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Home > Three-day government shutdown ends with fourth continuing appropriations bill for 2018

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The federal government went into a three-day partial shutdown after the Senate rejected the short-term spending agreement passed in the House to keep agencies funded past Friday, January 19, when the existing continuing appropriations expired. The shutdown ended when both chambers passed and President Donald Trump signed H.R.195 into law on the night of January 22. As the fourth continuing appropriations bill for fiscal year (FY) 2018, H.R.195 funds the government at FY 2017 levels through February 8, extends funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) for six years through FY 2023, and delays the enactment of three health care related taxes.

Now, Congress has until February 8 to pass a budget for FY 2018, which began on October 1, 2017, and avoid another shutdown. However, members must first reach an agreement on the budget caps for discretionary defense and nondefense spending. The current caps for FY 2018 are set at \$549 billion for defense and \$516 billion for nondefense spending, but Republicans want to see an increase in defense spending while Democrats want any increases in defense spending to be accompanied by similar increases in nondefense spending. If they reach an agreement on the budget caps, Congress can then assemble the 12 appropriations bills into a final omnibus spending bill for FY 2018.

In addition to budget caps, other key issues for congressional leaders include immigration and disaster aid. In an effort to end the shutdown, Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) agreed to bring an immigration measure to the floor for debate if lawmakers do not reach an agreement on immigration policies by February 8. The Senate also has yet to act on an \$81 billion emergency disaster relief package that the House passed in December 2017.

Sources: E&E News; Library of Congress
