

Shutdown Showdown: Border-Wall Battle Coming

ED MORRISSEY Posted at 10:01 am on November 26, 2018

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Thanks to the expected midterm correction, Republicans only have a one-month lease on full control of Congress — but still have several spending bills to use as leverage. Donald Trump wants to use those, and the dramatic events taking place on the border, to get a showdown over funding for his long-promised security wall (<https://thehill.com/policy/finance/417929-trumps-last-best-chance-for-wall-creates-latest-shutdown-threat>). With Nancy Pelosi getting ready to take charge of the House, the next few weeks will likely be Trump's last best chance to get it — although he'll have to throw Homeland Security under the bus to succeed:

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- 1 SCOTUS set to limit states' power to seize property used by criminals when committing crimes — Neil Gorsuch (<https://hotair.com/archives/2018/11/28/scotus-set-limit-states-power-seize-property-used-by-criminals-committing-crimes-led-neil-gorsuch/>)
- 2 Did GOP win enough Senate seats to secure 2020 majority? (<https://hotair.com/archives/2018/11/28/gop-enough-senate-seats-secure-2020-majority/>)
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- 4 Revisiting the Jeffrey Epstein scandal (<https://hotair.com/archives/2018/11/28/revisiting-jeffrey-epstein-scandal/>)
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- 7 You may have missed it, but Bitcoin is imploding (<https://hotair.com/archives/2018/11/28/may-missed-bitcoin-imploding/>)
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- 9 We need to show much more compassion to refugees, says ... Ammon Bundy (<https://hotair.com/archives/2018/11/28/need-show-much-compassion-refugees-says-ammon-bundy/>)
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(<https://hotair.com/archives/2018/11/28/need-show-much-compassion-refugees-says-ammon-bundy/>).

Congress is returning to Washington with a tight deadline to pass seven spending bills and avert a partial government shutdown over President Trump's demand that lawmakers fund his wall on the Mexican border.

The partial shutdown will take place on Dec. 7 if Congress does not pass legislation, creating the last chance for Trump to win wall funding before Democrats take over the House majority in January.

Trump has threatened to veto a spending bill that does not include funding for the wall. If he follows through, the partial shutdown would hit the Homeland Security, Justice and State departments, among other government entities.

This isn't the most promising ground on which to fight. Homeland Security includes the Border Patrol as well as agencies responsible for counter-terrorism operations. It might be a tough sell to argue that one has to shut down those operations in order to get a border wall that will enhance them to an arguable extent. The same goes for the Justice Department, which prosecutes immigration violations and already has a long backlog of work in that regard. Trump has repeatedly excoriated both departments for not moving swiftly and forcefully enough to crack down on illegal immigration, sometimes very publicly. How will a shutdown make that *better*?


Washington Post: Sorry for putting that Brett Kavanaugh coaching story under 'public safety'
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Democracy dies in resistance signaling.

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"...this was not simply a spontaneous grassroots movement."

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GOP lost the House anyway, perhaps losing as many as 40 seats in the process, as Democratic enthusiasm outpaced GOP turnout in the cities and the suburbs.

Nevertheless, Trump is persisting:



Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump

Republicans and Democrats MUST come together, finally, with a major Border Security package, which will include funding for the Wall. After 40 years of talk, it is finally time for action. Fix the Border, for once and for all, NOW!

163K 5:41 AM - Nov 23, 2018

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Meanwhile, Democrats are attaching a condition of their own (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/democrats-tie-support-for-spending-bill-to-mueller-probe-1543150852>):

Congressional Democrats heading into the critical stretch of the lame-duck session increasingly say they will tie their support for a high-priority spending bill to a measure protecting special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russian electoral interference. ...

If Congress and the White House cannot agree on a spending bill by Dec. 8, many agencies—including such high-profile entities as the Department of Homeland Security—will shut down. Democrats' demand to protect the special counsel is just one piece of a complex fight over the spending package; Mr. Trump, for example, has said it must include \$5 billion more for construction of a wall along the border with Mexico.

Sen. Ron Wyden, an Oregon Democrat who sits on the Senate Intelligence Committee, said he was “not going to rule out any option” if the spending bill doesn't include language to shield Mr. Mueller.

“I feel very strongly about protecting Bob Mueller,” Mr. Wyden said in an interview. “I think that I will look at any and all vehicles in order to do that. That goes to the question as to whether the president is above the law.”

The proposed measure would protect a special counsel from removal except for “good cause.” That is generally interpreted as meaning malfeasance or some other grave problem, rather than a general dissatisfaction with the direction of an investigation.

[Rick Moran \(https://pjmedia.com/trending/dems-look-to-leverage-votes-on-spending-bill-to-protect-mueller/\)](https://pjmedia.com/trending/dems-look-to-leverage-votes-on-spending-bill-to-protect-mueller/) calls this “a recipe for a shutdown that could last well into January,” but why not take a glass-half-full perspective? It’s also a recipe for a grand bargain. Trump could agree to swap protections for Mueller in exchange for significant border-wall funding, perhaps shorn of his other immigration demands or perhaps including all four of his “pillars.” Democrats get Mueller protected, Trump gets the border protection he wants. If Trump really isn’t going to interfere with Mueller — and it seems really far too late for him to intervene at this point — he’s not giving anything away of value anyway.

The main problem here, of course, that Mueller’s not really the main issue here for Democrats or Republicans. Immigration has been far too useful as a demagogic wedge for *both* parties, at least until this cycle. Maybe the midterm results changed that calculus for the GOP. Offer Mueller protections and see whether Democrats have a new calculus.

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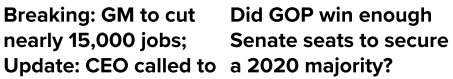
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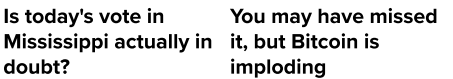
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Schadenfreude.

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NBC: State, Pentagon assume Trump will pull out of Afghanistan before 2020 election
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Lindsey Graham: I'm not voting on any major bill until the Senate hears from Gina Haspel on the Khashoggi killing
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"I'm not going to blow past this."

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"Investigators say that a group of men and women maced, punched, kicked, and robbed the reservists..."

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Down the tubes

CNN: Trump denied knowledge of Wikileaks, Trump tower meeting in Mueller answers
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"... answering to the best of his recollection."

Obama on U.S. oil production:
You're welcome, America
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"That was me, people."

Revisiting the Jeffrey Epstein
scandal
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"...Epstein could have ended up in federal
prison for the rest of his life."

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