



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on February 16, 2015

Boehner Says House Has Done Its Job — DHS Funding Up to Senate

In an interview taped on February 13 with Chris Wallace, anchor of *Fox News Sunday*, Speaker of the House John Boehner (shown) said he cannot promise the American people that funding for the Department of Homeland Security will not run out. In answer to Wallace's question on the subject, Boehner replied, "The House has acted. We've done our job. Senate Democrats are the ones putting us in this precarious position. It's up to Senate Democrats to get their act together."



When Wallace asked Boehner if he and other House Republicans had put the Republican Party "in a box" because funding for the Department of Homeland Security is about to run out and Senate Republicans (mainly Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell) have said that the House-passed DHS funding bill can't pass the Senate, Boehner replied:

Chris, the Constitution makes it pretty clear that the House has to do its work and the Senate has to do theirs. The House has acted to fund the department and to stop the president's overreach when it comes to immigration and his executive orders.

Remember, Chris, the president said 22 times that he did not have the authority to do what he eventually did. And the Congress just can't sit by and let the president defy the Constitution and defy his own oath of office.

And so, the House acted. Now, it's time for the Senate to act.

Wallace reminded Boehner that Republicans lacked the 60 votes needed to end a Democratic filibuster in the Senate. To reinforce his point, he played a video clip of McConnell's statement made at a press conference on February 10, in which the majority leader said: "It's clear we can't go forward in the Senate, unless you all heard something I haven't. The next move obviously is up to the House."

During the press conference, McConnell continued: "We can't offer amendments to the bill. And I think it would be pretty safe to say we're stuck because of Democratic obstruction on the Senate side."

Boehner answered by praising McConnell for doing "a great job as the new majority leader." He then continued:

The Senate Democrats are blocking the ability to even debate the bill. Senator McConnell's offered them the opportunity to offer amendments. It's their turn. That's the way the system works. That's the way the constitution spells it out.

So, the House has done its job. We've spoken. If the Senate doesn't like it, they'll have to produce something that fits their institution.

The Constitution specifies that all bills for raising revenue must originate in the House, but that the



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Senate “may propose or concur with amendments as on other bills.” However, with debate on the House bill unable to proceed because of the filibuster, there has been no opportunity for the Senate even to amend the bill; hence the stalemate.

When Wallace persisted in trying to get Boehner to relent on DHS funding, telling him that “the terror threat [is] only growing” and admonishing him, “You’re not going to allow funding for the Department of Homeland Security to run out,” Boehner held his ground:

Chris, Chris, one more time — the House has done its job under the Constitution. It’s time for the Senate to do their job.

Listen, I’ve got a tough job here. So does Senator McConnell. But Senate Democrats are the ones standing in the way; they’re the ones jeopardizing funding. Why don’t they get on the bill and offer amendment[s], offer their ideas? Let’s see what the Senate can do.

As *The New American* reported last week, McConnell, while also blaming Senate Democrats for not acting on the House funding bill, said that the House must next take action.

“The next move obviously is up to the House,” McConnell said in a statement to the press following a Senate GOP conference lunch on February 10, as quoted by *The Hill*. He added,

It’s clear we can’t get on [with] the bill. We can’t offer amendments to the bill. And I think it would be pretty safe to say we’re stuck because of Democratic obstruction on the Senate side.

However, Michael Steel, Boehner’s spokesman, said it is up to Senate Democrats to stop blocking the Republican-drafted bill, stating: “Until there is some signal from those Senate Democrats what would break their filibuster, there’s little point in additional House action.”

The House passed the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015 (H.R. 240) on January 14 by a vote of 236-191. It was received in the Senate on January 16. On several votes in the Senate on February 3, 4, and 5 to invoke cloture and bring H.R. 240 to a vote, the motion fell short of the required 60 votes, never receiving more than 53.

Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn (R-Texas) was quoted by the *Fiscal Times* as saying: “Unless you can find me six votes, that’s it. We’ve done the best we can. At some time, the arithmetic is the reality.”

However, at the February 10 press conference where McConnell spoke, Senator Cornyn, when asked if Congress would ultimately pass a “clean” DHS spending bill without riders reversing President Obama’s immigration executive orders, answered simply: “I have no doubt that the Department of Homeland Security will be funded,” *The Hill* reported.

H.R. 240 de-funds President Obama’s and Homeland Secretary Jeh Johnson’s executive action for new or renewed applications for the Deferred Action for Child Arrivals (DACA) program and further limits the Obama administration’s grants of amnesty to illegal immigrants by executive actions.

Photo of Speaker of the House John Boehner: AP Images

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