

APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

**December
15th, 2025**

Cuellar Reinstated to Top Appropriations Subcommittee Role

Democrats on the House Appropriations Committee voted Thursday to recommend reinstalling Rep. Henry Cuellar (D-TX) as the ranking member of the Homeland Security subcommittee, after President Trump pardoned the congressman for alleged bribery schemes last week. The decision comes at a critical time for appropriators as Congress faces a tight turnaround to wrap up nine long-delayed fiscal 2026 appropriations bills by January 30th. Of the nine remaining funding bills, Homeland Security is among the most likely to be funded through a full-year continuing resolution – meaning DHS funding levels would be a continuation of FY24 and FY25 levels.

Additional CR Provisions and Full Year Funding Details

Republican senators have lined up a number of environment-related amendments to the Interior-Environment appropriations measure as the Senate inches closer to a vote on a broader spending package. Among the amendments is language that would allow for the creation of a consolidated wildland firefighting agency and a proposal to slash hundreds of millions of dollars in water infrastructure funding. The amendments are the product of weeks of negotiations between conservative senators who have objections to parts of a proposed five-bill “minibus” and senior appropriators, who need their support in order to move the package.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) and Senate appropriators remain optimistic on advancing a package of spending bills that would fund the departments of Defense, Labor, HHS, Transportation, Housing, Interior, Commerce and Justice, as well as science agencies. But even with a lightning-fast turnaround this week in the Senate, the package almost certainly wouldn’t get a vote in the House until next month.