

Dewonkify – CR (Continuing Resolution)

Article By:

James W. Twaddell, IV

Word: CR/Continuing Resolution

Definition: Legislation to provide budget authority for federal agencies to continue operating until the 12 regular appropriations spending bills are passed. Congress passes a continuing resolution (CR) in the form of a joint resolution at or near the beginning of a new fiscal year (starting on October 1), or when the previous CR is about to expire, and it funds the government at or near current levels for a specific length of time.

Used in a Sentence: “Congress’s Use of Continuing Resolutions is a Common Practice”

(<http://www.nationaljournal.com/congress-legacy/congress-s-use-of-continuing-resolutions-is-a-common-practice-20120911>)

History: Since 2000, Congress has passed CRs ranging anywhere from one day to 157 days, with the highest number of CRs signed in 2001, when 21 CRs were passed. Standoffs between political parties or between the president and Congress may lead to the necessity of a CR for the government to remain functional. In 1995, the most noteworthy issue regarding funding the government through a CR occurred when a clash between the Republican Congressional leadership and President Clinton led to a shutdown of the federal government for a total of 28 days.

What It Means: Unless the 12 annual appropriations bills that Congress must pass are approved by the House and Senate and signed by the President, CRs are necessary to continue normal government operations. The government is currently operating on a CR that is effective from October 1, 2012 to March 27, 2013, encompassing nearly 6 months of fiscal year 2013. On March 6, 2013, the House voted 267 to 151 on a \$982 billion CR that would continue funding through the end of the fiscal year. It maintains many post-sequestration spending levels while protecting some defense and veterans’ programs. The Senate is expected to move on its own version of a CR next week, which is likely to include more funding flexibility for non-defense discretionary programs. The two chambers have until the spring recess to agree on a new CR.

***Gwen Rathbun contributed to this posting.*

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