

I have heard from many concerned constituents about what the federal government shutting down would mean for them and their families. If Congressional leaders cannot negotiate a compromise on this year's government funding bill by midnight tonight, federal agencies will begin furloughing employees and winding down services deemed "non-essential."

While the Social Security Administration would still send checks to seniors, new applications would not be processed. The Postal Service would still deliver mail and our military servicemen and servicewomen would continue to be supported, but a government shutdown would disrupt many other important government services. For example, the IRS would be able to process electronic returns and issue refunds by electronic deposit, but not paper-based returns, and IRS walk-in assistance centers would close. In addition, museums and national parks would close, many government contracts and contractors would not be paid, and small business loan applications would not be reviewed. A prolonged government shutdown has the potential to injure our economy as it continues to recover.

I am working to keep the government open. Of course, we always should be looking to remove wasteful spending and programs that don't work. I have [supported](#) and will continue to support [thoughtful budget cuts](#) that reduce the deficit by eliminating unnecessary spending and costly tax giveaways to industries reaping enormous profits. We must not forget, though, to preserve the safety-net programs necessary for a humane society and the investments necessary for an innovative and prosperous economy.

While many federal agencies are preparing to reduce staff and services in the event of a shutdown, I and my staff in my New Jersey and Washington, D.C. offices will be available to answer your questions or concerns or if you need any assistance. Please do not hesitate to [e-mail](#) or call me at 1-87-RUSH-HOLT.

If a shutdown happens, the government temporarily stops all "non-essential" services. However, "essential services" will continue to operate, such as those listed above. Other federal agencies may cut their services to a bare minimum, and are determining which of their services fall under these rules.

These critical services would not cease:

- Social Security checks for seniors, people with disabilities and survivors would still go out. But new Social Security applications will likely not be processed during any shutdown, as during in the previous shutdowns.
- Troops would continue to serve, though their pay could be put on hold.
- Critical homeland security functions such as border security would continue.
- The Postal Service, which is self-funded, will continue to operate.
- The FAA would keep the air traffic control system open and safe.

However, some services would likely be affected:

- Unemployment benefits: The federal funds that help states pay the costs of their unemployment programs could be affected depending on the length of the shutdown.
- Veterans' services: While VA hospitals will remain open, veterans' benefits could be delayed or reduced, as was the case during the last shutdown.
- National parks: National parks and the National Wildlife Refuge Systems would be among the first places to close if the government shuts down.
- Passports: Passport and visa applications will not be processed. In the 1996 shutdown, over 200,000 passport applications and 30,000 daily visa applications went unprocessed.

- IRS processing of tax refunds for some returns would be suspended.
- FHA new home loan guarantees may cease.
- SBA approval of applications for business loan guarantees and direct loans to small businesses would likely cease, impacting the engines of our economy and potentially slowing the economic recovery.
 - Farm loans and farm payments would cease.
 - Museums: National museums, including the Smithsonian Institution, would close in the event of a government shutdown.
 - Access to the U.S. Capitol: Guide and staff-led tours of the Capitol will be canceled. The House Gallery will remain open.