



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on December 11, 2014

## Fate of “Bipartisan” Spending Bill Uncertain as Both Parties Voice Criticisms

Earlier this week, House Republicans cut a deal with Senate Democrats on a 1,600-page Omnibus Appropriations bill would fund most of the government through September, and fund the Department of Homeland Security through February 27. If the bill does not pass by midnight on December 11, some government operations will shut down. According to the *Washington Post*, in case an agreement cannot be reached in time, top appropriators have prepared a short-term extension for a vote that would fund the government for a few days while the House and Senate pass the final bill.



The bill includes funding for the Affordable Care Act (ObamaCare), even as House Republicans have voted to repeal the law multiple times. It would also allow President Obama’s amnesty of as many as five million illegal immigrants through February 27, 2015. The same bill would prohibit the issuance of regulations that outlaw incandescent light bulbs. But liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans have both raised issues with the bill, preventing what congressional leaders had hoped would be a quick passage in order to avoid a government shutdown.

House Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers (R-Ky.) and Senate Appropriations Chairwoman Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) released a joint statement praising what they called a “bipartisan” accomplishment.

“After months of thorough, business-like, sometimes tough but always civil negotiations, we have reached a responsible, bipartisan and bicameral agreement on funding for government operations for 2015,” said Rogers and Mikulski in their statement. “This bill fulfills our constitutional duty to fund the government, preventing damage from shutdown politics that are bad for the economy, cost jobs and hurt middle class families.”

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But some Republicans believe the bill to be in violation of the conservative agenda. Representative Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) said he would not vote for the omnibus government funding bill because it funds Obama’s unilateral amnesty. “I’m not voting for the omnibus,” Jordan stated. “I mean there’s a whole host of reasons. But the main one is we’re not addressing the president’s executive amnesty. We’re not addressing that. So that’s the main reason why I’m voting no on it.”

Likewise, Representative Justin Amash (R-Mich.) states he too will vote against the bill because he does not support most of the appropriations bills that make up the omnibus.

While GOP leaders were hoping to hold off on the battle over amnesty until next year, some conservatives are prepared to start that fight now. “I feel like the leadership is asking us to punt on first down,” Representative Mo Brooks (R-Ala.) said Wednesday.



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But House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) is urging his colleagues to wait until next year to revisit the immigration issue. "Without a threat of a government shutdown, this sets up a direct challenge to the president's unilateral actions on immigration when we have new majorities in both chambers of Congress," he said Wednesday.

But Republican Representative John Fleming of Louisiana believes Republicans should not wait until February because by then, the administration will have completed the hiring of hundreds of employees to implement amnesty. "It will be too late for us to act," Fleming said.

Opposition to the omnibus bill is not one-sided. Key Democrats such as Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) are demanding that provisions of the bill be stripped before they vote in its favor. Pelosi took particular issue with provisions dealing with financial regulation and campaign finance.

Without support from Democrats, the bill would not likely pass. Fox News explains:

Though Democrats are in the minority in the House, Speaker John Boehner likely needs their support to pull the \$1.1 trillion spending bill over the finish line. Dozens of conservative Republicans stand to defect on the vote over myriad concerns, including complaints that the bill does not try to defund President Obama's immigration executive actions.

Boehner can only afford to lose 17 Republican votes before he needs help from Democrats to pass the bill. WND reports that Rep. Fleming estimates anywhere from 60 to 80 conservatives will vote against the bill.

Pelosi is opposed to a provision that changes the 2010 Dodd-Frank regulation of complex financial instruments known as derivatives and a provision that increases limits on donations to political parties from \$32,400 to \$324,000. "These provisions are destructive to middle class families and to the practice of our democracy," Pelosi said. "We must get them out of the omnibus package." She later told reporters her members are "very, very concerned" about them.

According to Boehner, the provisions were added to the bill as a trade-off and will remain in the bill.

Other Democrats such as Representative Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) have stated that they would oppose the bill. "I've already found lots of provisions that are against the public interest," Van Hollen said. "I find it surprising that some people are threatening to shut down the government in order to extract big benefits for big banks at the expense of consumers and taxpayers."

Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) called the spending bill "the worst of government for the rich and powerful."

In typical Washington fashion, some lawmakers are asking their colleagues to grit their teeth and bear it. "This may be a 'hold your nose' vote," the AP quoted Representative Gerry Connolly (D-Va.) as saying. "Do you really think next year, with Republicans entirely in control, that it would actually get better?"

Sources close to the whip operation told Fox News that they believe they will have the votes to pass the bill. One source even said that while a number of Republicans are voicing opposition to the bill, they will stand to vote in the affirmative if their votes are needed.

Some Republicans are touting the bill as a "win" in that the GOP was able to secure spending cuts and policy changes in the legislation. "I think we won on policy, the budget numbers are lower than I ever thought it would be," said Representative Richard Hudson (R-N.C.).



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Republicans negotiated a significant cut to the Internal Revenue Service budget and a cut to the budget for the Environmental Protection Agency as well. They also were able to exempt a number of agricultural projects from clean water rules.

But Democrats were able to secure budget increases for the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Democrats blocked efforts by Republicans to stop the Obama administration's regulations on greenhouse gas emissions.

The bill includes funding to battle the outbreak of Ebola in West Africa and further funding to combat the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

But the fate of the bill remains uncertain as both parties continue to slam the legislation.

Meanwhile, White House press secretary Josh Earnest said that "it is certainly possible that the president could sign this piece of legislation."



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