

# [***Congress Passes Massive Spending Bill Chock-Full Of Earmarks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BGW-8FR1-DXXD-7364-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

[*Link to Image*](https://cdn01.dailycaller.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Untitled-design-5-e1709755518620.png)

The House of Representatives passed a spending bill on Wednesday to fund part of the federal government for the 2024 fiscal year, finishing a long drawn-out process that led to multiple continuing resolutions since Sept. 30 to avoid government shutdowns.

Congressional leaders from both parties and both houses [*announced*](https://www.speaker.gov/joint-statement-on-fy24-appropriations-agreement/) a deal on Feb. 28 to pass two spending bills comprising six appropriations bills each, commonly known as “[*minibus*](https://federalnewsnetwork.com/budget/2024/03/6-bill-minibus-rewards-some-agencies-while-slashing-budgets-for-others/)” bills, to fund the government for the remainder of fiscal year 2024. The [*first*](https://appropriations.house.gov/first-fy24-consolidated-appropriations-act) of those bills - which would fund the federal departments of Justice, Commerce, Energy, Interior, Veterans' Affairs, Agriculture, Transportation and Housing and Urban Development until September 30, 2024 - [*passed*](https://twitter.com/HouseDailyPress/status/1765488029836189851) the House by a vote of 339 yeas to 85 nays. [***(RELATED: New Spending Bill Would Slash Funding For Heavily Backlogged Immigration Courts)***](https://dailycaller.com/2024/03/04/new-spending-would-slash-funds-immigration-courts-backlog/)

“This is a long process. It is overdue, but we're very happy now that we're finally at the point where we're going to move beyond getting [fiscal year 2024] done and then turn our attention to [fiscal year 2025],” House Speaker Mike Johnson told the Daily Caller News Foundation on Wednesday. “It takes a long time to turn an aircraft carrier, and we're doing that right now.”

[*Consolidated Appropriations...*](https://www.scribd.com/document/710483718/Consolidated-Appropriations-Act-of-2024#from_embed) by [*Daily Caller News Foundation*](https://www.scribd.com/user/292804634/Daily-Caller-News-Foundation#from_embed)

Opposition to the bill was bipartisan, with 83 House Republicans and two Democrats, Reps. Mark Takano of California and Maxwell Frost of Florida, voting against it.

At the outset of the 118th Congress, House Republicans had [*promised*](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/house-gop-leaders-jettison-promise-12-individual-spending-bills) that Congress would consider and pass 12 single appropriations bills separately, as opposed to consolidated “omnibus” bills previously passed by Democratic-led Congresses. While the House [*passed*](https://crsreports.congress.gov/AppropriationsStatusTable) seven appropriations bills individually, it did not pass the remaining five bills - some of which were [*withdrawn*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/congress/-ungovernable-house-republicans-nix-votes-two-funding-bills-shutdown-d-rcna124441) from consideration - and, within days of shutdown deadlines, passed [*four continuing resolutions*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/02/29/both-houses-congress-pass-fourth-continuing-resolution-avert-government-shutdown/).

“We're at $34 trillion in [debt]. That means next year, just the interest payments alone that we're gonna have to service, will exceed our entire national defense annual spending, over $900 billion. This is not tenable,” Republican Rep. Cory Mills of Florida told the DCNF on Wednesday. “We've got a crisis of leadership across the government as a whole, from the executive to the legislative branch...there's been an unwillingness to truly address the key issues [of spending].”

The bill includes some [*prohibitions*](https://www.speaker.gov/speaker-johnson-statement-on-fy24-appropriations-legislation/) on the use of federal funding. Among these is a [*restriction*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/03/04/new-spending-bill-provision-stop-department-justice-targeting-parents-school-boards/) on the FBI from using funds to investigate parents who protest at school board meetings.

“What you're seeing is that Democrats continue to fund things that the American people don't want. But with such a slim majority in the House of Representatives, it's difficult to push back against that,” Republican Rep. Harriet Hageman of Wyoming told the DCNF. “I would agree to a 10, 15, 20% cut across the board for federal spending in Washington DC and then push through with border security.

The consolidated bill has been [*criticized*](https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/4507946-spending-bill-roils-senate-gop-leadership-battle/) for including many [*targeted spending provisions*](https://appropriations.house.gov/fiscal-year-2024-community-project-funding), known more commonly as “earmarks,” that allocate taxpayer money to district-based projects chosen by members.

“It's $12.7 billion, which I would note is more than Texas has had to spend on border security to do the job that the federal government won't do,” Republican Rep. Chip Roy of Texas told the DCNF.

Today, the House Freedom Caucus released the following official position urging Republicans to vote against the omnibus and keep their promises to the American people. [*pic.twitter.com/zH5vMiOoU1*](https://t.co/zH5vMiOoU1)

- House Freedom Caucus (@freedomcaucus) [*March 5, 2024*](https://twitter.com/freedomcaucus/status/1765134832181408112?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

“We're going to spend more money than Pelosi, we're gonna get zero to precious few of the riders that we passed the hundreds of amendments that we moved through, and we're going to try to sell people that we got some grand wins,” Roy said. “Republican leadership is beholden to defense spending, Ukraine spending, FISA.”

Republican Rep. Dusty Johnson of South Dakota, meanwhile, defended the bill as a “realistic” compromise, given Democratic control of the Senate.

“The idea that Republicans were going to get everything they wanted out in an environment where they have barely one-half of one-third of our federal government is a little hard to imagine. It'd be great. I wish I had a magic wand,” Johnson told the DCNF. “The reality is that this bill cuts $200 billion of non-defense, non-VA spending over the budgetary window. That is a remarkable accomplishment ... when you look at a 10% cut to EPA, when you look at an 8% Cut to ATF, when you look at a 95% cut to the FBI construction accounts ... they are absolutely an important first step.”

The Senate is expected to pass the consolidated bill before March 8, the [*deadline*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/02/29/house-passes-continuing-resolution-delay-government-shutdown/) to fund the aforementioned departments before a partial shutdown. The Biden administration supports the passage of the bill, according to a press release.

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**Graphic**

House Speaker Mike Johnson speaks at a press conference on March 6, 2024. Photo by Arjun Singh for The Daily Caller News Foundation.

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