



Week Ending 4-24-26
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This Week in Congress!

The House voted on a package of energy, environmental, and permitting bills, including the **FIRE Act (H.R. 6387)** to exempt wildfire mitigation activities from state emissions limits. Members also considered several permitting reform measures aimed at expediting infrastructure and energy projects, including bills to streamline broadband deployment (H.R. 2289, H.R. 1681, H.R. 1343), roll back federal building energy standards (H.R. 4690), waive certain geothermal drilling permits (H.R. 5587), modify Endangered Species Act processes (H.R. 1897), and adjust federal review timelines for hydropower and broadband funding (S. 98, S. 1020). The House also reauthorized rural health and telehealth grant programs (H.R. 2493, H.R. 3419), passed a resolution supporting rural communities (H. Res. 1182), and approved legislation directing HHS to review lung cancer research affecting women and underserved communities (H.R. 2319). Additional bills addressed federal emergency response authorities.

Meanwhile, the Senate began debate on the FY 2027 budget resolution, voted on confirmations of Trump administration nominees and took the first steps to end the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) shutdown.

House Party Ratios

Last week, Reps. Tony Gonzales (R-TX) and Eric Swalwell (D-CA) resigned to avoid votes to expel them from Congress based on allegations of sexual misconduct. California Governor Newsom called for a special election on August 18 to fill the vacancy resulting from Swalwell's departure. That seat is expected to remain in Democratic control. Texas law gives its governor broad discretion over when to call a special election to fill a House vacancy. Governor Abbott could set the date as early as May 2, or he could delay the election until the date of the mid-terms. There is some concern that the Texas seat could flip to Democratic control.

Also last week, Democrat Analila Mejia was elected in a special election to fill the New Jersey House seat held by Mickie Sherril (D) before her election as Governor last November.

On Tuesday, Rep. Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick (D-FL) had the choice to resign or be expelled. Just before the House Ethics Committee started a hearing about her punishment, the Florida Democrat resigned.

On Wednesday, Rep. David Scott (D-GA) died. The 80-year-old Scott was first elected in 2002 and often tried to cast himself as a more middle of the road southern Democrat. Scott's death continued a bad run for Democrats. Five House members have died during the 119th Congress. Four of them have been Democrats, ages 70, 75, 77, and 80.

FY 2026 DHS Appropriations

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been shut down for 70 days. The White House believes that the current pay period, which ends this Friday, is the last it can cover with its executive authority.

The Senate voted 50-48 early Thursday morning to approve a \$70 billion GOP budget plan to fund ICE and the Border Patrol for the next three years. That budget framework now goes to the House - but it will still take

weeks to end the DHS shutdown. This was the first step on a somewhat complicated road to a budget reconciliation bill, which would contain up to \$70 billion in extra border security funding. The vote came on Day 69 of the shutdown at the Department of Homeland Security, which began way back on February 14.

Reconciliation 2.0 Begins

Republican leaders have set a very ambitious timeline for passage of a reconciliation 2.0 bill.

- Week of April 20: Senate vote-a-rama, followed by vote on adoption on the budget resolution
- Week of April 27: House vote on adoption of the Senate-adopted budget resolution
- Week of May 11: Senate vote-a-rama, followed by vote on passage of the reconciliation bill
- Week of May 18: House vote on passage of the Senate-passed reconciliation bill

If action is delayed during any point in this process, Republican leaders may shorten or cancel the Memorial Day recess, currently scheduled to start on May 25.

FY 2027 Appropriations

House Appropriations Subcommittees began marking-up FY 2027 spending bills last Friday. The chamber is starting with the smallest bills because leaders have not yet agreed to topline spending amounts. The House process is likely to be partisan, meaning the bills will pass in that chamber with little if any Democratic support.

FISA Sec. 702 Extension

House Republicans have not yet resolved disputes relating to federal government surveillance authorities granted under section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). Those authorities were scheduled to expire on Monday, April 20, but last Friday Congress agreed to extend them until April 30, avoiding a lapse in authority and buying a bit more time to negotiate a more durable solution.

The number of Republicans participating in the revolt against leadership is unusual (and could signal rough seas ahead for the reconciliation bill as well). Further delay in resolving this issue could impact the timing of the budget reconciliation process.

Iran War

Last week, Senate Republicans (except Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY)) and Sen. John Fetterman (D-PA)) blocked consideration of an Iran War Powers resolution. The House then narrowly rejected its own War Powers resolution. Rep. Thomas Massie (R-KY) supported it with all Democrats except Rep. Jared Golden (D-ME); Rep. Warren Davidson (R-OH) voted present.

Under the War Powers Resolution, a president must end unauthorized military operations after 60 days setting the date for April 29 (with a possible 30-day extension to May 29). As that deadline nears, some Republican senators want the White House to outline an exit strategy or seek congressional authorization. Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) is drafting, with a group of senators, an authorization for the use of military force in Iran that could be introduced before April 29.

IEEPA Tariff Refunds

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced that Phase 1 of its Consolidated Administration and Processing of Entries (CAPE) process for refunding International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) tariffs began Monday, April 20, 2026. Phase 1 is limited and does not cover every type of IEEPA transaction.

CBP guidance on CAPE and Phase 1 refund submissions is available here:

<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDHSCBP/bulletins/4126a9c>

Through the CAPE Claim Portal, only the importer of record (IOR) or its authorized broker(s) may request refunds by uploading a CSV file listing eligible entries. This process applies only to IEEPA-related tariffs and does not apply to Section 122, 232, or 301 tariffs (or other tariff programs).

Submissions will go through a validation process. Once validated, CAPE will remove IEEPA HTS numbers from covered entries, recalculate duties, and support liquidation or reliquidation without the IEEPA duties. Refunds will be routed through ACE's collections module for payment, with potential interest where applicable.

Phase 1 focuses on basic transactions and will not cover all entries on which IEEPA tariffs were paid. At this time, CBP will accept CAPE declarations only for entries liquidated within the preceding 80 days, to align with CBP's 90-day voluntary reliquidation period. CBP's guidance suggests that "finally liquidated" entries may not be eligible for Phase 1 and may need to wait for a later phase.

In addition, CBP stated that the following categories of entries will not be accepted on a CAPE declaration during Phase 1:

- Entries flagged for reconciliation and Entry Type 09 – Reconciliation Summary entries
- Entries designated for drawback claims
- Entries covered by a protest
- Entries not filed in ACE and without a liquidation status in ACE
- Entries subject to antidumping and countervailing duties that have liquidation instructions

After CBP accepts a complete, validated CAPE refund declaration—and assuming no complicating issues—CBP estimates a 60- to 90-day review period even for straightforward transactions. Additional phases are expected, but CBP has not yet provided details on timing or scope.