

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Consideration of H.R. 7148, Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026
February 3, 2026
Remarks of U.S. Representative Ed Case (Hawai'i-First District)

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I rise in support of this measure as a member of our Appropriations Committee, as well as of our Subcommittees on Defense and on Homeland Security.

Madam Speaker, I join the vast majority of Americans in condemning the actions of immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Brutality and death in our streets. So-called leaders trashing victims and their grieving families. Warrantless searches. Fear in our own citizens. (Last week a sitting state senator in my own district relayed that she was fearful of going out to talk with our constituents in her community without her passport.)

This is unacceptable. This is un-American. ICE must be reformed. And until it is, neither it nor its parent entity, the Department of Homeland Security, should be fully funded. And the best way for us to reform ICE is to keep our laser focus on ICE reform.

This measure does exactly that. It gives this administration and my majority colleagues ten days to work with us all to do the right thing. And unless the right thing is done, we should not fund the Department of Homeland Security.

But this measure also funds 70% of our federal government rather than shut it down again. Let me focus on just a few areas where this is critical.

Let's start with defense. Half of our total budget in a time that it is critical to our national security that our Defense Department be fully operating, be fully focused, be nimble, be quick, be able to adjust. And yet we have kept our Defense Department essentially crippled for sixteen months now, as the last time we funded it in regular order and gave it direction through funding and oversight was Fiscal Year 2024.

They've been operating on a continuing resolution for sixteen months now, and that cripples national security. That is a national security risk. No new programs. Procurement that is excessively expensive because it cannot function over multi-years. No effective systemwide modernization. Any military leader will tell you that the worst thing going for our national defense right now, in a time when it has to adjust to the PRC, to Russia, across a variety of focuses, is another government shutdown or continuing resolution.

Let's look at financial services and general government. This bill funds our federal courts. Can we envision a time in our history when it was more important that our federal courts be fully staffed and funded? I don't think so.

This bill funds Social Security. It enables Social Security to continue to function for the millions of Americans who depend on it, all at a time when Social Security is being crippled by staff cuts.

Let's look at foreign affairs. This bill provides continued security assistance to our friends and allies throughout the world. It maintains some effective projection of presence out into the world. It funds the Countering PRC Influence Fund that is so important to our efforts.

Let's look at transportation. This bill funds the Federal Aviation Administration so that our air transportation system can continue to function.

This measure funds federal workers throughout our government who have borne the brunt of our failure to appropriate in regular order, causing a record-setting shutdown. It helps millions of workers throughout our country by assuring them that they can continue working and getting paid without great doubt.

We must pass this measure now. And it must not be, need not be, and will not be at the expense of ICE reform. We sacrifice none of that mandate to reform ICE by passing this bill today.

I would finally say to our Department of Homeland Security employees throughout the country who have served us so well through so much difficulty in the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Homeland Security Investigations, Customs and Border Protection, Transportation Security Administration and other agencies. You do critical work for us all, and we apologize to you that we must create more uncertainty for you for now. But we ask you to understand that reforming ICE is critical, not just to those that are suffering at the hands of ICE. It is critical to our country. You will be paid because this measure continues your pay. But until we get this resolved, you must live with the uncertainty. We truly appreciate your understanding and service.

Madam Speaker, I urge support of this measure and yield back.