



Written by [David Kelly](#) on January 16, 2024

Congressional Leaders Agree on Legislation to Extend Government Funding into March

House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) [released text](#) for a continuing resolution (CR) on Sunday to extend key government funding into March, avoiding the [original CR](#) funding deadline of January 19.

Johnson [reportedly](#) said the short-term spending bill “is required to complete what House Republicans are working hard to achieve: an end to governance by omnibus, meaningful policy wins, and better stewardship of American tax dollars.”



Mikhail Makarov/iStock/Getty Images Plus

“On Tuesday, the Senate will begin the process to pass a clean continuing resolution that will avert a shutdown and give Congress the time it needs to finish our work to fund the government for the rest of the fiscal year,” Schumer said in a [statement](#). “To avoid a shutdown, it will take bipartisan cooperation in the Senate and the House to quickly pass the CR and send it to the President’s desk before Friday’s funding deadline,” he added.

If this CR is passed by both chambers of Congress this week, it would be the third Continuing Resolution passed since 2023 funding expired in September. The new CR reinforces last week’s [announced](#) bipartisan appropriations agreement that sets a top-line spending number of \$1.59 trillion for the fiscal year, with \$886 billion for defense spending and \$704 billion in non-defense spending.

In the proposed funding legislation, [according](#) to *The Hill*, “Four of the 12 annual appropriations bills would see funding extended at the temporary levels through the March 1 cutoff date, including dollars for agencies like the Departments of Agriculture, the Food and Drug Administration, Energy, Transportation and Housing and Urban Development. The remaining eight bills fall under the March 8 deadline. Agencies funded by those bills include the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education.”

The passage of a new CR could challenge Johnson’s leadership role as he broke his November [pledge](#) of “NO more short-term CRs,” while pushing passage of the current funding limit. Johnson shared then in a [press release](#) that they were placing “a line in the sand against short-term Continuing Resolutions: House Republicans will no longer tolerate additional short-term CRs absent real progress on responsible full-year funding and substantial policy reforms.”

Johnson added firmly, “We will not waste time on a failed process. If Congressional Democrats and President Biden are unwilling to responsibly finish the important work of completing the FY24 funding bills on this timeline, House Republicans will refocus Washington on FY25, by implementing a full-year CR with appropriate adjustments to meet our national security priorities and demanding the Senate and White House get back to regular order on schedule and without gimmicks.”

Apparently, Speaker Johnson has forgotten his firm stance on making “real progress on responsible full-



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year funding and substantial policy reforms.”

Shortly after the announced CR on Sunday, the House Freedom Caucus criticized the proposed fiscal legislation, [posting](#) on X:

The [@HouseGOP](#) is planning to pass a short-term spending bill continuing Pelosi levels with Biden policies, to buy time to pass longer-term spending bills at Pelosi levels with Biden policies.

This is what surrender looks like.

— House Freedom Caucus (@freedomcaucus) [January 15, 2024](#)

Some House conservatives most likely will not support the CR if new immigration policies and spending limits are not included in the funding legislation. Such opposition from these House Republicans means Johnson will likely have to seek Democrat votes to pass the CR, which ultimately could place his leadership role on shaky ground.

Affirming Johnson needing Democrat support, CNN [reported](#) Schumer said at a news conference, “We need strong bipartisan support in the House and Senate to prevent the shutdown, to overcome the band of MAGA extremists who somehow, in some dark thinking, think a shutdown would be good for America and the American people.”

This week’s discussions in both government chambers will be interesting to watch, as the politicians navigate once again a path to avoiding a shutdown. The real question is, what will the new funding agreement cost taxpayers?



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