

# Immigration Takes Center Stage: Can Congress Avoid Shutdown in 2024?

Article By:

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Congress returns from recess in 2024 facing a daunting task: approving crucial supplemental funding while navigating the contentious terrain of immigration and border security. This delicate dance threatens to trigger a government shutdown, jeopardizing aid for Ukraine and Israel.

## Funding Fallout: Immigration Intersects with Global Aid

President Biden's \$105.9 billion supplemental funding proposal aims to bolster international allies like Ukraine and Israel. However, Republican support hinges on finding common ground on immigration and border security. Senate Republicans envision tying an immigration agreement to the funding package, while House Republicans prefer separate legislation, potentially pushing HR 2, the House-passed border bill, as a prerequisite.

Failure to pass the supplemental funding could jeopardize aid to allies, while a Jan. 19 government shutdown looms if funding for four key agencies is not secured. This upcoming deadline, in addition to the tension surrounding potential impeachment proceedings against Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas, make the atmosphere in Washington increasingly volatile.

## Important Upcoming Deadlines

Past shutdowns remain top of mind. Congress narrowly avoided shutdowns twice in 2023, highlighting the ongoing budget struggles. Two upcoming deadlines may test bipartisan resolve.

There will be a partial shutdown Jan. 19 unless funding for the Agriculture, Energy & Water, Military Construction-VA, and Transportation-HUD departments is secured. Speaker Johnson (R-LA) proposes a full-year extension, but this approach may cause greater uncertainty. The deadline for the remaining eight appropriations bills is Feb. 2, at which point a wider shutdown may occur if congressmembers are not able to agree.

A government shutdown would cause non-essential personnel to be furloughed, thus disrupting national park access, delaying passport issuance, and inhibiting scientific research. Economic uncertainty would ripple through businesses and consumer confidence. In short, a shutdown would hinder both national security and domestic well-being.

## Uncertain Future

With much at stake, finding common ground is paramount. Senate negotiators strive to bridge the partisan divide and craft a workable immigration agreement. Yet the question remains: will the House follow suit, or will fragmented legislation jeopardize the entire funding package? The coming weeks will test bipartisan cooperation.

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National Law Review, Volume XIV, Number 10

Source URL: <https://natlawreview.com/article/immigration-takes-center-stage-can-congress-avoid-shutdown-2024>