Congress ends shutdown

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US Congress sped toward reopening the government Monday as Democrats reluctantly voted to temporarily pay for resumed operations, relenting in a fight over immigration in return for assurances from Republican leaders that the Senate will soon take up the plight of young "dreamers" and other contentious issues.  
The vote set the stage for hundreds of thousands of federal workers to return on Tuesday, cutting short what could have become a messy and costly impasse. The House was expected to vote later in the day.  
But by relenting, the Democrats prompted a backlash from immigration activists and liberal base supporters who wanted them to fight longer and harder for legislation to protect from deportation the 700,000 or so younger immigrants who were brought to the country as children and now are here illegally.  
Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell's commitment to quickly tackle the issue of the "dreamers" was contingent on Democrats providing enough votes now for a stopgap spending funding measure lasting a little less than three weeks. Sixty votes were needed to end the Democrats' filibuster, and the party's senators provided 33 of the 81 the measure got. Eighteen senators, including members of both parties, were opposed.  
Hours later the Senate approved the final bill by the same 81-18 vote, sending it to the House and President Donald Trump for expected approval so the government can reopen. White House press secretary Sarah Sanders predicted that operations would return to normal by Tuesday morning.  
Democrats climbed onboard after two days of negotiations that ended with new reassurances from Senate Majority Leader McConnell that the Senate would consider immigration proposals in the coming weeks. But there were deep divides in the Democratic caucus over strategy, as red-state lawmakers fighting for their survival broke with progressive looking satisfy liberals' and immigrants' demands,  
Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer lent his backing to the agreement during a speech on the chamber's floor. "Now there is a real pathway to get a bill on the floor and through the Senate," he said of legislation to halt any deportation efforts aimed at the younger immigrants.  
However, the agreement to reopen the government provided no certainty for the "dreamers," and the short-term stopgap sets up another potential crisis point on Feb. 8.  
The White House downplayed McConnell's commitment, and said Democrats caved under pressure. "They blinked," deputy press secretary Raj Shah told CNN. In a statement, Trump said he's open to immigration deal only if it is "good for our country."  
Immigration activists and other groups harshly criticized the deal reached by the Democratic leadership.  
Cristina Jimenez, executive director of United We Dream, said the members of the group are "outraged." She added that senators who voted Monday in favor of the deal "are not resisting Trump, they are enablers."  
Other groups such as the American Civil Liberties Union expressed disappointment and shared similar criticism.  
A block of liberal Democrats stuck to their opposition. Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Cory Booker of New Jersey voted no.  
House Speaker Paul Ryan said on Monday that if the Senate approved a temporary spending bill to reopen the government through Feb. 8, the House would approve it, too.  
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