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Longest DHS Shutdown in History Put Cities at Risk: What To Know Now

On Thursday, April 30, the longest shutdown of a federal department in U.S. history came to an end when the president signed a bill to fund most of the Department of Homeland Security. This blog summarizes the continued effects on local governments and reflects recent federal updates.

The ongoing lapse in funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has now become the longest shutdown affecting one of the federal government's most essential departments. For America's cities, towns and villages, this is not an abstract federal issue. It is a growing public safety challenge with real consequences on the ground.

The Senate approved a bipartisan DHS funding bill that excludes U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and parts of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in the early morning hours of March 27, 2026, passing it by unanimous voice vote. The House has not taken up the measure, as House leadership insists that Congress address ICE and CBP funding first. In late April, the Senate also passed a budget reconciliation resolution, 50-48, that establishes a framework to provide \$70 billion in funding to ICE and CBP for the next several years through a simple majority process that bypasses the filibuster. On April 29, 2026, the House adopted the Senate budget resolution on a largely party-line vote, 215-211. After advancing the reconciliation process, the House today approved the bipartisan DHS funding bill that excludes ICE and parts of CBP, nearly a month after the Senate passed it.

Local governments rely on strong and consistent federal partnership to protect residents and maintain community resilience. DHS plays a central role in that partnership, supporting disaster response, emergency management coordination, cybersecurity and infrastructure protection. When DHS operations are disrupted, local leaders are forced to navigate increasing risks with fewer resources and less coordination.

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National League of Cities

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