



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on December 27, 2018

## Trump Says Shutdown Will Last “Until We Have a Wall”

Speaking to reporters at the Oval Office on Christmas Day, during the fourth day of the government shutdown, President Trump, when asked when the government would reopen, said, “I can’t tell you when the government’s going to be open. I can tell you it’s not going to be open until we have a wall or fence, whatever they’d like to call it.”

Trump refused to sign a bill to continue funding the government past December 21 if he does not get \$5 billion to help build a border wall. He blames Democrats for refusing to vote for a House-passed bill that includes the \$5.7 billion he wants for the wall.

“President Trump should understand, there are not the votes for the wall in the House or the Senate,” Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) said just days before the shutdown began. “He is not going to get the wall in any form.”

AP reported that the White House presented a counteroffer over the weekend to Schumer that is between Trump’s \$5.7 billion price tag and the \$1.3 billion Democrats have offered, according to budget director Mick Mulvaney. A Democratic aide granted anonymity to discuss the private talks said the White House offered \$2.5 billion — an initial \$2.1 billion plus \$400 million Democrats called a “slush fund” for the president’s other immigration priorities.

Even without passage of the bill providing funding for the wall, construction of portions of it has already begun. Trump told the reporters that he will be going to the border in Texas for a “groundbreaking” ceremony for a portion of the project at the end of January.

“While we’re fighting over funding, we’re also building, and it’s my hope to have this done, completed, all 500 to 550 miles, to have it either renovated or brand new by Election Day,” he said.

The president repeated that he is prepared to wait as long as it takes to get \$5 billion from taxpayers for his border wall while speaking at Al Asad Air Base in Iraq on December 26. Trump blamed the shutdown on Democrat Nancy Pelosi, who was expected to become speaker of the house on January 3.

“Nancy is calling the shots,” said Trump, suggesting that Pelosi’s opposition to his demand for wall funding had to do with her need for votes to become speaker.



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