

Congress Recesses Amid Gridlock

Congress adjourned for a two-week Fourth of July recess with both the House and Senate in a near stalemate over the [Safeguard American Voter Eligibility \(SAVE\) Act](#), a contentious election-protection bill that remains President Trump's top legislative priority. Although the House passed a version of the SAVE Act weeks ago, its chances of advancing through the Senate as currently written are close to zero.

Still, it stubbornly remains a roadblock to any other legislative activity, including advancing fiscal year (FY) 2027 appropriations bills. House Republican leadership plans to take it up again when Congress returns in mid-July while Senate Republicans continue to insist that it has no viable Senate pathway. July is typically a busy legislative month, as members try to advance key priorities before the August recess. This year, that may not be possible.

There are two critical time-sensitive deadlines that Congress is working against when it returns to D.C. in mid-July:

- **FY 2027 Appropriations**

The House remarkably advanced all 12 FY2027 appropriations bills out of committee and passed two, the Military Construction-VA and Agriculture-FDA, before the July 4 recess. The Senate has yet to mark up any of its 12 FY2027 appropriations bills due to top-line funding disagreements. The Senate's markup of the FY2027 Labor-HHS-Education bill, initially scheduled for early June, has been postponed indefinitely.

The House and the Senate appropriations bills usually differ enough to require reconciliation in some form, adding another layer of complexity to the appropriations process. With Congress' impending August recess, lawmakers have just a few weeks to reach bipartisan agreements on FY2027 before October 1, 2026.



At this point, it is likely that Congress will pass a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the government funded at FY2026 levels through November's mid-term elections. While neither party is particularly inclined to campaign during a government shutdown, there is still a chance that the government could shut down if lawmakers cannot agree on terms for a CR before the end of September.

- **Midterm Elections**

November's mid-term elections may be one of the most consequential in recent years. The narrow majority that Republicans hold in the House and Senate could easily be lost, creating a potential seismic shift to Washington's current balance of power.

Republicans are campaigning on a tumultuous two years. The current legislative block has prevented Republicans from pushing through a campaign-friendly legislative agenda, which makes their majority more challenging to hold. The president's party typically loses seats during mid-term elections, and many are projecting that the House, and possibly the Senate, will flip.

Still, Democratic struggles with a unifying campaign message and lackluster confidence in their leadership may inhibit their ability to take full advantage of the opportunity. With every seat in the House up for grabs and 1/3 of the Senate seats, a Democratic majority could have a remarkable impact on the White House-Congressional dynamic for the remainder of President Trump's second term. Congress has just 18 legislative days left before mid-term elections and a full legislative calendar that the SAVE Act continues to block.

ASTCT will continue to keep you updated on FY2027 HHS funding and other Congressional activity. Learn more about ASTCT Payer and Government Relations activities, and how you can get involved, on [ASTCT's Advocacy webpage](#) or contact [Molly Ford](#), ASTCT's Director of Government and Payer Relations.

