

## **Lankford-Hassan Prevent Government Shutdowns Act of 2026**

**Background:** The *Prevent Government Shutdowns Act of 2026* would automatically continue funding for programs, projects, or activities that experience a lapse in funding. Funding would be extended automatically for a period of 14 days (i.e., a 14-day auto CR) at the same rate of operations as provided in the prior fiscal year. If, after 14 days, there still is not an appropriation, then the amendment would extend such funding for another 14 days, and so on, until funding is provided for the full year (or, until there is language specifying no funds shall be provided for the program, project, or activity).

To compel Congress to avoid a lapse in funding and to pass full-year appropriations bills, the amendment would restrict official travel, the use of campaign funds for official travel, and generally keep Members in DC while under an auto CR, until the enactment of appropriations bills. It also would require the Senate to meet each day, seven days a week, during such periods. Further, it would restrict Congress to considering appropriations-related legislation during such periods, including preventing the Senate from considering most nominations – requiring a 2/3 vote to waive or suspend the restriction.

**Vice Chair Murray opposes the *Prevent Government Shutdowns Act* as it erodes Congress' ability to govern and cedes more power to the Trump administration.**

### ***Key Points to Consider:***

- **Creating an automatic, forever CR will reward and incentivize inaction, not prevent it.** For those who oppose the appropriations process or new checks on the administration, it would make it easier for them to -
  - Block bills that increase funding or include policies they oppose, and
  - Shrink the size of government.
    - Those driven to shrink the size of government and/or remove protections for vulnerable populations will not become more reasonable over the threat of the Senate staying in town. They will use that cudgel both for leverage and to draw more attention to their efforts.
- **The *Prevent Government Shutdowns Act* will make it *harder* to complete regular appropriations bills by removing the consequences of the hard deadlines in place now, which force members to negotiate in good faith and agree on annual bills – or risk real consequences, such as a shutdown.**
- **If an auto-CR is enacted, Democrats will forfeit one of the few avenues available to hold the Trump Administration accountable.**
  - Democrats will give up the ability to force Trump to the table and push back on any number of potentially horrible things that could happen in the fall – from messing with fair elections to targeting blue states and cities to reckless wars, to illegally impounding and rescinding funds...

- We need to have all our tools ready to deal with this administration – not take some of them away.
- We saw what happened when the Trump Administration had a full-year CR in FY25. We can't let that happen again.
  
- This bill will *increase* the president's leverage in negotiations—empowering him to oppose any appropriations bills he dislikes, knowing the fallout is not a shutdown but keeping the *status quo* with a funded government and no ability for Democrats to check him.
  - The bill would relinquish power in Congress and shift even more power to the White House.

**In summary, enacting the *Prevent Government Shutdowns Act* will:**

- further erode the appropriations process and Congress's ability to govern,
- weaken Democrats' ability to put the most basic checks on this administration, and
- shift power from Congress to the President and Executive Branch.