

Evidence Card: Arguments Against End Government Shutdown Act

Team Policy Evidence Sheet

Tag Line

Automatic continuing resolutions would undermine congressional power and diminish effective budgeting

Verbal Citation

"Automatic CR proposals would automatically extend funding whenever Congress and the President fail to enact full-year or temporary funding for a fiscal year... [they] raise significant concerns and would cause serious problems of their own, undermining sound budgeting and diminishing Congress' role in setting national priorities." - Richard Kogan and Paul N. Van de Water, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "Automatic Continuing Resolutions Not a Good Solution for Government Shutdowns", 2019"By allowing the government to keep operating without any action by Congress and the President, an automatic CR mechanism would significantly reduce pressure to reach agreement on full-year appropriation bills and thus would tend to prolong budgetary uncertainty." - Richard Kogan and Paul N. Van de Water, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "Automatic Continuing Resolutions Not a Good Solution for Government Shutdowns", 2019"Enacting an automatic CR would shift power from Congress to the executive branch. Under an automatic CR, however, congressional report language would no longer constrain the way appropriations are spent, effectively giving extensive new authority to the Administration over how to use the funds." - Richard Kogan and Paul N. Van de Water, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "Automatic Continuing Resolutions Not a Good Solution for Government Shutdowns", 2019

What the evidence says in context

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities experts Richard Kogan and Paul N. Van de Water provide a comprehensive analysis of why automatic continuing resolutions are problematic. They explain that automatic CRs would eliminate the pressure that forces Congress and the President to reach budget agreements, leading to prolonged uncertainty and potentially replacing regular appropriations entirely. The authors detail how automatic CRs would shift power from Congress to the executive branch by removing congressional constraints on how funds are spent, fundamentally altering the constitutional balance of power. They also note that automatic CRs would make it easier to shrink government by freezing funding levels, effectively allowing cuts to occur without legislators ever having to vote for them.

Impact

The End Government Shutdown Act would fundamentally undermine congressional authority over federal spending and shift power to the executive branch. By removing the pressure that forces bipartisan budget negotiations, automatic CRs would likely prolong budgetary uncertainty and potentially replace regular appropriations entirely. This would diminish Congress's constitutional role in setting national priorities while giving the executive branch expanded authority over spending decisions. The mechanism would also make it easier to shrink government by freezing funding levels, allowing cuts to occur without direct legislative votes, thereby avoiding accountability for spending reductions.

Webpage or Book Title

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

URL or page number

<https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-budget/automatic-continuing-resolutions-not-a-good-solution-for-government>

Article Title if Applicable

"Automatic Continuing Resolutions Not a Good Solution for Government Shutdowns"

Author or Publisher

Richard Kogan and Paul N. Van de Water, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

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