



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 7, 2015

## Conservatives Eye Spending Bill to Defund Planned Parenthood

Though Republicans in the Senate failed to defund Planned Parenthood through legislation, the GOP is not without options. Some lawmakers are looking to the budget as a means by which to defund the scandalous pro-abortion organization by adding a defunding provision to the Continuing Resolution, which is to be debated in September.



Fox News [reports](#) that “Government money expires Oct. 1, the start of the federal fiscal year. The House and Senate haven’t sent any annual spending bills to the White House for President Obama to sign. That means lawmakers must prep an interim spending bill (known as a ‘Continuing Resolution’ or ‘CR’) to keep the lights on.”

For frustrated conservatives who have been unable to advance a Planned Parenthood defunding bill, the Continuing Resolution presents an opportunity to achieve the goal of cutting taxpayer funds to an organization that treats aborted fetuses as nothing more than profitable commodities.

Planned Parenthood, which is responsible for approximately 300,000 abortions each year, has received federal funding since 1970, when President Richard Nixon signed the Family Planning Services and Population Research Act. Constitutionalists have long observed that the federal government has no authority in the U.S. Constitution to fund any of Planned Parenthood’s activities, and calls to cut funding to Planned Parenthood have increased after the release of undercover videos recorded by the Center for Medical Progress in which Planned Parenthood officials discuss the sale of body parts of aborted babies. Critics contend that the scenes captured in the video are not only despicable but illegal if the organization was making profits on the organ sales.

During a procedural vote on Monday, Senate Republicans failed to pass legislation that would have barred all federal funds to Planned Parenthood. With just 53 votes, the Republicans failed to secure the supermajority they needed to debate the standalone bill.

And while there is not a current consensus amongst Republicans that they should go this route, Democrats are already drawing a line in the sand. “The move is theirs,” said Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) of Republicans. “There is no such thing as a clean CR for Republicans.”

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) is seemingly hopeful that divisions among Republicans on this issue will result in a failure to reach an agreement and permit Democrats to have more influence over the CR. “If they don’t have the Republican votes to pass it, then hopefully we can have some influence over what is in that CR,” Pelosi said.



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As noted by Fox News, there is a precedent for this: “During [House Speaker John] Boehner’s speakership, the Ohio Republican has repeatedly shown a willingness to assemble a minimal group of GOPers — coupled with a large contingent of Democrats — to approve ‘must-pass’ measures and avert political crises.”

Earlier this year, Boehner struck a deal with Pelosi to advance a bill to drive a defense spending increase and the so-called “doc fix” through the United States House of Representatives.

When questioned on his decision to strike a deal with the Democrats before discussing it with members of his own party, Boehner said, “I just think that there was an opportunity that presented itself to work in a bipartisan way to find the appropriate offsets, spending offsets.... And the door opened, and I decided to walk in it. As simple as that.”

Republican efforts to block funding for Obama’s executive action on immigration also came to an end when Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and Boehner caved and offered Democrats a clean funding bill. As a result, Speaker Boehner told his colleagues that they were out of options, and the House accepted the bill.

Boehner also turned to Pelosi to help pass the Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act despite heavy opposition from his fellow Republicans.

Regarding the issue of defunding Planned Parenthood, Senator Susan Collins (R-Maine) contrived an amendment that she believed would have been less controversial in the Senate. Collins’ idea was to simply defund the Planned Parenthood clinics associated with the fetal tissue harvesting scandal. “I want to take a more measured approach,” said Collins about her amendment. She described the original Republican effort as “a blunt approach which penalizes clinics which have done nothing wrong.”

But Collins was unable to offer her amendment on Monday without the required 60 votes.

Meanwhile, Congress is reportedly running short on time. Congress will not be meeting for business again until September 8, at which point they will be tasked with consideration of President Obama’s nuclear deal with Iran. Fox News reports,

Citing the gravity of the issue, McConnell wants all 100 senators to speak on the floor about the matter. He wants fellow senators to “remain in their seats and listen.” He also intends to suspend all committee hearings during this crucial time.

September will not present Congress with much time, as a visit by Pope Francis to the Capitol along with a mid-September break for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur will leave little room for Congress to debate government spending.

This scenario only further creates the possibility for McConnell to reach across the aisle for help from the Democrats. The threshold to get a bill on the floor is 60 votes, followed by another vote to finish debate, requiring 60 votes. If McConnell did not have the necessary votes from his fellow Republicans, he could consider working with the Democrats to avoid a government shutdown.

Since McConnell reiterated his promise of “no more government shutdowns” to reporters on Tuesday, it seems he could turn his back on the party’s conservatives.

But with McConnell remaining largely silent on the Continuing Resolution and defunding Planned Parenthood, Americans are left to speculate.

*The Hill* reports that a Senate Democratic leadership aide predicted that McConnell would have no



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choice but to include riders defunding Planned Parenthood or the Environmental Protection Agency, and a conservative Senate aide articulated similar sentiments. “With any continuing resolution, there’s going to be incredible pressure to put riders on it,” acknowledged the aide.



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