US Policy

July 17, 2026

CONGRESS FOCUSES ON BUDGET

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The president spoke to the nation last night about his concerns surrounding election security, but on Capitol Hill, the focus has been on the need to pass a federal budget before the Oct. 1 deadline.

While the war in Iran continued this week with tensions growing over the Strait of Hormuz, the House was focused on budget issues and the spending deadline. The center of the administration's budget requests is to deal with the urgent needs of the Defense Department. The House is working on a strategy to ensure that there is not a government shutdown weeks before the election.

The plan that seems to be emerging is for Congress to pass a Continuing Resolution (CR) that will fund the government until after the November elections but pass some additional legislation that will provide money that the Defense Department needs urgently to start ordering critical munitions.

In addition to the war in Iran, during the Biden administration, significant U.S. military hardware was sent to Ukraine to help them execute their war with Russia. The combination has made the Defense needs urgent.

The House and Senate leadership need to find a pathway that can get through the Senate. With the Senate filibuster rules, they need a plan that has some Democratic support. One strategy would be to start consideration of the Continuing Resolution in the next few weeks prior to the monthlong August break. After the break, Congress will only have four weeks to act on a spending plan, likely a Continuing Resolution, before the October break when legislators will be anxious to go home and campaign.

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