

U.S. Sen. Johnson: Johnson, Lankford and colleagues push to end government shutdowns, hold Congress accountable

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WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) along with Sens. James Lankford (R-Okla.), Maggie Hassan (D-N.H.), Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), Mike Braun (R-Ind.), Rick Scott (R-Fla.), Steve Daines (R-Mont.), Angus King (I-Maine), Ben Sasse (R-Neb.), and Bill Cassidy, MD (R-La.) plan to reintroduce the [Prevent Government Shutdowns Act of 2021](#), which would take government shutdowns off the table by setting up an automatic continuing resolution if government funding has not been enacted on time and by requiring Congress to stay in town until the job is done.

“Government shutdowns are inefficient and come at an enormous cost to American taxpayers,” **said Johnson.** “In Wisconsin, if the governor and state legislature can’t pass the budget, we don’t shut down the state government, we just spend at last year’s level. The Prevent Government Shutdowns Act would enforce the same discipline at the federal level. It is a common-sense piece of legislation that should’ve been passed and implemented a long time ago.”

The Prevent Government Shutdowns Act is supported by the following groups: Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, Council for Citizens Against

Government Waste, FreedomWorks, National Taxpayers Union, Americans for Prosperity, Americans for Tax Reform, and the American Conservative Union.

Upon a lapse in government funding, the bill would implement an automatic continuing resolution, on rolling 14-day periods, based on the most current spending levels enacted in the previous fiscal year. This would prevent a shutdown and continue critical services and operations while not increasing spending.

During the covered period of an automatic continuing resolution, the restrictions put in place include no taxpayer-funded travel allowances for official business (except one flight to return to Washington) for White House Office of Management and Budget staff and leadership, members of the House and Senate, and committee and personal staff of the House and Senate. Additionally, no official funds may be used for congressional delegation or staff delegation travel, campaign funds may not be used by congressional offices to supplement official duties or travel expenses, and no motions may be made to recess or adjourn in the House or Senate for a period or more than 23 hours.

In addition, under the bill, no other votes would be in order in the House and Senate unless they pertain to passage of the appropriations bills or mandatory quorum calls in the Senate. However, after 30 days under the automatic continuing resolution, certain expiring authorization bills and executive calendar nominations would be eligible for consideration on the Senate floor, including a nomination for a justice of the Supreme Court or a cabinet secretary, and narrow reauthorization legislation for programs operating under an authorization that has already expired or will expire within the next 30 days.

These restrictions can be waived by a two-thirds vote in either chamber but not for longer than seven days. Additionally, the bill provides for expedited consideration of bipartisan funding bills if appropriations have not been enacted after 30 days after the start of the fiscal year. This further incentivizes Congress to process bipartisan spending bills and fund the government on time. Lastly, the bill ensures Congress is not under floor and travel restrictions after they get the job done and are awaiting the president's signature. However, if the president vetoes any funding bills, the restrictions on congressional travel and floor consideration are re-imposed.

Although federal funding runs out on Sept. 30, Congress has failed to enact any of the 12 annual appropriations bills, which once again means we face a possible government shutdown or another continuing resolution that fails to take into

account what we actually need as a nation.

Introduced initially in [February 2019](#), the Prevent Government Shutdowns Act requires that if appropriations work is not done on time, all members of Congress must stay in Washington and work until the spending bills are completed. This will prevent a government-wide shut down, continue critical services and operations for Americans, and hold federal workers harmless while Congress finishes its job.