



Chairman Tom Cole
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Ranking Member Rose DeLauro
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Letter of Support for S.4632, “The Prevent Government Shutdowns Act of 2026”
Submitted for the hearing: “Funding Lapses: Analyzing Shutdown Reform,”
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations, July 22, 2026

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

On behalf of Concerned Veterans for America (CVA) and the thousands of veterans, military family members, and patriotic Americans we represent across the country, we write to urge you to support S. 4632 / H.R. 5870, “The Prevent Government Shutdowns Act” (PGSA). This legislation, sponsored by Sens. James Lankford and Maggie Hassan in the Senate and Reps. Jodey Arrington and Jimmy Panetta in the House, would be a vital corrective to our nation’s destructive cycle of shutdown politics.

Since government shutdowns were created by Carter-era memo in 1980, they have encouraged a fraught system of government-by-crisis. This status quo gives little inducement to pass regular appropriations on time, leading to worse policy through bloated omnibus bills that sideline individual legislators. These incentives have contributed to Congress failing to pass a single regular appropriations bill on time in any year since FY 2020.¹ The lack of urgency also leads to overreliance on Continuing Resolutions (CRs), which have funded the federal government for 118 days per year, an average of almost four months, in the 28 years between FY 1998 and FY 2025.²

Beyond handicapping our government, funding uncertainty directly harms our national defense. During the record-breaking 43-day shutdown of 2025, Coast Guardsmen and deployed National Guard members went without pay, even as their missions continued. According to the Navy Federal Credit Union, more than 350,000 servicemembers and their families sought bridge loans from them during the shutdown.³

Nearly half of the civilian defense workforce was furloughed during the shutdown, disrupting base operations, training cycles, and other national security priorities.⁴ These included offices such as the Department of Homeland Security’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), which had to furlough roughly two-thirds of its

¹ Drew Aherene, et. al., “[Continuing Resolutions: Overview of Components and Practices](#),” CRS R46595, March 27, 2025.

² Ibid.

³ Megan Cerullo, “[How soon could federal workers be paid after the government shutdown ends?](#)” CBS News, November 13, 2025.

⁴ Ellen Mitchell, “How the government shutdown hurt military personnel,” The Hill, November 16, 2025.
<https://thehill.com/policy/defense/5606795-civilian-defense-employees-backpay/>



workforce, risking critical vulnerabilities in the process.⁵ The inability to predictably pay servicemembers and national security civilians directly harms recruitment and retention, hemorrhaging hard-won institutional knowledge in the process.

Congress' inability to provide regular appropriations continuously undermines our defense-industrial base as well. Lapses in appropriations disrupt the Services' procurement cycles, delaying and raising the costs of equipping our troops. No matter the size of the defense topline, America's servicemembers will get less of the equipment they need, later, and at lower quality if Congress cannot create better funding incentives for itself.

The PGSA would break Congress' handicap, revitalizing it through better incentives. The bill's premise is simple: hold Congress accountable for doing its job. Currently, legislators come and go freely during shutdowns, continuing to work in Washington a few days a week.

The PGSA would create a much-needed sense of urgency, instituting an auto-CR for up to two weeks at a time during lapses in appropriations, but freezing travel funds for Congress and the Office of Management and Budget and limiting consideration of other business until funding is passed. The PGSA's approach mirrors practices used successfully in whole or in part in over 22 states to encourage more sustainable, punctual spending patterns.

June 2026 polling conducted by CVA and YouGov found overwhelming support among veterans, military families, and the general public for legislative action to prevent shutdowns.⁶ Nearly 8 in 10 veterans and military family members view shutdowns as a national security risk, and nearly 9 in 10 support passing the PGSA. The polling also found that good policy is good politics. Nearly 78% of veterans indicated they would be more likely to support a candidate who supports the legislation.

To function more effectively as an institution and to better steward our national defense, Congress needs to hold itself responsible for doing its job. For these reasons, I strongly urge you to support S. 4632 / H.R. 5870, "The Prevent Government Shutdowns Act."

Sincerely,

John Byrnes | Strategic Director | Concerned Veterans for America

⁵ Eric Geller, "CISA to furlough 65% of staff if government shuts down this week," Cybersecurity Dive, September 29, 2025. <https://www.cybersecuritydive.com/news/cisa-government-shutdown-plan-employees/761365/>

⁶ "POLL: Veterans Know America Can't Afford Government Shutdowns," Concerned Veterans for America, July 20, 2026. <https://cv4a.org/news-media/veterans-know-america-cant-afford-government-shutdowns/>