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Senate Approves Budget With \$175 Billion for Border Wall, Mass Deportations, \$4.5 Trillion in Tax Cuts

In a 51-48 vote, the Senate advanced Trump's plan funding immigration enforcement, permanent tax cuts, \$150B for military, and a \$5T debt ceiling hike, while raising concerns over possible \$800B in Medicaid cuts and other social programs.

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On March 16, 2025, prison officials in Tecoluca, El Salvador, escorted individuals deported from the U.S.—reportedly members of Venezuelan gangs—into the Terrorism Confinement Center for processing and detention.

After an all-night session that stretched into the early morning hours of Saturday, April 5, the U.S. Senate voted 51-48 to approve a budget resolution aligned with President Donald Trump's

second-term legislative goals. The narrow vote came after hours of floor debate and a lengthy amendment process known as “vote-a-rama,” which pushed proceedings past 2:30 a.m. Eastern Time.

The resolution now advances to the House, where its future remains uncertain amid internal Republican divisions. While its passage in the Senate marks a key milestone for Trump’s policy agenda, the road ahead will require reconciliation between differing House and Senate proposals.

Central to the resolution is the continuation of the 2017 tax cuts, which are currently set to expire at the end of this year. The Senate framework proposes making those cuts permanent and authorizing up to \$4.5 trillion in additional tax relief over the next decade, targeting both individuals and businesses. Supporters argue the move will fuel economic growth, while critics say it risks worsening income inequality and adding to the national debt.

In addition to tax reform, the budget plan lays out significant new spending tied to Trump’s priorities. It allocates \$175 billion toward border security and immigration enforcement. These funds would support initiatives such as mass deportations and continued construction of a border wall. Another \$150 billion is designated for bolstering military strength, consistent with Trump’s “America First” focus on national security and defense readiness.

To partially offset the cost of these proposals, the resolution instructs congressional committees to identify \$4 billion in immediate spending reductions. Long-term cuts could eventually reach \$2 trillion over ten years once the final legislative package is drafted. Although precise details remain unclear, the House’s corresponding plan has sparked concern due to [proposed cuts](#) to mandatory spending programs like Medicaid. Analysts estimate Medicaid alone could see reductions exceeding \$800 billion over a decade.

While Senate leaders have tried to allay fears by suggesting such programs may be spared, the resolution’s flexibility leaves room for significant revisions. Some Republican amendments aimed at protecting these programs indicate there may be internal disagreements over how deep the cuts should go.

The framework also includes a provision to raise the debt ceiling by up to \$5 trillion. This move is designed to prevent a federal default later this year while accommodating the plan’s fiscal ambitions. Still, the increase has prompted concern among fiscal conservatives, given the existing national debt, which now stands at \$36 trillion.

Two Republican senators broke ranks to oppose the resolution. Senator Susan Collins of Maine cited concerns about potential Medicaid cuts, while Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky objected on fiscal grounds. Paul argued that the framework fails to sufficiently reduce federal spending and could add \$5 trillion to the national debt over the next ten years. That projection was backed by the bipartisan Joint Committee on Taxation.

Throughout the vote-a-rama, Democrats sought to put Republicans on the record on politically charged issues such as tariffs, Medicaid, and Social Security. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York sharply criticized the plan, calling it a “roadmap for painful cuts” and accusing Republicans of disguising tax breaks for the wealthy as economic reform.

In contrast, Senate Majority Leader John Thune of South Dakota called the resolution a “generational investment” in the country’s future. He emphasized that it strengthens national security, supports economic growth, and reflects the priorities of the American people.

President Trump voiced support for the Senate's actions during the proceedings. Posting on his Truth Social platform, he thanked Senate Republicans and Majority Leader Thune "for working so hard on funding the Trump Border Agenda." The administration has indicated it is open to moving the legislative package forward as either a single, comprehensive bill—what Trump calls his "big, beautiful bill"—or in smaller, incremental pieces, depending on how negotiations unfold.

The vote occurred against a backdrop of economic uncertainty, following Trump's recent announcements of new tariffs. Those moves have shaken financial markets and raised concerns about rising prices for consumers. During the vote-a-rama, Schumer introduced an amendment aimed at rolling back some of those tariffs. The amendment failed but drew attention to potential GOP vulnerabilities on the economic front.

With the Senate resolution approved, the process now shifts to the House of Representatives, where Speaker Mike Johnson of Louisiana will face the difficult task of unifying his party's slim majority. The House passed its own budget plan in February, one that shares many of Trump's priorities but diverges in scope and structure.

The House plan includes \$2 trillion in spending cuts—vastly more than the \$4 billion outlined in the Senate's version. This discrepancy is likely to become a sticking point as both chambers work to merge their plans into a single resolution. Some House Republicans have already expressed reservations. Representative Andy Harris of Maryland has called for "actual spending and deficit reduction plans," while Representative Jodey Arrington of Texas labeled the Senate's version "unserious."

Once the House and Senate reach agreement on a unified budget resolution, congressional committees will be tasked with drafting the specific legislation. That phase will involve defining tax provisions and pinpointing spending cuts—decisions that are expected to reignite debate over federally funded programs like student loans, food assistance, and Medicaid.

Republican leadership aims to have the final bill on Trump's desk by August, just before the summer recess. However, given the internal disagreements and the legislative complexity, the timeline may shift.

The reconciliation process allows the bill to pass with a simple majority in the Senate, bypassing the typical 60-vote threshold and insulating it from a Democratic filibuster. But political headwinds remain. Some Republicans are uneasy about the Senate's use of a "current policy baseline," which treats the extension of the 2017 tax cuts as fiscally neutral. Critics argue this method obscures the real impact of the cuts, potentially hiding a \$3.8 trillion hit to federal revenue—a concern raised by Senator Bill Cassidy of Louisiana.

While Democrats lack the numbers to block the legislation outright, they have pledged to make its consequences a campaign issue heading into the 2026 midterm elections. They plan to focus on the potential impact to safety net programs and the national debt.