



SPENDING DEAL AVERTS A POSSIBLE FEDERAL SHUTDOWN AND FUNDS THE GOVERNMENT INTO DECEMBER -ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., walks to a meeting at the Capitol in Washington, Sept. 11, 2024.

Congressional leaders announced an agreement Sunday on a short-term spending bill that will fund federal agencies for about three months, averting a possible partial government shutdown when the new budget year begins Oct. 1 and pushing final decisions until after the November election.

Temporary spending bills generally fund agencies at current levels, but an additional \$231 million was included to bolster the Secret Service after the two assassination attempts against Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, and additional money was added to aid with the presidential transition, among other things.

Lawmakers have struggled to get to this point as the current budget year winds to a close at month's end. At the urging of the most conservative members of his conference, House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., had linked temporary funding with a mandate that would have compelled states to require proof of citizenship when people register to vote.

But Johnson abandoned that approach to reach an agreement, even as Trump insisted there should not be a stop-gap measure without the voting requirement.

Bipartisan negotiations began in earnest shortly after that, with leadership agreeing to extend funding into mid-December. That gives the current Congress the ability to fashion a full-year spending bill after the Nov. 5 election, rather than push that responsibility to the next Congress and president.

In a letter to Republican colleagues, Johnson said the budget measure would be "very narrow, bare-bones" and include "only the extensions that are absolutely necessary."

"While this is not the solution any of us prefer, it is the most prudent path forward under the present circumstances," Johnson wrote. "As

history has taught and current polling affirms, shutting the government down less than 40 days from a fateful election would be an act of political malpractice.”



House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries said Democrats would evaluate the bill in its entirety before this week's vote, but with the agreement, “Congress is now on a bipartisan path to avoid a government shutdown that would hurt everyday Americans.”

Rep. Tom Cole, the House Appropriations Committee chairman, had said on Friday that talks were going well.

“So far, nothing has come up that we can't deal with,” said Cole, R-Okla. “Most people don't want a government shutdown and they don't want that to interfere with the election. So nobody is like, ‘I've got to have this or we're walking.’ It's just not that way.”

Johnson's earlier effort had no chance in the Democratic-controlled Senate and was opposed by the White House, but it did give the speaker a chance to show Trump and conservatives within his conference that he fought for their request.

The final result — government funding effectively on autopilot — was what many had predicted. With the election just weeks away, few lawmakers in either party had any appetite for the brinksmanship that often leads to a shutdown.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said the same agreement could have been reached two weeks ago, but “Speaker Johnson chose to follow the MAGA way and wasted precious time.”

“As I have said throughout this process, there is only one way to get things done, with bipartisan, bicameral support,” Schumer said.

Now a bipartisan majority is expected to push the short-term measure over the finish line this week. The agreement on the short-term measure does not mean getting to a final spending bill will be easy in December. The election results could also influence the political calculations if one party fares much better than the other, potentially pushing the fight into early next year.

The Secret Service funding also comes with a string attached, with lawmakers making it contingent on the Department of Homeland Security providing certain information to a House task force and Senate committee investigating the assassination attempts made against Trump.

In a recent letter, the Secret Service told lawmakers that a funding shortfall was not the reason for lapses in Trump's security when a gunman climbed onto an unsecured roof on July 13 at a rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, and opened fire. But acting Secret Service Director Ronald Rowe Jr. said this week that the agency had “immediate needs” and that he's talking to Congress.