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Vote-a-rama No. 4

BY: KATHERINE TULLY-MCMANUS, JENNIFER SCHOLTES | 07/16/2025 03:54 PM EDT

QUICK FIX

Tweaks in the queue — The Senate has [embarked this afternoon](#) on yet another vote-a-rama, after working into the night (or through the night) three other times this year: [budget resolution take one](#), [budget resolution take two](#) and [megabill passage this month](#). Today's voting spree on amendments to the \$9.4 billion [rescissions package](#) could spill into the night as well. But Democrats are limited in what kinds of amendments they can offer, since the bill covers just 21 funding buckets now and there are strict rules on what's considered a germane change to a clawbacks package.

Rejected so far — The Senate has already [batted down Democrats' first attempts](#) at slimming the rescissions bill. In a 49-50 vote, the chamber rejected an amendment from Sen. [Chris Coons](#) (D-Del.) that would retain \$496 million in international disaster relief that President Donald Trump wants to cut. The Senate also sank Sen. [Catherine Cortez Masto's](#) (D-Nev.) attempt to send the bill back to committee and bar public broadcasting cuts that would affect public safety efforts, including the work of first responders and law enforcement.

302(b)s are baked — House Appropriations Chair [Tom Cole](#) (R-Okla.) has rolled out his [full slate of fiscal 2026 totals](#), matching the Trump administration's request for a flat \$892.5 billion in military funding but exceeding the White House's domestic funding

request. For non-defense funding, House appropriators are proposing \$705.6 billion. That's about 27 percent higher than Trump's request for \$557.4 billion. But it's also 2 percent lower than the current non-defense funding total of \$720.5 billion.

YOU'RE ALMOST OVER THE HUMP! Reach out: jscholtes@politico.com (@jascholtes) and ktullymcmamus@politico.com (@ktullymcmamus).

TOP DOC

Two docs for browser tabs today: The [manager's amendment](#) Senate Republicans have crafted to slim down the rescissions package by deleting the \$400 million cut to PEPFAR, plus the [original request](#) Trump sent last month asking Congress to approve his desired clawbacks.

#DAILYBUDGETFACT

The fewest votes held during a vote-a-rama is 15, which has happened four times: in 1980, 1981, 2000 and 2003. But the number of votes has little bearing on the overall duration of a vote-a-rama, because votes can be held open beyond the official time limits and long stretches can elapse between roll call votes.

APPROPRIATIONS

SAVING LABOR-H FOR LATER: Rep. [Robert Aderholt](#), who chairs the Labor-HHS-Education subcommittee, says he expects his funding bill to get a markup during the first week of September. The Alabama Republican told POLITICO "everything's gotten pushed back" because of the House's recess last week. The [committee was previously aiming](#) to have markups of the bill next week.

RESCISSIONS STATE OF PLAY: The rescissions package cleared two procedural hurdles Tuesday night, but [not without needing the help of Vice President JD Vance to break the ties](#). GOP Sens. [Mitch McConnell](#) of Kentucky, [Lisa Murkowski](#) of Alaska and [Susan Collins](#) of Maine voted against moving the White House spending clawbacks forward to the Senate floor. There are still a handful of GOP senators who have yet to say if they will vote to pass it, even after [major changes](#) to strip out of the package a proposed \$400 million cut to global AIDS-prevention funding, known as PEPFAR.

THUNE'S TAKE: Senate Majority Leader [John Thune](#) says his colleagues make "a fair point" with their complaints about OMB not providing enough detail on the accounts targeted for cuts. "I don't disagree. I think that more specificity would be a good thing, and certainly more detail in terms of what exactly it is that they intend to cut as a result of all this," Thune told reporters Wednesday morning. "But I think for the most part, most of our members believe there was enough detail here to make a good decision about

whether or not we want to move forward on the package, and we'll see where the amendment process goes today.”

SENATE MINIBUSES? Thune also says he wants to pass some of the fiscal 2026 funding bills this fall. “[M]y intent is, if the committee will succeed in getting some of those bills reported out, that we would put some of them together hopefully and get a bill on the floor,” the South Dakota Republican said.

FBI IMPASSE UPDATE: Sen. [Jerry Moran](#) (R-Kan.), who chairs the Commerce-Justice-Science subcommittee, said in a brief interview on Tuesday that he “[hopes](#)” to [resume marking up](#) his bill as soon as Thursday. The measure was derailed last week by an amendment to block Trump from diverting FBI money intended for moving the agency's headquarters to Maryland. Murkowski, who backed the amendment, met with the FBI and said “we’re working with the chairman” to come to an agreement.

SPACE

APPROPRIATORS SIDE WITH THE ASTRONAUTS: The Commerce-Justice-Science funding bill House appropriators approved in subcommittee this week [rejects the White House's call for deep cuts to NASA](#). But the budget differs from past ones in that it trims the agency’s science funding and boosts money for space exploration. NASA's science funding would decrease from \$1 billion to \$6 billion, while exploration would increase from \$2 billion to \$9.7 billion.

CAMPAIGNS

COLLINS’ REELECTION OUTLOOK: The chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee says it’s her intention to run for a sixth term next year, and her recent fundraising numbers are impressive. But her fellow Republicans [aren’t making that calculus easy](#). As Trump undercuts the appropriations process Collins controls, bipartisanship is withering around the Mainer who has been repeatedly ranked as the [Senate’s most bipartisan lawmaker](#), and GOP leaders now routinely force the Appropriations Committee chair to take tough votes on bills that don’t hit well in her politically moderate home state.

WHAT WE'RE READING

- [Some agencies are walking back planned layoffs, Trump administration says](#). Government Executive.
- [Trump team withholds \\$140 million budgeted for fentanyl fight](#). NPR.