

APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

January
12th, 2026

Minibus Awaits Senate Passage as Earmarks Become a Point of Contention

Last week, the House introduced and passed a three-bill minibus to fund the Commerce-Justice-Science, Interior-Environment, and Energy and Water accounts by a vote of 397-28. The package was briefly stalled over objections by conservatives to a \$1 million earmark for wraparound services in Rep. Ilhan Omar's (D-MN) district. House Appropriations Chair Tom Cole (R-OK) quickly pulled the earmark from the bill to advance the bill to the House floor for a vote. Now, hardliners are demanding more involvement in the appropriations process and in scrutinizing earmarks.

As the package moves to the Senate floor, several Republican Senators are also calling for more limitations on earmarks. While this first minibus is expected to move to final passage by the end of the week, it's unclear how the earmark debate will impact the remaining six funding bills, particularly the Transportation-HUD bill, which typically contains the vast majority of funding for local projects.

Appropriators Release Text of Two-Bill Minibus

Congressional Appropriators have released the text of a second minibus package that will fund the Financial Services and National Security-State/Foreign Operations accounts. The legislation would fund the departments of State and Treasury through the end of the fiscal year, along with the IRS, the Judiciary, and the Federal Trade Commission. House Republican leaders plan to tee up a floor vote as soon as Wednesday on the package.

Appropriators were hoping to include a third bill to fund the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), but were unable to reach an agreement due to Democratic concerns about ICE operations. The increasingly tense political environment could shelve the passage of many of the funding bills until the end of the month. In the meantime, Congress still has to produce a funding vehicle for DHS, Transportation-HUD, Defense, and Labor-HHS, which together make up almost 90 percent of government spending.