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From: [redacted] (b)(3) CIAAct
Sent: Tuesday, September 06, 2016 9:35 AM (b)(6)
To: [redacted]
Subject: Re: [redacted] on Sat - The Hill: Senate braces for shutdown fight (b)(3) CIAAct

Sigh. Saw that coming.

Sent from [redacted] (b)(3) CIAAct
(b)(3) NatSecAct

On Sep 6, 2016 9:13:08 AM, [redacted] wrote:

FYI. EXDIR sent an e-mail this morning asking about the likelihood of a shutdown this year. (b)(6)
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Senate braces for shutdown fight

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Greg Nash

By Alexander Bolton - 09/02/16 06:00 AM EDT

Lawmakers are returning to Washington next week to confront an impasse over funding bills that threatens to cause a government shutdown, something Republican leaders want to avoid at all costs.

Senators will immediately square off over funding to combat the Zika virus, with aides expecting a replay of what happened in June, when Democrats blocked a GOP-authored bill they said would unfairly block money for Planned Parenthood.

Democrats say that in some areas of the country such as Puerto Rico, a territory, Planned Parenthood is the place women can go to get treatment for a sexually transmitted disease affecting a fetus.

Also on the Senate schedule for next week is a bill funding the Department of Defense, which Democrats also plan to block.

Senate Democratic leaders don't want to let Republicans pass the defense bill at a new funding level and lose leverage to push other spending legislation to President Obama's desk.

"We don't want a defense bill to pass by itself but leave other bills that have security funding for the Department of Homeland Security, FBI and the CIA on autopilot," said a senior Democratic aide.

For Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), who sets the floor schedule, the Democratic blockade comes with electoral upside.

With their majority on the line, Senate Republican candidates will be able to argue that Democrats are playing politics with Zika and military funding.

Democrats counter that McConnell has designed the votes to fail by teeing up bills he knows will encounter strong objections.

The bigger problem for McConnell and Speaker Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) is the insistence by some House conservatives that a stop-gap funding measure to keep the government open beyond Sept. 30, the end of the fiscal year, extend into 2017.

These conservatives want to avoid a lame-duck session because they think that's when Obama and congressional leaders will negotiate a massive omnibus package that boosts spending levels for next year. They want to delay talks until next year in hopes that Donald Trump wins the election and will slash the budget once in office.

Senate Democratic Leader (Nev.) has ruled out the possibility of passing a stopgap funding bill stretching into next year. He and other Democrats expect Hillary Clinton will be president, and they don't want to saddle her with a leftover spending fight during her first 100 days in office, when she would have maximum leverage for passing legislation.

"Everyone should be alerted today that we're not going to be doing a long-term CR," Reid told reporters Thursday on a conference call, referring to a short-term continuing resolution to fund the government beyond this month.

Other than announcing votes on Zika funding and the Department of Defense, McConnell has given little indication of what else might come to the floor this fall. The Zika money is attached to a conference report for legislation funding military construction and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Senate sources say one candidate for floor time is the Water Resources Development Act.

Another possibility is the conference report for the Energy Policy Modernization Act, which passed the Senate in April. It would promote renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Senate Republicans will discuss the schedule and their top legislative priorities when they reconvene next week.

The Senate is scheduled to be in session through the first week of October, but aides say it's likely McConnell will recess earlier to give his colleagues more time to campaign at home.

A senior Republican aide said the spending bills or a continuing resolution to keep the government operating are the only must-pass legislation slated for September.

"There are other things likely to get done but the big thing that needs to get done is funding the government, the have-to, have-to thing," the aide said.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program needs to be extended, but that renewal is likely to be wrapped into the continuing resolution.

Among the items GOP leaders would also like to finish up is the defense authorization bill, which now is in a conference committee of Senate and House negotiators.

Congress does not face many of the same deadlines it has in previous Septembers and Octobers because McConnell and other GOP leaders made a conscious effort to clear the decks ahead of the election year.

The federal debt ceiling, an issue that has divided GOP leaders and conservative activists in the past, does not expire until next summer.

The Federal Aviation Administration authorization has already been extended until September of 2017.

Congress passed a massive tax package last year that made permanent several popular tax breaks, such as the research and development credit, the enhanced child tax credit and the enhanced earned income tax credit.

“We don’t get credit for it, but we’ve already done all that work,” said the senior GOP aide.

Reid in his conference call Thursday nevertheless bashed Senate Republicans for taking a seven-week recess over much of July and all of August.

“Next week the Senate returns from its longest recess in 16 years,” Reid said.

“It’s hard to believe that we would not be here when we have so much to do, so much to do.”

Reid criticized McConnell for not scheduling a vote on a bipartisan Zika package that would attract Democratic votes.