House Likely to Move CR Soon, But Complications Remain; Increased Talk of Budget Negotiations, But No Action Yet

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Legislative Activity

House Likely to Move CR Soon, But Complications Remain

With only eight legislative days scheduled in the House before government funding runs out on September 30, Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) is under a short timeline to push a Continuing Resolution (CR) through the House. Speaker Boehner could bring a CR to the floor this week, likely to fund the government through mid- to late-December, but complicating the process many conservative House Republicans have said they will not vote for a CR unless it includes a provision defunding Planned Parenthood, after several controversial videos were released over the last few months.

Speaker Boehner can only afford to lose 28 of the 246 Republicans in the House, or he will have to work out a deal to gain Democratic support. The House Freedom Caucus, with more than 40 members, has been vocal in its opposition to a CR that does not defund Planned Parenthood. Additionally, Boehner’s Speakership could be on the line, as Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) recently filed a motion to unseat him and several conservative members have implied that defunding Planned Parenthood is a critical issue for them.

Republican Leadership has consistently stated they do not want to shut down the government, and if they need Democratic support, the most likely outcome is a clean CR that will keep the government open until December. It is also unlikely that President Obama would sign a CR that includes controversial riders or defunds Planned Parenthood, though the President has asked for a CR that decreases the Department of Defense’s Overseas Contingency Operations account and provides an additional $450 million in emergency funding to fight wildfires.

Increased Talk of Budget Negotiations, But No Action Yet

In recent weeks, some Republicans have voiced support for budget negotiations, and Democrats have been calling for negotiations since the beginning of the appropriations process, though it is unclear who will lead the negotiations or what they will include. A CR funding the government into December is likely, which would provide some time for budget negotiations to take place, although Congress will also be faced with raising the debt limit in December which could complicate the negotiation process.

White House press secretary Josh Earnest recently implied the President would let Senate Democrats take the lead during negotiations, with the White House offering advice and support. Democrats are almost certainly going to call for equal increases for both Defense and non-Defense spending, while Republicans will likely focus on increasing defense spending alone.

This Week’s Hearings:

- No upcoming hearings are currently scheduled.