

House Passes Bill to Avert Government Shutdown, Calming Fears of Impact to USVI and Nation at Large

Federal / **Published On September 30, 2023 03:10 PM /**

Staff Consortium **September 30, 2023**

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In a move bringing [relief to the U.S. Virgin Islands](#) and the nation at large, the U.S. House of Representatives united across party lines to pass a measure that extends government funding until mid-November. With a 335-91 vote in favor of the provision, which allocates \$16 billion for disaster relief but neglects aid to Ukraine, the decision is now up to the U.S. Senate to ensure continuity in federal operations.

The legislation's passage requires a two-thirds supermajority, a threshold comfortably met by the House. However, prior to this affirmative action, the Republicans in the House had their back against the wall. With internal dissensions thwarting an earlier proposal, they asserted that the only way forward was an extension of the \$1.6 trillion annual budget from 2023 till November 17. Notably, this proposal is in alignment with the Senate's approach, but it omits the Senate's

proposed \$6 billion emergency aid for Ukraine.

An impassioned plea came from House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R., Calif.) earlier on Saturday following a confidential conference. McCarthy emphasized, "I want to keep government open. I am urging members from both sides - set your differences aside. The focus should be the American populace." He also mentioned that there are still eight out of twelve spending bills that need the House's nod.

The legislation did witness resistance, especially from some Democrats, who criticized the lack of aid for Ukraine. Additionally, they expressed concerns that the bill, as put forward by Republicans, might enable a pay increase for Congress members. However, the Republicans acted swiftly to address the cost-of-living adjustment, simultaneously questioning the Democrats' logic behind risking a government shutdown in the name of supporting Ukraine.

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