

House OKs \$1.2T spending package

Tight vote reflects GOP dismay as bill moves to Senate

By Kevin Freking
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The House approved a \$1.2 trillion package of spending bills Friday just a few hours before funding for some key federal agencies is set to expire, a long overdue action nearly six months into the budget year that will push any threats of a government shutdown to the fall.

The bill passed by a vote of 286-134 and moved to the Senate, where leadership hoped for a final vote later Friday. More than 70% of the money would go to defense.

Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., brought up the bill under a streamlined process that required two-thirds support for approval. The bill narrowly met that threshold with more Republicans voting against it than voting for it, which could spell difficulties for Johnson in the weeks ahead.

The vote was tight, a reflection of anger among Republicans over the content of the package and the speed with which it was brought to a vote.

Signaling more potential trouble, Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., initiated an effort to oust Johnson as the House began the vote but held off on further action until the House returns in two weeks. It's the same tool that was used last year to remove the last Republican speaker, Kevin McCarthy of California.

Greene told reporters that she initiated the process to remove the speaker as a "warning" because his actions were a "betrayal."

"This was our leverage," Greene said of the bill. "This is our chance to secure the border, and he didn't do it. And now this funding bill passed without the majority of the majority."

While 101 Republicans voted for the bill and 112 voted against it, 185 Democrats voted for the bill and 22 against.

Lawmakers could still miss the midnight deadline for funding the government as action in the Senate could take time. But the practical impact in the near term would be minimal. With most federal workers off duty over the weekend and many government services funded through earlier legislation, a shutdown would mostly pass without incident unless matters dragged into Monday.

"Democrats and Republicans have about 13 hours to work together to make sure the government stays open. That's not going to be easy," Senate Major-

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Convictions in killing of boy in 2015

Two men charged with killing 7-year-old Amari Brown on the Fourth of July in 2015 were found guilty of murder Thursday in the boy's slaying, an act of violence that generated national attention and calls to action that year.
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Russia, China veto Gaza resolution

Russia and China vetoed a U.S.-sponsored United Nations Security Council resolution supporting "an immediate and sustained cease-fire" in the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, calling the measure ambiguous and saying it was not the direct demand to end the fighting that much of the world seeks.
Nation & World



Election judges process and count mail-in ballots at the Chicago Board of Elections on Friday. ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Harris continuing to chip away at O'Neill Burke's lead

Unclear if enough outstanding ballots remain to flip Cook state's attorney race

By A.D. Quig and Claire Malon
Chicago Tribune

A fresh count Friday evening of more than 11,000 ballots mailed in by Democratic Chicago voters in recent days further shrunk retired Appellate Judge Eileen O'Neill Burke's lead in the primary race for Cook County state's attorney, but not nearly enough for her

opponent, Clayton Harris III, to overtake her.

After a total of 12,634 Republican and Democratic ballots were tabulated, O'Neill Burke's edge shrank to 6,786 votes, down from the roughly 8,200-vote lead she had on Thursday. While Harris has been chipping away at O'Neill Burke's lead as more mail-in ballots are counted, he needs a significant share of outstanding

Democratic ballots to succeed. How many of those ballots come back and how many will bend in Harris' favor remain open questions.

Throughout the day Friday, Chicago election workers split between the sixth floor and basement of the government building at 69 W. Washington St. to begin the painstaking work of tallying tens of thousands of mail-in ballots that arrived on Election Day and the day after.

The workers did so under the eye of note-taking poll watch-

ers from both campaigns as 30 election judges from both political parties removed ballots from envelopes, initialed each ballot and sorted them by ward into padded blue zippered containers emblazoned with the Chicago Board of Elections logo. Chicago's election board has received 27,485 mail-in ballots since Election Day — 14,714 via drop boxes and 7,009 from the U.S. Postal Service on Tuesday and another 4,027 via mail on Wednesday. An additional

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Hatem Abudayyeh, the chair of the U.S. Palestinian Community Network, speaks during a news conference at Federal Plaza on Friday announcing a federal lawsuit against the city of Chicago over the denial of permits proposed by various groups to protest within "sight and sound" of the Democratic National Convention to be held at the United Center in August. VINCENT ALBAN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Blocked DNC protest permits spark First Amendment lawsuit

City allegedly denying right to be within 'sight and sound'

By Jake Sheridan
Chicago Tribune

Activist groups hoping to "make life miserable" for the Democratic National Convention's organizers and attendees filed a federal lawsuit Friday alleging Chicago violated their First Amendment rights by

blocking their protest plans.

"The tens of thousands of people that are coming — not only from the Midwest, but all across the country — will be marching on the DNC, permit or not," Hatem Abudayyeh, executive director of the U.S. Palestinian Community Network, said at a Federal Plaza news conference Friday after groups affiliated with their protest filed the suit.

The city has so far blocked every protest permit requested

near the August convention's United Center headquarters, despite Mayor Brandon Johnson's promises that demonstrators will have a fair platform and security. Instead, the city has offered each group the same two-block route through Grant Park — a proposal the groups allege doesn't fulfill their right to be within "sight and sound" of the convention.

The most recent denials

Turn to Protest, Page 4

Welch's office squelches queries

Tells Dem lawmakers not to answer Tribune reporter's questions

By Rick Pearson and Olivia Olander
Chicago Tribune

Illinois House Speaker Emanuel "Chris" Welch's office issued an order instructing his 78-member Democratic supermajority not to speak to a Chicago Tribune reporter about "political matters" at the State Capitol or elsewhere, citing highly dubious grounds that such discussions could be an ethical breach.

One former veteran statehouse journalist described the order as a "goofy" and "stupid" attempt to try to stifle legitimate news-gathering activities, while the head of the state's press association said reporter conversations with lawmakers about politics are legal "constitutionally protected" free speech.

The order was issued Thursday after Welch's team apparently became irked by questions being asked of the speaker's leadership team by Tribune reporter Jeremy Gorner about tens of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions that they made in support of Michael Crawford's candidacy for an Illinois House seat in Tues-

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