



January 29, 2026

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Subject: Urgently Requesting Separation of DHS Funding from Minibus Appropriations Package

Dear Majority Leader Thune,

The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) and the undersigned organizations implore you to separate the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding from the minibus appropriations package that includes funding for the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, and Transportation (DOT).

AAPD is a disability-led and cross-disability rights organization that advocates for full civil rights for over 70 million Americans with disabilities. We accomplish this by promoting equal opportunities, economic empowerment, independent living, and political participation for disabled people.

The Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, and Transportation fund and oversee numerous programs and services that are essential to the lives of people with disabilities. These programs are also responsible for the enforcement of key civil rights protections for disabled people. Programs such as special education, Medicaid and Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS), vocational rehabilitation, Centers for Independent Living, equal employment opportunity enforcement, and paratransit services are all vital lifelines that are at immediate risk of interruption if political disagreements over the funding of DHS are allowed to derail this minibus package and result in a government shutdown of unknown duration.

Americans, least of all people with disabilities, cannot afford a repeat of last fall's government shutdown. That shutdown led to delays in millions of Americans receiving critical benefits they rely on to survive and disrupted services at numerous government agencies, including the Social Security Administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

Increasing concerns from across the political spectrum about recent incidents involving Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), including violent incidents involving [U.S. citizens with disabilities](#), has put passage of the minibus before the January 30 deadline in question.

Last week, the House of Representatives voted on a budget package which separated DHS funding, enabling passage of a funding bill for FY26 for all agencies except for DHS, keeping those agencies open and working for the American people.

We implore you, Majority Leader Thune, not to allow concerns over the Department of Homeland Security and ICE operations to jeopardize the continued function and operations of the federal government. A government shutdown would have adverse impacts on Americans of all walks of life.

Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,

Access Living
ADA Legacy
Ability360
American Association on Health and Disability
American Association of People with Disabilities
Autistic Self Advocacy Network
Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
Boston Center for Independent Living
The Center for Learner Equity
Deaf Equality
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
Diverse Elders Coalition (DEC)
Easterseals, Inc.
Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employers Network
Lakeshore Foundation
Little Lobbyists
National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care
National Council on Independent Living
National Empowerment Center
National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse
Roads to Freedom Center for Independent Living (RTFCIL) of North Central PA
United Spinal Association
United States International Council on Disabilities
Well Spouse Association