

House Republicans Inch Closer to DHS Shutdown **With Two Days Left Until Funding Deadline**

In less than 48 hours, the Department of Homeland Security will run out of funding and shut down, putting our national security at risk at a time when we face threats at home and abroad. As Republican infighting continues to deepen, Republican leaders have a choice to make: they can either placate their most extreme Members and put our national security at risk over disagreements on immigration policy, or they can take responsible action to keep Americans safe by listening to their colleagues who support a clean funding bill, including former Republican DHS Secretaries Tom Ridge and Michael Chertoff:

“You have to engage it in the right form,” [Former Republican Governor and first DHS Secretary Tom Ridge] said. **“Send the president some measures to elevate the debate. But you don’t elevate the debate and you don’t send the message by refusing to compensate the men and women who go to work every single day in a uniform of public service when their mission is to keep us safer and more secure.”** [The Hill, [2/25/15](#)]

“[Former Secretary] Chertoff, who followed Ridge at the agency under Bush, said that while there are some deep concerns about the immigration order, **‘what I don’t think makes sense is to hold the entire set of operations of the Department of Homeland Security in abeyance as a hostage as the legislative branch starts to play game of chicken with the president.’**... **‘At this particular moment, given what is going on in the world and even in this country in terms of the security challenges we face we cannot afford to be distracting the men and women on the front lines of our homeland security with concerns about whether they will get administrative support they need, the equipment they need and their salaries and their paychecks,’** he added.” [The Hill, [2/25/15](#)]

In the last two weeks, Republicans in the House and Senate have expressed their strong disagreement with these political games and are urging Republican leaders to pass a clean bill to fund DHS without delay:

House Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence Chairman and former Chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security Peter King (R-NY): **“‘If a clean bill comes here, we have to accept a vote on it,’** said Rep. Peter King (R-N.Y.), who has been critical of his colleagues during previous funding showdowns. **King suggested the GOP brand would suffer if the Homeland Security agency was shut down. ‘People think we’re crazy. There are terrorist attacks all over the world and we’re talking about closing down Homeland Security. This is like living in a world with crazy people,’** King said. King acknowledged, however, that **his view is ‘probably not’ shared by the majority of his conference.**” [The Hill, [2/25/15](#)]

Representative Charlie Dent (R-PA): **“‘Somebody told me, ‘You don’t know what the Senate will pass.’ Well, I know what the hell the Senate is not going to pass — they’re not going to pass the bill we sent them.’”** [The Hill, [2/25/15](#)]

Representative Tom Cole (R-OK): **“I don’t see how it’s helpful for us to risk a shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security,’** said Rep. Tom Cole of Oklahoma. He said the recent court order to block the president’s immigration executive actions was a compelling reason for the GOP to feel comfortable advancing a rider-free spending bill at this point.” [Politico, [2/24/15](#)]

Representative Mario Diaz-Balart (R-PA): “‘That’s not rocket science’ that those riders couldn’t survive beyond the House of Representatives, said Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart, R-Fla., a longtime advocate of overhauling the nation’s immigration system who has opposed past GOP efforts to dismantle the White House’s so-called Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.” [Politico, [2/24/15](#)]

Representative Ryan Costello (R-PA): “‘We should fund our Homeland Security Department,’ freshman Rep. Ryan Costello (R-Pa.), who opposed the House’s initial move to link DHS funding to the immigration riders, said in an interview.” [The Hill, [2/24/15](#)]

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Corker (R-TN): “We need to figure out a way to get [DHS] funded...” [Washington Post, [2/24/15](#)]

Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC): “...for God’s sake, don’t shut down the premier homeland security defense line called the Department of Homeland Security. If we do, as Republicans, we’ll get blamed.” [National Review, [2/23/15](#)]

House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX): “I fully believe we should be not be playing politics with the national security agency like the Department of Homeland Security particularly given the high threat environment that we’re in right now as we look at ISIS, as we look at this latest pronouncement coming out of al-Shabaab ... I’m very concerned that a Paris-style attack could occur in the United States, anytime, anywhere. And it would be irresponsible for lawmakers and policy makers to shut down this National Security Agency at this very grave time.” [The Hill, [2/23/15](#)]

Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI): “The political impasse on DHS funding must end. Responsible members of both parties must work together to find some way to fund DHS without further delay.” [CQ Roll Call, [2/23/15](#)]

Senator John McCain (R-AZ): “It’s not a good idea to shut down the Department of Homeland Security.” [The Hill, [2/19/15](#)]

Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL): “‘We have to fund Homeland Security,’ Rubio said at a press conference in Las Vegas, according to the Las Vegas Review-Journal. ‘We can’t let Homeland Security shut down.’... Rubio suggested that Republicans should find another path forward for funding DHS now that Senate Democrats are blocking legislation that would roll back President Obama’s executive actions on immigration.” [The Hill, [2/18/15](#)]

While the Senate is advancing a clean bill that would fund DHS for the remainder of the fiscal year at the level agreed to by Democrats and Republicans, House Republicans are deeply divided among themselves and refuse to bring a clean bill to the Floor:

“The Senate moved quickly Wednesday to break an impasse over financing the Department of Homeland Security, **laying bare tensions between House and Senate Republicans as they searched for a way to avert a partial shutdown of the agency...** The stakes over a possible shutdown were greater for Republicans as **several members acknowledged that their party would probably be blamed by the public.** Mr. McConnell had pledged the day after Republicans regained the Senate majority that there would be no more government shutdowns. And for Mr. Boehner, the funding impasse raises the question of whether he has the political muscle to corral his restive conference — including its most conservative members — into passing a spending measure without a reprisal against his leadership.” [NY Times, [2/26/15](#)]

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“Congressional Republicans have been plagued in recent years by a fractious and politically harmful family feud. **Wednesday provided fresh evidence that the party’s sweeping November midterm wins have done little to alter that dynamic. House and Senate Republicans remained sharply at odds** over how to fund the Department of Homeland Security while continuing to do battle with President Obama over immigration... The Senate on Wednesday advanced a measure that would fund the agency through September and forestall any kind of shutdown. But that proposal, crafted by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), could face stiff GOP resistance in the House, **where Speaker John A. Boehner -(R-Ohio) has not been willing to say whether he would bring the bill to a vote.**” [Washington Post, [2/25/15](#)]

“**Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker John Boehner pledged to work together to run the new Republican-controlled Congress in harmony, but evidence is mounting that they aren’t in sync** on the most controversial problem they have encountered so far. The latest sign came Wednesday, when the Senate moved forward with a bill, already facing widespread GOP criticism in the House, that would fund the Homeland Security Department past a midnight Friday deadline. The measure doesn’t include contentious provisions passed by the House to block an executive action by President Barack Obama... **The Senate’s move highlighted a growing gulf between the House and Senate, despite leaders who had pledged to work together to prove how effectively their party can govern.**” [WSJ, [2/25/15](#)]

“**A group of House conservatives is privately mulling blocking the House's ability to vote on any clean DHS funding bill by opposing the rule—a move that would especially anger GOP leaders who view such rule votes as a basic test of party loyalty.** Outside conservative groups, such as Heritage Action, have said they will consider a ‘Yea’ vote a black mark on members' legislative scorecards. And late Tuesday, several Republicans, led by Rep. Jeff Duncan, sent a letter to **Boehner, Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, and Majority Whip Steve Scalise urging them to continue to stand firm** against what they call Obama's executive overreach.” [National Journal, [2/24/15](#)]

Editorial Boards are sharply criticizing House Republicans for their political games, pointing out the serious impacts of a shut down and how out of touch the GOP is with the majority of Americans:

“Republicans in the Senate took a step on Wednesday to avert a national crisis by passing a law to fund the Department of Homeland Security before its budget expires at the end of the week. **Republicans in the House, however, intent on thwarting President Obama’s executive action on immigration, have been unwilling to back away from the dangerous impasse on this issue in their party...** If the department is not financed, 30,000 people would be furloughed. Most of the department’s employees would be considered ‘essential’ and asked to show up to work even though they wouldn’t be getting paid. **The collateral damage of the stalemate are tens of thousands of families who depend on the biweekly paychecks of these front-line workers, including border patrol agents and airport security screeners.**” [NY Times, [2/26/15](#)]

“**Congressional Republicans are so busy this week flirting with a partial government shutdown — their target is the Department of Homeland Security and its 240,000 employees — that they may have missed fresh evidence of how badly out of step with the American public they are on the issue of illegal immigration...** As it happens, **60 percent of Americans — and roughly equal segments of Republicans, Democrats and independents — oppose the GOP’s tactic of threatening homeland security funding as a means to subvert the Obama administration’s immigration policy...** Increasingly, Republicans who use illegal immigration as a wedge issue are at odds not just with the Obama administration, Democrats and Hispanics; they are also at odds with majorities of

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Americans in every region of the nation. That's a recipe for political marginalization." [Washington Post, [2/26/15](#)]

And its clear continued Republican infighting and inaction are threatening the resources needed to fund the following areas critical to our security:

Frontline Personnel: A DHS shutdown would force at least 169,000 front-line security personnel to work without pay, undermining the morale of the workforce responsible for keeping communities safe. An additional 30,000 vital DHS employees would be furloughed under a shutdown. Those working without pay include:

- More than 40,000 Border Patrol agents and Customs and Border Protection Officers;
- More than 50,000 TSA aviation security screeners;
- More than 13,000 Immigration and Customs Enforcement law enforcement agents and officers;
- More than 40,000 active duty Coast Guard military members; and
- More than 4,000 Secret Service law enforcement agents and officers. [DHS]

Law Enforcement Training: A DHS shutdown would halt law enforcement training, restricting the Department's ability to train new hires who would be working to secure the border and screen passengers. [DHS]

Border Security: A shutdown would put several technological improvements at the border, including mobile video surveillance systems and X-ray machines, on hold. [House Committee on Homeland Security, [Fact Sheet](#)]

Nuclear Detection: A DHS shutdown would force the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office in charge of detecting and reporting dangerous nuclear material to close. [DHS]

Coast Guard: A DHS shutdown would suspend or terminate several operational activities, such as vessel safety inspections, maritime license and credentialing activities, environmental and fisheries enforcement, maintenance of aids to navigation, and icebreaking operations. [House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, [Press Release](#)]

State and Local Preparedness: A DHS shutdown would impair FEMA's ability to prepare for future disasters by furloughing personnel who work on grant programs that help states and communities improve their ability to respond to terrorism, disasters, and other emergencies. This would also result in the elimination of jobs and end of key efforts to protect critical infrastructure across the country. [DHS]

Research & E-Verify: A DHS shutdown would hurt commerce by restricting the Department's ability to sustain E-Verify, the system that lets employers voluntarily determine whether prospective employees are eligible to work in the United States. All research & development activities would be halted. [DHS]

Transportation Security Administration: A DHS shutdown would withhold paychecks from TSA personnel charged with screening operations to ensure flight security and effectively screen passengers and luggage every day at more than 450 airports throughout the United States. [DHS]