

The Virgin Islands Consortium

TSA Relief Stalls in House, Leaving Airport Disruptions Unresolved

Lawmakers in the Senate moved to restore funding for airport security operations, but House Republican leaders resisted the measure because it left out immigration agencies, prolonging the broader standoff and leaving travelers facing continued delays.

Travel / **Published On March 27, 2026 02:15 PM /**

Ernice Gilbert **March 27, 2026**



The Senate moved overnight to restore funding for TSA and most of the Department of Homeland Security after weeks of worsening delays, staffing strain and missed paychecks, but by Friday the effort was still stuck. House Republican leaders turned away from the Senate bill because it left out ICE and Border Patrol, keeping the broader funding fight alive as airports continued to absorb the fallout.

The impasse has increasingly become an airport story as much as a Washington one. Reuters reported Friday that airports in Houston and Atlanta were warning travelers to prepare for waits of up to four hours, the result of prolonged staffing shortages at security checkpoints after thousands of TSA workers went without pay during the partial shutdown.

The Senate bill was designed to relieve that pressure. Senators [unanimously approved a package to fund TSA](#) and most of DHS operations, including agencies tied to airport security, disaster response and maritime safety, while excluding ICE and Border Patrol. The measure was intended to restart pay for screeners and stabilize operations without resolving the larger fight over immigration enforcement.

But the House was not aligned with that narrower approach. The official House Clerk record shows the chamber's last verified floor action on Homeland Security funding was passage of H.R. 8029, the Pay Our Homeland Defenders Act, on March 26 by a 218-206 vote. That bill reflected the House Republican position of funding DHS more broadly rather than carving out TSA and other operations while leaving immigration agencies behind.

Friday's House schedule underscored the uncertainty. The Majority Leader's public calendar listed another bill, H.R. 7084, as the day's main legislative business and said only that additional legislative items were possible. That left no clear path for immediate House approval of the Senate package, even as airport disruptions continued to mount.

The strain on TSA's workforce has been building for days. More than 480 officers had quit since the funding lapse began in mid-February. The AP reported that more than 3,100 TSA employees scheduled to work on Wednesday failed to report. Those figures added to concerns that the longer the standoff lasts, the harder it will be to quickly restore normal operations at airports already under heavy spring travel pressure.

For now, Congress remains split between a Senate effort focused on getting airport security and other core functions back on stable footing, and a House position that refuses to separate TSA funding from the larger immigration enforcement fight. Until that divide is resolved, the relief promised to airports, travelers and unpaid screeners remains out of reach.