The Daily Dish

FY 2026 Appropriations Pulse Check

JORDAN HARING | AUGUST 27, 2025

Congress will be up against the clock when it returns from August recess on Tuesday.

Fiscal year (FY) 2025 ends on September 30 and the continuing resolution (CR) that has funded the federal government since March 15 will expire. Policymakers will have just 28 days to complete work on the 12 full-year appropriations bills for FY 2026 or enact another CR to keep the federal government funded at current levels. Otherwise, a government shutdown will occur.

So far, Congress has not enacted any of the 12 full-year appropriations bills for the new fiscal year that begins on October 1. The appropriations process has been underway for several months in Congress, though the work that's been done shows the House and Senate are on different pages when it comes to what the topline spending levels should be for the new fiscal year. See my latest here for a full breakdown.

Let's check in on the House first. The House Appropriations Committee adopted 302(b) subcommittee allocations that specify the amount that each of the 12 subcommittees must draft their respective appropriations bill for the programs under their jurisdiction. The 302(b)s allocate nearly $1.6 trillion of total base discretionary budget authority (BA) for FY 2026, including $892.5 billion for defense programs and $705.6 billion for nondefense programs. The House leaves defense spending frozen at the FY 2025 level but cuts nondefense spending by $2.4 billion.

Eleven of the 12 bills have advanced out of their respective subcommittees, nine of the 12 bills have cleared the House Appropriations Committee, and two of the 12 bills have been passed by the full House. The Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies bill has yet to be introduced by its House subcommittee. The 11 bills that have been drafted thus far adhere to their 302(b) allocation, except for the Financial Services and General Government bill, which is $143 million over its allocation.

Now to the Senate. Unlike its House counterpart, the Senate Appropriations Committee has not adopted 302(b) subcommittee allocations. The subcommittees have been unveiling the topline amount for their respective appropriations bills as the bills are introduced. Eight of the 12 bills have advanced out of their respective subcommittee and the Senate Appropriations Committee, and three of the 12 bills have been passed by the full Senate. The Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies, Financial Services and General Government, Homeland Security, and National Security, Department of State, and Related Programs bills have yet to be introduced.

When looking at the overlap between the two chambers, the House and Senate have both made progress on seven of the same bills. The House versions of these seven bills allocate more than $1.2 trillion of total base BA. The Senate versions allocate nearly $1.3 trillion, which is $37.6 billion (3.1 percent) above their House counterparts.

So, what does this all mean? When Congress returns to Capitol Hill on Tuesday, the pressure will be on to come to some sort of agreement to keep the government's lights on when the clock strikes midnight on September 30.