

**The National Council of Social Security Management Associations, Inc.**  
**GREYSTONE GROUP WASHINGTON REPORT**  
**Legislative Report 14-2010**  
**October 1, 2010**

**Congress Passes Continuing Resolution, President Signs Into Law**

Early the morning of Thursday, September 30, 2010, the House of Representatives, by a vote of 228-194, passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) (H.R. 3081) to ensure that the federal government will keep running through December 3, 2010. The Senate had already passed the CR on Wednesday, September 29, 2010 by a vote of 69-30. The CR was signed into law by the President late Thursday, September, 30, 2010.

The budget and appropriations process has stalled this year in some part due to rising concerns about the growing federal deficit. Congress failed to pass even one of the twelve annual spending bills for fiscal year 2011. The Senate Appropriations Committee reported out all but one of the bills, Interior and Environment, but has yet to bring any of the bills to the Senate floor. The House Appropriations Committee has only considered the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Transportation, Housing and Urban Development spending measures, but has yet to bring any spending measure to the House floor.

**The CR will fund the vast majority of federal agencies and programs at existing 2010 levels, starting the first day of the 2011 fiscal year (FY), Friday, October 1, 2010.** As passed, the CR was for the most part clean of any additional spending. The CR itself will allow spending at an annual rate of around \$8 billion less than FY 2010 levels. The \$8 billion savings resulted from reduced funding for two activities: Census Bureau operations (which received a significant increase for the 2010 decennial census) and military base realignment and closing activities.

The following is a link to the full text of the stopgap spending measure:

[http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111\\_cong\\_bills&docid=f:h3081eas.txt.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&docid=f:h3081eas.txt.pdf)

Following the passage of the CR both the Senate and the House adjourned, and members headed back to their respective districts and states to campaign for the November elections. Currently, both chambers are scheduled to reconvene on November 15 for a lame-duck session. They then plan to adjourn the week of Thanksgiving, and reconvene November 29 for an undetermined amount of time. Congress has a full list of legislative agenda items they will need to tackle during the lame-duck session, such as the extension of the expiring Bush tax cuts as well as the FY 2011 appropriations bills.

The two parties are operating from very different legislative blueprints. The Democrats would like to get the FY 2011 spending measures finalized in the lame-duck, possibly in some sort of omnibus bill, while the Republicans would prefer to wait until after January 1, when they may have control of one or more of the chambers. In a CQ Today article

titled, “Congress Clears Stopgap Spending Bill,” Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH), Ranking Member of the Senate Budget Committee stated, “you have to wait for the election. It’s really hypothetical to try and predict what is going to happen in December.” Senator Gregg added, “If we pick up lots of seats, there won’t be a lot of desire to do much around here, except get to the next Congress.”

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