



Written by [Peter Rykowski](#) on July 18, 2026

What Will Happen to “Reconciliation 3.0” With Lindsey Graham Gone?

The sudden death last week of U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) has thrown a question mark into congressional Republicans’ agenda over the coming months. This includes negotiations over whether to pass a third reconciliation bill, and what provisions to include in it.

Bypassing the Filibuster

Graham, the chairman of the Senate Committee on the Budget, had been [working](#) on legislation that would appropriate additional funding for the Department of Defense, among other priorities. As a reconciliation bill, it would require only a simple majority to pass, bypassing the Senate filibuster. The current Congress previously enacted the [One Big Beautiful Bill](#) (OBBB), U.S. President Donald Trump’s signature spending and policy legislation, and the [Secure America Act](#), which provided funding for border security and immigration enforcement, using the same process.



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House Taking the Lead

With Graham gone, the U.S. House appears to be taking the lead on the process. Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (R-La.) is [seeking](#) to rally his GOP members around the proposal. The House Committee on the Budget [on Thursday](#) passed a resolution to advance the bill to the House floor. The advanced proposal [appropriated](#) an additional \$73 billion to the Department of Defense and \$12 billion for farm assistance, and created an election-grant program promoting policies in the proposed SAVE America Act.

New Senate Leadership

In the Senate, Senator Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) is set to [replace](#) Graham as chairman of the Budget Committee. Johnson is publicly supportive of a third reconciliation bill, and [said](#) on Monday that he had “already met with Lindsey’s staff” to discuss the legislation. However, Johnson is more conservative than Graham — he holds a lifetime Freedom Index score of [72 percent](#) compared to Graham’s [57 percent](#) — and is more skeptical about federal spending. He may seek greater spending cuts to offset the supplemental appropriations in the bill — and may be constitutionalists’ greatest hope of mitigating another OBBB-esque big-spending debacle.



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There's no guarantee that a third reconciliation bill will pass, particularly with the GOP's slim congressional majorities. Regardless of the outcome, though, Graham's untimely death is affecting the process.

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