



# LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS

# PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS ACTION FUND

## What's on Congress' To-Do List? Must-Pass Bills in 2024

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The table below describes must-pass bills Congress will likely consider in 2024, based on statements from congressional leaders and historical precedent. This list should not be considered exhaustive, and predictions regarding the timing for these bills should not be considered definitive. Rather, the information below reflects known congressional priorities at the time of publication in January 2024.

To learn more about what makes a bill “must-pass” and how members of Congress have used must-pass bills to advance their priorities, check out [Understanding Must-Pass Bills](#).

Must-Pass Bill for 2024	Why is it "Must-Pass"?	What Opportunities Does this Bill Present?	When Will this Bill Expire?	Current Status
<b>Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Appropriations</b>	Congress passes 12 appropriations bills every year to fund federal agencies and programs, such as the National Institutes of Health or the Title X family planning	Members of Congress can use appropriations bills to increase funding for government programs they care about or cut funding for programs they oppose. Additionally, members	FY 2023 appropriations expired on September 30, 2023. Since then, Congress has passed three short-term funding extensions known as continuing resolutions (CRs) to	In January, House and Senate leaders agreed to topline levels for defense spending (\$886 billion) and nondefense spending (\$773 billion). They also determined how

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	<p>program. This funding expires annually, typically at the end of the fiscal year (September 30). If Congress fails to pass another appropriations bill before that expiration date, the government shuts down.</p>	<p>can request "community project funding"—better known as "earmarks"—to finance projects in their states and districts. Finally, members may try to add or remove appropriations "riders," provisions that attach policy directives or conditions on funding.</p>	<p>keep the government open. The most recent <a href="#">short-term spending bill</a> became law on January 19. It funds federal agencies included in the Agriculture-FDA, Energy-Water, Military Construction-VA, and Transportation-HUD appropriations bills through <b>March 1, 2024</b>. Funding for other agencies expires <b>March 8, 2024</b>.</p>	<p>to allocate that funding among the 12 appropriations bills. However, those allocations were not public at the time of publication. Now, lawmakers must decide which policy riders—if any—to include, and which earmark requests to fund before the House and Senate can finish writing and voting on spending bills. All of this must happen before March 1 and 8 to avoid a shutdown or another short-term patch.</p>
<p><b>Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Appropriations</b></p>	<p>See above.</p>	<p>See above.</p>	<p>Once Congress approves FY 2024 appropriations bills, they will expire on September 30, 2024. Accordingly, Congress will have to pass FY 2025 spending bills before <b>September 30</b> to avoid a shutdown or</p>	<p>The appropriations process usually begins after the president submits a budget request to Congress in early February. Then, appropriators draft a budget resolution to set the topline spending levels for</p>

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			a short-term extension of FY 2024 bills.	that year's appropriations bills. After this, Congress can craft spending bills that adhere to those numbers. However, given delays in the FY 2024 appropriations process discussed above, this process may also be delayed.
<b>National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)</b>	The NDAA authorizes funding and sets policies for U.S. military programs. The NDAA also allows Congress a yearly opportunity to adapt these programs to changing circumstances globally, such as climate change or the pandemic; address emerging servicemember needs; and mandate information from the Defense Department. Congress has passed an NDAA <a href="#">every year since 1961</a> to take advantage	Members might attempt to boost or cut funding for programs they support or oppose, or require reforms. For example, a member may work to restrict military equipment transfers to state and local law enforcement under the <a href="#">1033 program</a> . Members may also seek to cut the overall defense budget. Additionally, the NDAA provides a chance to debate U.S. military activities, like war authorizations, weapons sales, or funding for other	Congress typically finalizes the coming year's NDAA in <b>December</b> . For example, the <a href="#">FY 2023 NDAA</a> became law on December 23, 2022, while the <a href="#">FY 2024 NDAA</a> became law on December 22, 2023.	The House and Senate Armed Forces Committees will start conducting hearings and drafting the FY 2025 NDAA after the president submits his budget request to Congress, usually in early February.

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	of these opportunities and avoid criticisms that members are "soft" on national security issues.	militaries—and whether those activities should continue.		
<b>The "Farm Bill"</b>	Congress passes this comprehensive legislation on food and agricultural policy roughly every five years to <a href="#">prevent critical programs like nutrition assistance from expiring</a> . The last farm bill, <a href="#">the Agriculture Improvement Act (P.L. 115-34)</a> , was signed into law on December 20, 2018.	Given its broad scope, Congress can tackle several priorities via the farm bill. For example, members may work to strengthen anti-hunger programs to address racial and ethnic inequities around food access. Alternatively, members might target consolidation in the farming industry to protect small farmers, or improve conservation programs to combat climate change.	The authorizations in <a href="#">the 2018 farm bill</a> expired at the end of FY 2023 (September 30). However, <a href="#">as it's done in the past</a> , Congress passed an extension to give itself extra time to negotiate a new five-year farm bill. On November 16, 2023, President Biden signed a <a href="#">continuing resolution</a> that extended the 2018 farm bill through September 30, 2024. Congress will need to pass a new farm bill by <b>September 30, 2024</b> .	Neither the House nor Senate agriculture committee has released a draft for a new farm bill or scheduled a markup. However, on November 12, the House and Senate Agriculture Committees' leaders issued a bipartisan <a href="#">statement</a> affirming their commitment to approving a new farm bill in 2024.
<b>Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization</b>	FAA reauthorization bills greenlight funding and set policies for the FAA. The last reauthorization, <a href="#">the FAA Reauthorization</a>	Congress may use the FAA reauthorization bill to tackle air travel issues that the pandemic exacerbated, such as lengthy flight delays.	On December 26, 2023, President Biden signed a <a href="#">short-term extension</a> to renew expiring FAA authorities through	The House passed its version of the FAA reauthorization on July 20, 2023 by a vote of <a href="#">351-69</a> . Senators <a href="#">introduced their FAA</a>

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	<p><a href="#">Act (P.L. 115-254)</a>, expired at the end of FY 2023 (September 30). A reauthorization will allow Congress to address issues that have emerged in civilian aviation over the past five years. Given Americans' widespread dependence on air travel, Congress will likely take advantage of this opportunity to deal with problems in this space.</p>	<p>Members could also direct funding towards district projects, like airport infrastructure improvements. Additionally, members could update safety standards and protections for workers, such as required rest periods for pilots or flight attendants.</p>	<p><b>March 8, 2024.</b> Such extensions are common: <a href="#">Congress passed</a> 23 short-term FAA authorizations between 2007 and 2012, three between 2015 and 2017, and the authorization lapsed entirely in 2011.</p>	<p><a href="#">reauthorization bill</a> in June, but have not voted on the measure. Since the current extension expires on the same day as most of the federal government's funding (March 8), Congress may attach an FAA bill to its next appropriations measure.</p>
<p><b>Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) Reauthorization</b></p>	<p>FISA first <a href="#">became law in 1978</a> and created guidelines the U.S. government must follow while collecting foreign intelligence. It is now used for <a href="#">domestic surveillance</a>. <a href="#">Certain FISA provisions</a> concerning information collection about people outside the United States, who communicate with</p>	<p>FISA reauthorizations have previously renewed debates around government surveillance and civil liberties. As such, members of Congress may use the FISA reauthorization as an opportunity to rein in what they consider excessive and <a href="#">unlawful</a> government surveillance. For example, on November 7, 2023, a</p>	<p>Congress temporarily extended expiring FISA provisions as part of the <a href="#">FY 2024 NDAA</a>. The extension expires on <b>April 19, 2024</b>.</p>	<p>There remain numerous proposals to extend FISA authorities, none of which have been considered in either chamber.</p> <p>Bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee leaders introduced <a href="#">legislation</a> to extend FISA Section 702 authority through</p>

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	<p>individuals in the United States, expired last year.</p>	<p><a href="#">bipartisan, bicameral</a> group of lawmakers introduced the Government Surveillance Reform Act, which reauthorizes FISA Section 702 with reforms to protect Americans' privacy rights.</p>		<p>2035. The aforementioned Government Surveillance Reform Act would reform Section 702 while extending its authority through September 30, 2027. The House was set to consider competing FISA reauthorization bills in December: one from its <a href="#">Judiciary</a> Committee and one from <a href="#">Intelligence</a>, but did not ultimately vote on either.</p>
<p><b>Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA)</b></p>	<p>WRDA authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to complete specific activities and water development projects. Congress consistently <a href="#">passes</a> a new WRDA every two years. The last WRDA became law on December 23, 2022 as part of that year's <a href="#">NDAA</a>.</p>	<p>WRDA authorizes a wide range of water-related development projects. These include flood control; maintenance of ports, locks, and dams; ecosystem restoration; wastewater management systems, and much more. Members can use WRDA to direct federal funding to specific state and</p>	<p>WRDA does not "expire" in the typical sense. Rather, Congress has routinely opted to amend or add to the projects WRDA authorizes every two years to account for communities' changing needs. To maintain that schedule, Congress must pass a new</p>	<p>Neither chamber has proposed a WRDA bill for 2024. However, both the <a href="#">House</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a> have held hearings regarding this year's WRDA, the most recent of which took place on <a href="#">December 13</a> in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.</p>

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		district water development priorities.	WRDA by <b>December 2024.</b>	