group saw the biggest inflow of any US-based exchange-traded fund on Friday, with an infusion of $1.54 billion.

The Capital Group Municipal High-Income ETF had $241 million of assets on Thursday. One day later, that had jumped to $1.78 billion, a 639% gain, after the massive influx of cash, the data shows.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Elizabeth Rembert

August 18, 2025

Record First Half at ICE Bonds for Corporate and Municipal Bond Trading.

Record First Half at ICE Bonds for Corporate and Municipal Bond Trading

Registers first spread-based click-to-trade corporate bond order

Intercontinental Exchange (NYSE: ICE), a leading global provider of technology and data, today announced record trading volume in the first half of 2025 for corporate bond and municipal bond trading on the ICE Bonds’ electronic execution platforms.

Trading on ICE Bonds reached record notional volume of $120 billion for corporate bonds in the first half of 2025, up 20% from the first half of 2024. Municipal bond trading reached record notional volume of $109 billion in the first half of 2025, up 35% from the first half of 2024.

“We’re pleased to see the strong activity in the first half of the year, which marks the fourth consecutive year of volume increases in our corporate and municipal bond markets,” said Peter Borstelmann, President of ICE Bonds. “This growth is in line with the progress we’ve made over the last few years expanding the functionality on our platforms and building out our institutional and wealth management network of customers.”

ICE Bonds also recently recorded its first spread-based click-to-trade order, which blends the spread-based pricing protocol that institutional investors use with the click-to-trade execution protocol that is predominantly used by retail investors and wealth managers. This offers our market participants the risk management benefits of quotes priced at a spread to Treasuries, along with the ease of use and access that click-to-trade offers investors of all types. It also allows market participants to leverage the most efficient technology to access the growing volume of smaller-sized trades that we have seen become more prevalent in the fixed income market.

ICE Bonds offers deep liquidity pools that support multiple trading protocols including click-to-trade, sweeps, auctions and request for protocol (RFQ), with a vast breadth of fixed income data. ICE Bonds recently launched a new RFQ protocol for Mortgage-Backed Securities (MBS), which sits alongside ICE Bonds' existing MBS Click-to-Trade marketplace and allows clients to send MBS RFQs within ICE TMC's anonymous trading pool.

ICE's evaluated pricing and analytics power those protocols, offering transparency and support across pre-trade, trade and post-trade workflows. Focused on execution efficiency, ICE Bonds enables both anonymous and disclosed counterparty interactions, and trading from odd-lots to blocks for Corporates, Municipals, Agencies, Treasuries and Certificates of Deposit.

For more information about ICE Bonds, please visit https://www.ice.com/fixed-income-da-a-services/fixed-income/ice-bonds.

Provided by Business Wire Aug 18, 2025, 5:30:00 AM

---

2 ETF Options as Munis Offer Insulation From Tariff Contagion.

Lauded for their yield, credit quality, and of course, their federal tax-free income, municipal bond benefits are also extending into the containment of tariff contagion. A pair of funds that income investors should consider are the Vanguard Tax-Exempt Bond ETF (VTEB) and the Vanguard Core Tax-Exempt Bond ETF (VCRM).

As Vanguard noted, because munis derive their income from sources such as state income or property taxes, they are more insulated from the effect of tariffs, which have remained front and center in the 24-hour financial news cycle. Compare this to corporate bonds where certain companies could be affected by tariff levies on their products or even safe haven Treasuries where the rising cost of imported goods could keep inflation elevated and thus, apply downward price pressure while yields remain high.

"Municipal bonds also offer potential tax benefits, along with a domestic focus that largely shields them from tariff-related risks," noted Vanguard in its most recent ETF industry perspective, noting that the income derived from munis are "insulated from the cause-and-effect concerns surrounding tariff policies."

Continue reading.

etftrends.com

by Ben Hernandez

August 15, 2025

Systemic Risk in U.S. Law Enforcement: Unpacking the Financial Market

Implications of Police Accountability and Public Trust Erosion

– Police accountability failures are reshaping municipal bond markets, driving credit downgrades and rising insurance liabilities as cities like Phoenix and Minneapolis face fiscal strain from reform costs.

– Racial disparities in credit ratings highlight systemic biases, with cities having larger Black populations often rated lower despite comparable economic performance, merging social justice with financial risk.

– Third-party litigation financing inflates settlement costs by 27%, pressuring insurers and municipalities as prolonged legal battles increase borrowing costs and regulatory scrutiny intensifies.

– Investors must balance high-yield litigation finance opportunities with governance risks, prioritizing cities with transparent reforms and diversified revenue to mitigate systemic instability.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Henry Rivers

Saturday, Aug 16, 2025 4:30 am ET

The Municipal Bond Market's Post-Golden Age Realignment.

Municipal Bond Credit Quality Remains Strong, Even as the Boom Fades

Between 2021 and 2024, many U.S. public entities, particularly state and local governments, experienced an unprecedented era of abundance. Massive federal aid, unexpected revenue growth (in the face of mounting uncertainty), and a surprisingly resilient economy did not just stabilize many public sector budgets; they elevated them to historic highs.

Continue reading.

advisorhub.com

by Tom Kozlik, HilltopSecurities

August 13, 2025

California Municipal Bonds: A Strategic Bet on Resilience Amid Policy-Driven Growth

Aime Summary

– California's municipal bonds (rated AA by major agencies) show strong credit fundamentals amid fiscal resilience and strategic infrastructure reforms.

– Governor Newsom's Jobs First Blueprint targets 10 growth sectors with $532M in workforce training and regional equity programs to boost long-term economic competitiveness.

– 2025 CEQA reforms accelerate urban housing development by exempting infill projects from costly environmental reviews, creating new municipal financing opportunities.

– Investors are advised to prioritize short-duration, high-rated bonds (AA/Aa+) to mitigate risks from federal tariffs and potential budget cuts while benefiting from policy-driven growth tailwinds.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Julian West

Monday, Aug 11, 2025 10:56 pm ET

Treasury Department Sets Limits on Remaining Wind and Solar Tax Credits.

The Treasury Department issued guidance Friday that narrows which wind and solar energy projects can receive the remaining tax credits that were largely eliminated under the Republicans' "big, beautiful bill."

The legislation passed by Republicans last month axes the credits for projects that don't begin producing electricity by 2028.

However, it contains an exemption for projects that begin construction over the next year. Under the law, those projects would remain eligible for the subsidies even if they don't produce electricity under the specified time frame.

Continue reading.

The Hill

by Rachel Frazin – 08/15/25 5:05 PM ET

Public Utility Accounting: APPA Webinar

September 16 – 18, 2025 | 12:00pm – 3:00pm Eastern

Part one of the three-part Accounting Fundamental Series. Learn the basics of how the electric utility business works, get a grasp on the ins-and-outs of FERC accounting, and review practical examples of how you can use the FERC USoA.

Click here to learn more and to register.

[FINRA Fines Wells Fargo Clearing Services $137.5k for Alleged Violations Related to Unregistered Advisor Activity.]

Wells Fargo Clearing Services has agreed to pay $137,500 to settle a Financial Industry Regulatory Authority allegation that the firm violated a municipal securities rule by failing to set up and maintain a supervisory system reasonably designed to achieve compliance with federal securities laws that ban unregistered municipal advisory activity.

The $137,500 fine for allegedly violating Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board Rule G-27 was part of a $275,000 total fine imposed on the St. Louis, Mo.-based firm by FINRA, which also alleged certain FINRA rule violations.

Wells Fargo (WFC) was also censured, according to a settlement document accepted by FINRA on Aug. 11. The firm consented to FINRA's findings without admitting or denying them, the document said.

FINRA found that from at least June 2019 to November 2024, Wells Fargo (WFC) failed to set up and maintain a supervisory system – including written supervisory procedures – "that was reasonably designed to achieve compliance with Section 15B(a)(1)(B) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which prohibits unregistered municipal advisory activity," according to the document.

That section of the Exchange Act prohibits broker-dealers from providing advice to municipal entities concerning, among other things, investing proceeds from the issuance of municipal securities "unless the broker-dealers are registered as a municipal advisor, with certain inapplicable exceptions," the document said.

"In Regulatory Notice 19-28, FINRA reminded members that if they are not registered as municipal advisors yet hold or transact in municipal entities' accounts, they must establish and maintain a supervisory system and WSPs that are reasonably designed to detect and prevent investment-related activities that would require registration as a municipal advisor," the settlement document said.

During the period from at least June 2019 to November 2024, "Wells Fargo (WFC) had hundreds of municipal entity customers who transacted in municipal and non-municipal securities in their firm accounts, but the firm was not registered as a municipal advisor," the document said.

The firm didn't establish and maintain a supervisory system – including WSPs – that was reasonably designed to ensure that the investment-related activities of the firm and its associated persons didn't require Wells Fargo (WFC) to register as a municipal advisor.

While Wells Fargo's (WFC) WSPs prohibited its associated persons from advising municipal entities about investing proceeds from the issuance of muni securities, the firm didn't supply guidance to its associated persons about what constituted providing such advice and what other activities require registration as a municipal advisor, the document said.

The firm also lacked any process for identifying whether deposits in municipal entities' accounts were proceeds from the issuance of municipal securities and didn't institute controls to detect and prevent associated persons from advising municipal entities on how to invest proceeds from the issuance of muni securities, the document said.

"While Wells Fargo (WFC) relied on provisions in its client account agreement and disclosures provided to customers in their year-end account statements to help ensure municipal entities were not depositing proceeds from the issuance of municipal securities, these provisions and disclosures were not prominent," the document said, adding that the firm "did not otherwise take reasonable steps to ensure that its services for municipal entities did not include providing advice on the investment of proceeds from the issuance of municipal securities and thus constitute municipal advisory activity."

Through its failure "to establish and maintain a reasonable supervisory system and procedures, Wells Fargo (WFC) violated MSRB Rule G-27," the settlement document said.

In November 2024, the firm "took steps to modify its supervisory system, including its WSPs, relating to municipal advisory activity," the settlement document said.

The firm did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

By Kathie O'Donnell

BY SourceMedia | MUNICIPAL | 08/13/25 10:52 AM EDT

AMT: One Big Beautiful Opportunity in the Municipal Bond Market

A primary risk that may have once deterred investors from these instruments has significantly diminished.

For many investors, the phrase "alternative minimum tax" tends to raise eyebrows or trigger confusion, if not concern. However, within the municipal bond market, AMT-designated bonds are quietly offering one of the most attractive opportunities in today's investment-grade sector. And thanks to recent tax legislation, a primary risk that may have once deterred investors from these instruments has, in our opinion, significantly diminished.

Understanding AMT and Its Impact on Bonds

The individual alternative minimum tax is part of a parallel tax system that requires some taxpayers to calculate their tax liability twice—once using the standard rules and again using AMT rules. The AMT calculation includes certain deductions and additional adjustments. Taxpayers must pay the higher liability from the two calculations.

Some municipal bonds—generally those issued in sectors where private entities may benefit, such as airports or solid waste facilities—are designated as AMT. Although interest from these bonds is technically tax-exempt, it may be included in an investor's AMT calculation, reducing the overall tax advantage. AMT bonds are generally issued at higher yields than comparable non-AMT bonds to offset this risk.

Continue reading.

wealthmanagement.com

by Peter Aloisi

August 12, 2025

TAX - VERMONT

[Salisbury AD 1, LLC v. Town of Salisbury]

Supreme Court of Vermont - August 8, 2025 - A.3d - 2025 WL 2264355 - 2025 VT 43

Taxpayer that owned anaerobic digester facility appealed town's decision denying taxpayer's request for reconsideration of town's denial of taxpayer's untimely appeal of town listeners' decision denying taxpayer's grievance appeal of town's tax assessment.

The Superior Court denied town's motion for summary judgment, granted taxpayer's motion for summary judgment, and issued order granting mandamus relief. Town appealed.

The Supreme Court held that town's notice was sufficient to satisfy taxpayer's procedural due process rights.

Town provided taxpayer that owned anaerobic digester facility with actual notice of town listers' decision denying taxpayer's grievance appeal of town's tax assessment for certain tax year, and thus town's notice was sufficient to satisfy taxpayer's procedural due process rights, even though town did not mail notice of the decision to both taxpayer and its counsel; town mailed the decision directly to taxpayer at its address of record via certified mail with receipt requested and heard nothing back indicating that anything had gone awry, and received confirmation that taxpayer had received notice of the decision.

[Congress Has Increased the Tax on College and University Endowments: How Should We Think about This Policy Change?]

The reconciliation bill passed by the House of Representatives in May 2025 includes a significant increase to the current tax on the incomes from the endowments of private nonprofit colleges and universities. This brief examines the logic behind the long-standing exemption from taxation for educational institutions and other nonprofit charitable organizations, as well as the role of endowments, as context for evaluating this policy change and related proposals.

Why This Matters

The income tax system has always included a tax exemption for charitable institutions, the definition of which clearly includes colleges and universities. A significant tax on income from endowments and other financial assets limits the ability of affected colleges and universities to carry out their missions, which include educating undergraduate and graduate students, performing research, and engaging in other activities benefiting their communities. It is unlikely that the revenues from such a tax will be directed toward any related goals. And it is easy to view excluding selected colleges and universities from receiving the long-standing exemption from taxation for charitable institutions as an arbitrary strategy inconsistent with sound public policy.

What We Found

Nonprofit colleges and universities clearly meet the criteria for tax exemption.

- Concerns about the disproportionate share of students from affluent families at elite colleges and universities are valid but not disqualifying for exemption from taxation.

- The restrictions on political activity by tax-exempt organizations do not extend to the viewpoints or ideologies of the organizations or their members.
- Colleges and universities are fundamentally different from private foundations, so it is logical for their tax treatment to be different.
- The tax exemption is generally viewed as a “tax expenditure,” which has the same effect on the federal budget as a direct subsidy, but it might also be thought of as a separation between the government and charitable organizations, as is the case for churches.
- Unlike the 21 percent tax on corporate profits, the endowment tax does not subtract costs of production from income before calculating taxes due.

Endowments allow colleges and universities to support their missions far into the future, not just to fund current activities. They supplement other revenue sources and protect against an uncertain future.

- There is no clear optimal size for an endowment.
- Endowment per student is a better metric than total endowment size for comparing wealth across institutions, but it is far from a perfect indicator.
- The new tax on investment income will affect fewer institutions than the 1.4 percent tax imposed in 2017 because of the exclusion of small colleges. Neither policy generates significant federal revenue.
- The goal of taxing endowments might be to change institutional behaviors or, like the new tax and the one it replaces, simply to transfer funds from colleges and universities to the federal government.

If the motivation for taxing the endowment income of wealthy colleges and universities is to provide incentives for these institutions to enroll more low-income students, other policy approaches directly related to this goal are likely to be more effective. The government could provide support for college preparation among disadvantaged youth and increase grant aid for low- and moderate-income students. If the concern is the inequality in resources across postsecondary institutions, direct subsidies to the underresourced institutions and their students are more likely to improve educational opportunities.

Download Report.

Tax Policy Center

by Sandy Baum

August 13, 2025

S&P Sustainable Finance FAQ: Sustainable Bond Impact And Transparency In Post-Issuance Reporting

This FAQ focuses on post-issuance reporting of sustainable use-of-proceeds instruments. It does not factor into credit ratings or comment on credit ratings.

Post-issuance reporting for sustainable (green, social, or sustainability) use-of-proceeds (UOP) instruments plays a vital role in demonstrating both allocation of funds and real-world impacts. External review providers (such as S&P Global Ratings) may have access to intended allocations and expected impact metrics when assessing pre-issuance sustainable frameworks or financings. Post-issuance reporting, however, provides the first opportunity to evaluate how those initial expectations compare to actual implementation and outcomes.

High quality post-issuance reporting and independent external reviews help demonstrate the issuer's allocation of proceeds in line with the eligibility criteria and sustainability commitments outlined in its corresponding pre-issuance framework or financing documents. These reviews also assess performance—whether meeting, exceeding, or falling short of pre-issuance expectations—and allow for informed stakeholder and fund provider decision-making while enabling the transition to a more sustainable future resilient to environmental and social challenges.

We anticipate post-issuance reporting will continue evolving toward greater consistency and transparency, driven by rising market demands for clarity on real-world outcomes as the impacts of climate change increase, advancements in data collection and validation technology, and increasing coalescence around standardized reporting frameworks.

Continue reading.

14-Aug-2025 | 12:50 EDT

Atlanta Proposes $1 Billion Bond to Rehab World's Busiest Airport.

Atlanta is proposing a $1 billion municipal-bond borrowing to help finance infrastructure improvements at the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the busiest hub in the world.

The city plans to issue about $970 million of bonds subject to the alternative-minimum tax, and roughly roughly $50 million of non-AMT bonds, according to an Aug. 8 securities filing outlining the borrowing plans. Atlanta is also considering designating one or more series of the issue as "green bonds," the filing states.

Proceeds raised in the offering will finance capital improvements at the airport and fund deposits to reserve accounts and construction funds, according to the filing. The airport — dubbed ATL — is in the midst of a capital-improvement plan to modernize and expand its terminals and concourses.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Industries

By Aashna Shah

August 11, 2025

Muni High-Yield ETF's $1.5 Billion Inflow Was Industry's Biggest.

A high-yield municipal-bond fund run by Capital Group saw the biggest inflow of any US-based exchange-traded funds on Friday, with an infusion of $1.54 billion.

The Capital Group Municipal High-Income ETF had $241 million of assets on Thursday. One day later, that had jumped to $1.78 billion, a 639% gain, after the massive influx of cash, the data shows.

The influx was more than seven times the next largest gain among fixed-income ETFs — a $206 million inflow into a roughly $55 billion BlackRock Inc. offering that invests in short-term Treasuries, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. The entire US ETF universe totals about $12 trillion.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Markets

By Elizabeth Rembert

August 18, 2025

- **Ed. Note:** What the heck is going on with all the breathless reporting on the new spaceport bonds? What municipality on God's Green Earth is suddenly going to build a spaceport now that tax-free bond financing is on the menu? We checked in with our friends in Oxbow, North Dakota and they reported back that they currently have no plans to construct a spaceport. Well, at least not until their particle accelerator is operational.
- GFOA: Tracking the 2025 One Big Beautiful Bill Act
- After Muni Bond Fund Blows Up, Broker-Dealers Osaic and Stifel Nicolaus Face Questions.
- Can PILOT Programs Plug Holes in Municipal Budgets?
- Fitch Ratings Publishes U.S. Public Finance Charter School Rating Criteria Exposure Draft.
- McGuireWoods: DOT Increases Maximum TIFIA Loan Financing for Transportation Infrastructure Projects
- NFMA Introduction to Municipal Bond Credit Analysis.
- NFMA Advanced Seminar on Housing.
- And Finally, Kicking People When They're Down: It's Good To Have a Hobby is brought to us this week by *Nguyen v. State*, in which, "a rookie Baltimore Police Officer responded to a report of two men fighting inside a gold Lincoln sedan." Any day you find yourself fighting in a gold Lincoln sedan is a good day. Upon arrival, one of the men was bloodied and lying unconscious on the ground. The rookie officer observed the ambulatory combatant walk up and kick the unconscious guy in the head. Hardly sporting, that. What really got the officer in trouble was his statement to the perpetrator that, "You did what you got to do to get your property back," and then asked him if he had ever considered being a professional fighter. Have you ever considered being a professional cop?

BALLOT INITIATIVE - ARIZONA

Roundtree v. City of Page

Supreme Court of Arizona - July 30, 2025 - P.3d - 2025 WL 2155408

Residents filed a special action complaint against city and city clerks, challenging city's decision that an initiative they submitted to decree that a certain street in the city never be narrowed was non-legislative and thus would not be placed on the ballot.

Following an expedited show-cause hearing, the Superior Court, Coconino County denied residents' requests for declaratory, injunctive, mandamus, and other relief, agreed with the city that the subject matter of the initiative was administrative rather than legislative, and entered judgment for city. Residents appealed. The Court of Appeals affirmed. The Supreme Court granted residents' petition for review.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Residents, as qualified electors of city, had the power to propose an initiative on any matter legislative in nature, and
- Initiative set the public policy of preserving the street as it existed and preventing use of public funds to narrow the street was legislative in nature and therefore could proceed to the ballot.

EMINENT DOMAIN - FEDERAL

United States v. Bennett

United States Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit- July 24, 2025 - F.4th - 2025 WL 2078190

United States, which built border wall on easement it held on private property abutting the border with Mexico, brought condemnation action to take that portion of the land and areas surrounding it to further build up the wall and make related improvements.

Landowner sought compensation for the value of the wall, contending the United States exceeded the scope of the easement when it built the wall, and sought to introduce expert testimony regarding the value of the wall, which the United States moved to exclude.

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas granted the motion to exclude and certified the question for interlocutory appeal.

The Court of Appeals sitting by designation, held that:

- Government built border wall in easement for public purposes and thus was acting through its eminent domain power such that trespass rule could not apply to grant landowner title to the wall, and
- Wall did not exist when the taking occurred, and thus no compensation was due, as the government had not built the wall when it entered into possession.

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT - MARYLAND

Nguyen v. State

Supreme Court of Maryland - July 30, 2025 - A.3d - 2025 WL 2155720

Following bench trial, defendant, who was former police officer, was convicted in the Circuit Court of reckless endangerment for failing to prevent unprovoked and spontaneous assault on individual by a third person that occurred in defendant’s presence. Defendant appealed.

The Appellate Court affirmed. Defendant filed petition for a writ of certiorari.

The Supreme Court held that:

- State failed to prove that defendant owed duty to protect individual from third person’s kicking individual in head, and
- State failed to establish that special relationship existed between defendant and individual for purposes of special relationship exception to public duty doctrine.

EMINENT DOMAIN - MINNESOTA

[Fletcher Properties, Inc. v. City of Minneapolis]

Supreme Court of Minnesota - July 30, 2025 - N.W.3d - 2025 WL 2155530

Residential landlords brought action against city, challenging ordinance prohibiting landlords from refusing to rent to tenants because of desire to avoid complying with Section 8 housing voucher program as preempted by state law, for unlawful interference with freedom of contract, and under Due Process, Takings, and Equal Protection Clauses of Minnesota Constitution.

The District Court granted summary judgment to landlords on due process and equal protection claims, and entered permanent injunction against enforcement of ordinance. City appealed. The Court of Appeals reversed and remanded, and the Supreme Court affirmed. On remand, the District Court, Hennepin County, granted city's motion for summary judgment, denied landlords' motion for summary judgment, and dissolved temporary injunction. Landlords appealed. The Court of Appeals affirmed. Landlords petitioned for review.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Ordinance did not cause a "physical taking" under Minnesota Takings Clause by appropriating landlords' right to exclude others from their property by allowing voucher holders to occupy it;
- Landlords failed to establish that ordinance would result in a negative economic impact that would rise to the level of a regulatory taking;
- Ordinance did not interfere with residential landlords' investment-backed expectations;
- The character of the government action weighed against finding that ordinance constituted a regulatory taking;
- Ordinance was not conflict preempted; and
- Minnesota Human Rights Act (MHRA) did not demonstrate any legislative intent to preempt local action by occupying the field of housing discrimination.

NUISANCE - UTAH

[Barrani v. Salt Lake City]

Supreme Court of Utah - July 31, 2025 - P.3d - 2025 WL 2177876 - 2025 UT 25

City residents brought public and private nuisance claims against city, alleging city's failure to eliminate unsheltered people's encampments on city-owned land adjoining their properties was interfering with their use and enjoyment of their land.

The Third District Court, Salt Lake County, granted city's motion to dismiss. Residents appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- Allegation that city's failure to eliminate encampments constituted a nuisance was a claim that city failed to adequately perform a public duty, and thus the public duty doctrine applied, and
- Special relationship exception to the doctrine did not apply.

City residents' allegation that city's failure to eliminate encampments created by unsheltered people on the city's public land constituted a nuisance was a claim that city failed to adequately perform a public duty, and thus the public duty doctrine applied to the claim; any actions the city could take stemmed from powers it had as a government actor, and city had a duty to exercise its enforcement authority for the benefit of all residents.

City residents did not have a special relationship with city in connection with encampments created by unsheltered people on the city's public land, even if they lived near the land, and thus special relationship exception to the public duty doctrine did not apply to preclude application of the doctrine to residents' claim that the city's failure to eliminate the encampments was a public and private nuisance; virtually all residents of the city "adjoined" city-owned land, encampments and the unsheltered people who lived in them were transient, and city had not done anything to reach out to the residents that would create a special relationship.

NASBO: Despite Slow Growth, FY25 Revenue Mostly Exceeded Forecasts

Newly released end-of-year revenue totals indicate states largely saw a third consecutive year of slow growth in tax collections in fiscal 2025. Despite modest gains in revenue collections, most states ended the year above both their original and revised revenue forecasts. Comparing actual collections to forecasts is a better indicator of state revenue performance than year-over-year growth figures which, in many states, have been considerably impacted by recently enacted tax cuts. While most states are reporting revenue surpluses, the surplus amounts are relatively small, especially when compared to the substantial surpluses experienced by states in fiscal 2021 and fiscal 2022. A number of states indicated their revenue totals were above forecast by less than one percent, with some also seeing revenues come in slightly below forecast.

As NASBO's Spring 2025 Fiscal Survey of States highlighted, after the two fastest growing years on record for general fund revenue in fiscal 2021 and fiscal 2022, growth in revenue collections has been modest in each year since. In fiscal 2023 through estimated fiscal 2025, annual general fund revenue growth on a median basis has been between 1 and 2 percent. Preliminary year-over-year totals for fiscal 2025 were largely in-line with recent trends, with most states seeing slow growth in tax collections compared to fiscal 2024, and other states recording modest declines. When examining individual revenue sources, initial data shows that the growth in personal income taxes was slightly higher than the growth in sales tax collections, while most states reported declines in corporate tax collections. Factors impacting year-over-year growth levels included recently enacted tax cuts, strong stock market performance in calendar year 2024, low unemployment levels, slower growth in consumption, and lower inflation.

Similar to recent years, states are anticipating modest revenue gains in fiscal 2026. Recommended budgets for fiscal 2026 are based on general fund revenues increasing 2.4 percent on a median basis. In discussing their end-of-year fiscal 2025 revenue totals and outlooks for fiscal 2026, states noted heightened economic uncertainty, the potential impact of tariffs and federal policy changes, increased spending demands, and the overall resilience of the state economy.

Continue reading.

National Association of State Budget Officers

By Brian Sigritz

Fitch: Profitability of US NFP Children's Hospitals Rebounds, but Medicaid Risks Loom

Fitch Ratings-Chicago/Austin-07 August 2025: Standalone U.S. not-for-profit children's hospitals demonstrated signs of financial recovery in fiscal 2024, with improved profitability and strengthened liquidity, according to Fitch Ratings' latest annual median ratios report. However, persistent structural challenges — particularly heightened Medicaid funding risks — continue to weigh on the sector's outlook.

After two years of declining profitability, children's hospitals reported a rebound in operating margins and healthy capital investment. The median operating margin rose to 3.2% in 2024, while median days cash on hand increased to 356, underscoring strong sector liquidity and credit fundamentals. Despite these gains, operating margins remain below pre-pandemic levels and the sector faces continued cost pressures — especially from staffing.

"Children's hospitals are adapting with operational innovations and technology adoption, but staffing costs remain high and pending changes to Medicaid funding will test the sector's resilience," said Director Richard Park.

The recently enacted U.S. tax and spending bill, which imposes new limits on state Medicaid payments and supplemental funding, poses a significant long-term risk to the financial flexibility of children's hospitals, many of which serve patient populations with 70%-80% Medicaid reliance. Most Medicaid changes in the bill will not take effect until late 2026, with provider tax and directed payment rate adjustments phased in over several years, allowing some time for hospitals to adapt. However, if federal funding streams are reduced, hospitals may ultimately face difficult decisions regarding specialized service lines and uncompensated care.
Ongoing demographic shifts, including declining fertility rates, add to the long-term strategic challenges. Meanwhile, competition from general acute care hospitals expanding pediatric services continues to intensify.

"Children's hospitals benefit from robust market positions, philanthropic support, and a commitment to capital investment — key credit differentiators that help offset ongoing policy and operating headwinds," said Park.

Fitch's "2025 Median Ratios for Not-for-Profit Children's Hospitals" report is available at www.fitchratings.com

Contacts:

Richard Park
Director
+1-512-813-5704
richard.park@fitchratings.com
Fitch Ratings, Inc.
2600 Via Fortuna, Suite 330
Austin, TX 78746

Gregory Dziubinski
Associate Director
+1-312-606-2347

gregory.dziubinski@fitchratings.com

Kevin Holloran
Senior Director
+1-512-813-5700
kevin.holloran@fitchratings.com

Media Relations: Cristina Bermudez, New York, Tel: +1 212 612 7892, Email: cristina.bermudez@thefitchgroup.com

---

Medicaid Cuts Set to Drain Revenue at Elite Teaching Hospitals.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Few in the US healthcare sector are immune to the effects of Washington's recent cuts to Medicaid, including cash-rich teaching hospitals affiliated with top-notch medical schools.
- Federal cuts to Medicaid will lead to less funding for teaching hospitals, causing them to reduce staff and scale back operations, according to the text.
- The risk to academic medical centers is a drop in revenue as some patients lose Medicaid coverage and reimbursements for their care decline, said Brad Spielman, a vice president at Moody's Ratings.

Few in the US healthcare sector are immune to the effects of Washington's recent cuts to Medicaid, even the cash-rich teaching hospitals affiliated with top-notch medical schools.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Industries

By Erin Hudson and Elizabeth Rembert

August 7, 2025

Fitch Ratings Publishes U.S. Public Finance Charter School Rating Criteria Exposure Draft.

Related Content: Exposure Draft: U.S. Public Finance Charter School Rating Criteria

Fitch Ratings-Chicago/New York-04 August 2025: Fitch Ratings has published an exposure draft detailing proposed revisions to its rating criteria for U.S. Public Finance Charter Schools.

"The proposed revisions will better reflect the diverse risk profiles of charter schools as the sector has evolved to encompass stronger, established operators as well as weaker, possibly newer entrants," said Senior Director Emily Wadhwani. The updated criteria will remodel the way Fitch addresses the sector's unique risks, including those related to renewal and revocation of charters, which are typically shorter in length than a school's bond maturities. The criteria will also explicitly incorporate evaluations of management and governance, and certain bond provisions, in Fitch's analysis.

Highlights of the proposed charter school criteria include:

–Increased granularity within the three Key Rating Drivers (KRDs) that are inputs to final ratings, growing the possible number of KRD assessment outcomes to four from three. In addition, the new proposed nomenclature for the assessments of 'a', 'bbb', 'bb' and 'b' will more intuitively align KRD assessments to final ratings than the current 'Stronger', 'Midrange', and 'Weaker' assessments;

–Revision of the Revenue Defensibility KRD to include three distinct subfactors: enrollment and academics, revenue and funding, and policy framework. In addition, Fitch currently categorizes certain regulatory, political, and charter renewal considerations as "asymmetric" factors that can only negatively affect the KRD assessment. Under the updated criteria, they will be able to either positively or negatively affect the KRD assessment;

–Enhancement of the Operating Risk KRD to include key metrics that scale operating cash flow, carrying costs, and capital spending. A new management framework to be incorporated into the Operating Risk KRD will provide a more structured and transparent approach to assessing the management and governance factors most likely to contribute to the health of a charter school's operations.

–Expansion of the Financial Profile KRD, incorporating three leverage-related metrics instead of one. The KRD will also explicitly consider debt structure risks and certain bond provisions that may promote solvency in stress situations such as financial covenants and debt service reserves; and

–The addition of weights to the components of each KRD to aid consistency and transparency.

"As the charter school sector has matured, the range of management and governance structures and credit risk profiles has widened," Wadhwani added. "The proposed criteria enhancements will support more differentiation among ratings for Fitch-rated charter schools within a more modernized, relevant and transparent ratings framework."

Fitch anticipates no rating impact to current ratings from the proposed criteria updates.

Fitch is actively soliciting market feedback on the proposed criteria. Send comments to criteria.feedback@fitchratings.com by Sept. 30, 2025. In addition to the exposure draft, Fitch has also published an Exposure Draft Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the proposed U.S. Public Finance Charter School Rating Criteria.

Fitch's "Exposure Draft: U.S. Public Finance Charter School Rating Criteria" and the FAQs are available at www.fitchratings.com or by clicking the link above.

Contact:

Emily E. Wadhwani
Senior Director
+1 312-368-3347
emily.wadhwani@fitchratings.com
Fitch Ratings, Inc.
One North Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606

Akiko M. Mitsui, CFA
Director
+1 212 612 7822

akiko.mitsui@fitchratings.com
Fitch Ratings, Inc.
300 W. 57 Street
New York, NY 10019

Media Relations: Cristina Bermudez, New York, Tel: +1 212 612 7892, Email: cristina.bermudez@thefitchgroup.com

Additional information is available on www.fitchratings.com

S&P History Of U.S. State Ratings.

View the list.

11-Aug-2025 | 16:58 EDT

S&P U.S. State Ratings And Outlooks: Current List

View the S&P list.

11-Aug-2025 | 16:04 EDT

S&P U.S. Public Finance Rating Activity: July 2025

View the Rating Activity.

11-Aug-2025 | 11:23 EDT

SIFMA US Municipal Bonds Statistics.

SIFMA Research tracks issuance, trading, and outstanding data for the U.S. municipal bond market. Issuance data is broken out by bond type, bid type, capital type, tax type, coupon type and callable status and includes average maturity. Trading volume data shows total and average daily volume and has customer bought/customer sold/dealer trade breakouts. Outstanding data includes holders' statistics. Data is downloadable by monthly, quarterly and annual statistics including trend analysis.

YTD statistics include:

- Issuance (as of end-July) $338.1 billion, +17.8% Y/Y
- Trading (as of end-July) $15.6 billion ADV, +26.8% Y/Y
- Outstanding (as of 1Q25) $4.2 trillion, +3.1% Y/YDownload xls

---

[MSRB Monthly Municipal Market Trading Summary Through July 2025.]

[View the MSRB summary.]

Aug 5, 2025

[Fitch Ratings 2025 Mid-Year Outlook: U.S. Public Finance Compendium]

The 2025 sector outlook for Water & Sewer has been revised to 'deteriorating,' reflecting higher tariff rates and inflationary pressures. Approximately 89% of USPF ratings have Stable Outlooks, with 6% Positive and 5% Negative.

[Access Report]

Mon 04 Aug, 2025 – 11:03 AM ET

[McGuireWoods: DOT Increases Maximum TIFIA Loan Financing for Transportation Infrastructure Projects]

On July 7, 2025, the Department of Transportation (DOT) announced a policy update raising the maximum percentage of loan financing for transportation infrastructure projects under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program from 33% to 49% of eligible costs. TIFIA was created in 1998 to support the funding needs of transportation infrastructure projects. Although the legislation always allowed for financing of up to 49% of eligible costs, it was the DOT's long-standing policy to cap loan amounts at 33% of costs for most types of projects. This policy update aligns the DOT's practice with the maximum loan percentage authorized by law. Project sponsors seeking to build transportation infrastructure should use this new ceiling to their full financial advantage.

TIFIA provides long-term, low-interest loans and other credit assistance for the construction of surface transportation projects of national or regional significance. Often TIFIA loans are made on more advantageous terms than the traditional financial market, which enables projects to obtain financing that might not otherwise be available.

Congress enacted TIFIA to respond to concerns that traditional public funding techniques were unable to keep pace with the transportation infrastructure investment needs of the United States. Through TIFIA, the government fills financing gaps and fuels the growth of critical infrastructure projects by encouraging and complementing state, local and private investment. TIFIA loans have been deployed to support major surface transportation public-private partnerships across the United States, including the Downtown Tunnel/Midtown Tunnel/MLK Extension project in Virginia and the North Tarrant Express managed lanes network in Texas.

[Continue reading.]

Insight | August 6, 2025

Value in Municipal Bonds: A Strategic Case for Senior Living Infrastructure

Summary

– Dallas Legacy Midtown Park uses layered municipal bonds to optimize capital efficiency and mitigate risk in senior housing infrastructure.

– Its $186.5M structure combines tax-exempt bonds, draw-down loans, and subordinate debt, saving $10.5M in interest while achieving 5.22% blended yield.

– The project aligns with aging demographics, addressing Dallas's 35,000–40,000 unit senior housing gap with 95.6% occupancy in active adult communities.

– Investors gain 5.22% tax-exempt yield (vs. 4.1% Treasuries) and 7-year refinancing flexibility, leveraging demographic tailwinds and supply constraints.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

by Charles Hayes

Wednesday, Aug 6, 2025 2:33 pm ET

Resilient Infrastructure Firms in Bankrupt Municipal Markets.

Summary

– Municipal bond markets face rising defaults in 2024, creating opportunities for firms with operational rigor and strategic foresight.

– Chung Ju-Yung's philosophy of frugality, execution, and partnerships drives value creation in distressed infrastructure, exemplified by Clean Harbors' success in repurposing industrial sites.

– Investors should target firms with proven distressed market expertise, strong balance sheets, and ESG-aligned partnerships to transform assets like toll roads or nursing homes into profitable ventures.

– Regulatory shifts and climate mandates will shape opportunities, with 72% of institutional investors prioritizing sustainability in distressed asset acquisitions.

– The next decade's municipal bankruptcies offer a blueprint for reinvention, rewarding firms that turn decay into growth through strategic execution and community alignment.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

MarketPulse

Saturday, Aug 9, 2025 3:23 am ET

Brookings: The Priority List

Relative to other developed countries, the construction of transportation infrastructure in the United States is extraordinarily time-consuming and expensive. A number of factors drive these costs, ranging from a lack of state capacity to excessive environmental, labor, and protectionist regulations to poor planning and a lack of accountability among state and local political leaders. Without effective reform, the cost of building roads, trains, and bridges in the United States will only continue to grow. But it has been impossible to enact reforms due to interest group opposition and skepticism about funding government expertise.

This paper proposes a framework—the "Priority List"— for how Congress can improve the efficiency of infrastructure construction in the United States. The Priority List would be a short list of nationally important and publicly popular infrastructure projects. The core of the idea is that Congress might be willing to pass needed reforms to get these very popular projects built, even if political roadblocks stand in the way of adopting reforms more broadly.

In constructing this list, the Secretary of Transportation would first identify a set of early-stage, high-profile infrastructure projects. Congress would then vote on the Secretary's list as a "closed rule," meaning that they vote up-or-down on the entire Priority List as opposed to voting on each project individually. The desire to get these high-profile projects built would be the sweetener needed to get Congress to swallow the political difficulty of passing reforms.

Continue reading.

The Brookings Institution

by David Schleicher

August 7, 2025

WSJ: Municipal Bonds May Not Remain This Cheap For Long

The securities are now more attractive thanks to their availability and tax benefits. But how long will this last?

A steady increase in municipal-bond supply, coupled with the survival of their tax benefit in President Trump's spending bill, is making the securities more attractive, even as key sectors such as healthcare and education stand to lose.

Municipal-bond investors are in a sweet spot. Prices have come down, due mainly to historically high issuance, and that pushes up the interest the securities pay. For most of this year, markets worried the One Big Beautiful Bill Act would curtail munis' tax-exemption benefit, but intense lobbying managed to keep that from happening.

The combination represents an opportunity for investors to add some of the safest fixed-income securities to their portfolios while expecting unusually high, tax-free returns. What is unclear is how long this will last.

Continue reading.

The Wall Street Journal

By Paulo Trevisani

Aug. 8, 2025 1:04 pm ET

Unlocking Long-Term Value: How School District Consolidation and Infrastructure Optimization Power Municipal and Education ETFs

Summary

– U.S. school district consolidations address enrollment declines and fiscal strain, with over 750 closures since 2020.

– Infrastructure upgrades in consolidated districts, like Michigan's $75M investments, boost test scores by 8% and property values by 9%.

– Municipal/education ETFs (e.g., MYMJ) target school bonds, leveraging infrastructure-linked returns while addressing equity gaps in underserved districts.

– Strategic investments in HVAC, STEM, and safety yield dual benefits: academic improvements for low-income students and long-term community economic growth.

– ETFs combining high-grade bonds and geographic diversification offer investors tax-exempt income aligned with 5-10 year infrastructure project timelines.

Continue reading.

ainvest.com

MarketPulse

Saturday, Aug 9, 2025 7:08 pm ET

S&P Research Update: Anaheim Public Utilities, CA Series 2025A And 2025B Revenue Refunding Bonds Assigned 'AA-' Rating; Outlook Is Stable

Overview

S&P Global Ratings assigned its 'AA-' long-term rating to the Anaheim Housing and Public Improvement Authority, Calif.'s anticipated $90.9 million series 2025-A revenue bonds and $113.47 million series 2025-B revenue refunding bonds, issued for the City of Anaheim's electric utility (doing business as Anaheim Public Utilities or APU).

At the same time, S&P Global Ratings affirmed its rating on the utility's parity senior-lien (working) obligations outstanding, issued by APU, the Anaheim Public Financing Authority, the California Municipal Finance Authority, and the Southern California Public Power Authority's (SCPPA) Canyon Power Project, of which APU is the sole participant.

The outlook is stable.

Continue reading.

12-Aug-2025 | 15:10 EDT

Los Angeles Department of Water & Power, California: Fitch New Issue Report

The series 2025A bonds are expected to sell the week of August 11 via negotiation. Fitch Ratings expects leverage to range between 8.5x and 9.0x in upcoming years.

Access Report

Fri 08 Aug, 2025 – 2:03 PM ET

Can PILOT Programs Plug Holes in Municipal Budgets?

Some American cities turn to "payments in lieu of taxes" programs to fill budget gaps. The jury's still out on how effective they are.

Should municipalities ask nonprofits to pay fees for the land they use?

It's a provocative question that, for years, has evoked strong responses for and against the idea. As many American cities grapple with declining property tax revenue in the wake of COVID-19 and the rapid adoption of remote work, the topic has received renewed interest.

One way municipalities may seek to add more dollars to their coffers is through "payments in lieu of taxes" programs, or PILOTs. These are agreements that require individual nonprofits to pay set amounts to their local municipality. The idea is to offset the cost of services that a nonprofit receives from the city, such as garbage removal or policing.

Continue reading.

cfo.com

by Dan Niepow

Published Aug. 8, 2025

[S&P Research Update: Midlothian, TX Series 2025 GO Bonds, Certificates Of Obligation, And Tax Notes Rated 'AA+'; Outlook Is Stable]

Overview

- S&P Global Ratings assigned its ‘AA+’ long-term rating to the City of Midlothian, Texas’ approximately $19.0 million series 2025 general obligation (GO) bonds, $15.5 million series 2025 combination tax and revenue certificates of obligation (COs), and $7.6 million series 2025 tax notes.
- At the same time, we affirmed our ‘AA+’ rating on the city’s existing GO and CO debt.
- The outlook is stable.
- The ratings reflect the application of our “Methodology For Rating U.S. Governments,” Sept. 9, 2024.

Continue reading.

12-Aug-2025 | 15:09 EDT

Children's Health System of Texas: Fitch New Issue Report

Children’s Health System of Texas was downgraded to ‘AA–’ from ‘AA’ on Aug. 1, 2025, with a Stable Rating Outlook. The organization has invested heavily in expanding care, including a new $5.2 billion pediatric campus in partnership with UT Southwestern.

Access Report

Mon 11 Aug, 2025 – 4:03 PM ET

Parker County Junior College District, Texas: Fitch New Issue Report

The ‘AA–’ consolidated fund revenue bond rating reflects Fitch Ratings’ expectation that pledged revenue will grow in line with inflation and that maximum annual debt service (MADS) coverage will remain resilient to pledged revenue declines. Net working capital has been maintained above 50% of spending since at least fiscal 2020 and was equal to 95% of spending in fiscal 2024.

Access Report

Tue 12 Aug, 2025 – 2:10 PM ET

White House Upends Puerto Rico Oversight Board With Mass Firings.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- The White House fired five of the seven board members of the federal watchdog that oversees Puerto Rico’s finances.

- The Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico said it “will continue to work to fulfill the mandate of PROMESA and in the interest of the people of Puerto Rico” after the terminations.
- Representative Nydia Velazquez said the move “simply creates an opening to stack the Board with even more extreme, pro-bondholder appointees who will continue to put the needs of hedge funds over the Puerto Rican people”.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Politics

By Jim Wyss, Skylar Woodhouse, and Michelle Kaske

August 5, 2025

Trump Ally Loomer Drags Puerto Rico’s Bankruptcy Battle Into Far-Right Spotlight.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Laura Loomer has gained a following on X while attacking various targets, including the board that oversees Puerto Rico’s finances, which she claims has incurred costly proceedings, including about $2 billion on lawyers and advisers.
- The Trump administration fired five members of the board, a move that threatens to complicate efforts to resolve $10 billion of debt owed by Puerto Rico’s power utility, according to the text.
- Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez said that the president’s action “simply creates an opening to stack the Board with even more extreme, pro-bondholder appointees who will continue to put the needs of hedge funds over the Puerto Rican people,” she said in a statement.

Continue reading.

Bloomberg Politics

By Michelle Kaske, Jim Wyss, and Skylar Woodhouse

August 6, 2025

Billionaire Needing a Win Gets Welcome Reprieve in Puerto Rico.

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Wes Edens’ New Fortress Energy Inc. is in dire straits due to debt and a battle with Puerto Rico’s oversight board over a $20 billion deal to supply liquefied natural gas.
- The White House’s firing of most of the oversight board members may benefit New Fortress, as the new appointees could be more accepting of the company’s plan, according to Luis Raul Torres, a former Puerto Rico House member.
- Resolving the Puerto Rico situation could potentially improve New Fortress’ cash flow issues, said Talon Custer, an energy infrastructure analyst for Bloomberg Intelligence.

[Continue reading.](#)

Bloomberg Wealth

By Ruth Liao, Jim Wyss, and Dylan Sloan

August 7, 2025

[Aviation-Themed Charter School Closes Two Years After Bond Sale.](#)

Takeaways by Bloomberg AI

- Colorado Skies Academy, an aviation-themed charter school, has closed two years after selling unrated municipal bonds.
- The school struggled to boost enrollment, with about 100 students enrolled in the most recent school year, despite having capacity for 375 students.
- Local school district officials had concerns about the school's "academic, financial, governance, and operational performance" when it sold bonds, according to bond documents.

Colorado Skies Academy, an aviation-themed charter school located outside of Denver, has abruptly closed two years after selling unrated municipal bonds.

The school, which trained middle schoolers in aviation aerospace science, struggled to boost enrollment. After selling $12 million of bonds in 2023 to refinance outstanding debt, board members voted on July 25 to close the school.

[Continue reading.](#)

Bloomberg Markets

By Amanda Albright

August 11, 2025

[Orrick: To Infinity and Beyond! A New Tax-Exempt Bond to Finance Spaceports](#)

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act, signed into law on July 4, authorizes tax-exempt bond financing for spaceports, treating them similarly to bonds issued by public authorities for airport improvements.

This new category of bond financing offers numerous benefits for private entities and corporations, as well as space agencies involved in space exploration and related activities.

- **Lower Cost of Capital.** Spaceports can utilize tax-exempt private activity bonds ("PABs") for spaceport development, lowering financing costs.
- **Encouraging Private Investment.** This new bond provision aims to shift the funding burden away from taxpayers by leveraging public-private partnerships for spaceport construction, expansion, and related improvements.

- **No Volume Cap.** Unlike many other types of PABs, bonds issued for spaceports are not subject to volume cap, meaning that there is no statutory limit on the amount of bonds that may be issued.

Under this new provision, a "spaceport" is defined as any facility (including fixed assets and related equipment) located at or in close proximity to a launch site or reentry site used for the following:

- Manufacturing, assembling or repairing spacecraft, space cargo, other facilities described below, or any component of the foregoing,
- Flight control operations,
- Providing launch services and reentry services, or
- Transferring crew, spacecraft participants, or space cargo to or from spacecraft.

Similar to airport improvements financed with PABs, spaceport bonds would be issued by authorized governmental issuers to finance spaceports. Pursuant to the governmental ownership requirements applicable to this category of PABs, the financed spaceport assets must be owned by a State or local government unit, but could be leased to a private entity/operator, where such lease payments (and possibly other amounts) would pay debt service on the bonds.

The statute contains numerous defined terms which are beyond the scope of this summary, however, some of the more critical defined terms are set forth below:

- **Launch Site:** The location on Earth from which a launch takes place and the necessary facilities at that location.
- **Launch:** To place or attempt to place a launch vehicle or reentry vehicle, along with any payload or human being from Earth, into a suborbital trajectory, Earth orbit in outer space, or otherwise in outer space, including activities involved in the preparation of a launch vehicle or payload launch.
- **Reentry Site:** The location on Earth to which a reentry vehicle is intended to return.
- **Reentry Vehicle:** A vehicle designed to return from Earth orbit or outer space to Earth, or a reusable launch vehicle designed to return from Earth orbit or outer space to Earth, substantially intact.

Importantly, given the federal government's interaction with respect to space operations and space flight, the legislation makes helpful accommodations regarding federal use and payments which would otherwise create tax concerns for the bonds.

As a general matter, tax-exempt bonds may not be directly or indirectly guaranteed by the federal government. The statute provides that a spaceport bond will not be treated as federally guaranteed because of the payment of rent, user fees, or other charges by the United States (or agency thereof) in exchange for the use of the spaceport.

For example, assume an authorized issuer issues bonds to finance a spaceport to be leased to Space Co. The bonds are secured and paid with Space Co. lease payments. Space Co. has long-term contracts with NASA and other federal agencies for use of the spaceport, including services provided by Space Co. for satellite operations. The lease payments made by Space Co., which will include payments made by federal agencies, will not cause the bonds to be federally guaranteed.

Effective Date: Bonds may be issued to finance spaceports on or after July 5, 2025.

Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe LLP

August.06.2025

[Built For This Moment: Why cashVest Matters More Than Ever]

At a time when public leaders are being asked to do more with less, the ability to make every dollar go further is no longer optional, it's essential. Especially in light of mounting fiscal shifts, proactive liquidity management is more critical than ever.

It's no secret that the future of interest rates is once again a topic of nationwide conversation. With evolving leadership dynamics and mixed economic signals, speculation is swirling about the direction of monetary policy. While some brace for potential rate cuts, others prepare for further shifts in liquidity and inflation strategies.

But for public sector leaders, the real question isn't what the Fed might do next; it's whether your entity is ready to respond, no matter what happens.

That's where cashVest by three+one stands apart.

From its inception, cashVest was built on the belief that you don't have to predict the market to succeed in it. Instead of reacting to economic shifts, cashVest empowers public entities to plan, adapt, and optimize their resources with clarity and discipline.

Here's why that matters right now:

Federal support is shrinking, and local responsibilities are growing. A recent report from the National Association of Counties (NACo) highlights an alarming trend: counties are facing nearly $1 trillion in increased costs over the next decade due to cuts in federal programs like Medicaid and SNAP, as well as key grant eliminations. As responsibilities shift to the local level, the financial burden is growing heavier.

You can read the full report here: [The Big Shift – NACo]

When rates move (up or down), timing is everything.

Waiting to act means leaving money on the table. cashVest users have the data and strategic foresight to adjust their cash positioning immediately, ensuring every available dollar is working harder for them.

Data makes the difference.

Entities using cashVest earn and save over 30% more on average than those without a data-driven liquidity strategy. That's because they're not just managing their funds, they're leveraging them as strategic assets.

Market cycles are inevitable. Being caught off guard shouldn't be.

Whether it's rising borrowing costs, flattening yields, or the shift of federal obligations to local governments, cashVest helps public finance teams stay one step ahead without adding burden to staff or sacrificing services.

It's not about high or low rates. It's all about smart decisions.

Some of the strongest cashVest results have occurred during periods of declining interest rates. The reason? Users were empowered with the data and tools to optimize timing, improve bank partnerships, and unlock new earnings even when benchmarks dipped.

At a time when public leaders are being asked to do more with less, the ability to make every dollar go further is no longer optional, it’s essential. Especially in light of mounting fiscal shifts, proactive liquidity management has never been more critical.

cashVest doesn’t just prepare you for what’s coming. It ensures you’re always in a position to act with confidence and clarity.

No guesswork. No gambling. Just smarter financial stewardship.

from cashVest

August 07, 2025
