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GENERAL MEMORANDUM 26-004

Partial Government Shutdown Approaches with No Expected Impact on BIA, BIE, & IHS

As of January 30, 2026, the federal government is approaching a partial government shutdown, as progress on a six-bill appropriations “minibus” stalls in the Senate. The deadline to enact this funding package is January 30, 2026, after which point agencies covered by the following appropriations bills will experience a lapse in funding:

- Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
- Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies
- Department of Homeland Security
- Financial Services and General Government
- Defense
- Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Importantly, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Education, and Indian Health Service will be unaffected as Interior-Environment appropriations passed earlier this month.

The funding impasse driving the potential shutdown is centered on the Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill. Democrats are seeking to add additional oversight and limitations on immigration enforcement activities. Although the underlying dispute is limited in scope, the six appropriations measures outlined above are procedurally linked, such that a conflict over one holds up funding for all other covered agencies.

Senators are working on an option to separate the Department of Homeland Security bill, allowing the other five measures to move independently. Specifically, they hope to vote on a package that combines a short two-week continuing resolution for the Department of Homeland Security with full-year funding for the other five appropriations bills. This would buy Congress more time to negotiate immigration enforcement reforms; however, it is still encountering procedural delays. Moreover, changing the Homeland Security measure to a continuing resolution will require the House’s approval. It is nearly guaranteed that the House will not be able to vote before the shutdown deadline, but Senators and the White House are hoping it will clear that chamber early next week. In other words, while a partial government shutdown remains likely, any lapse in funding is widely expected to be brief.

In the event of a partial government shutdown, Tribal Nations may experience interrupted communications and delayed funding distributions from impacted federal agencies. This includes

the Office of Native American Programs at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as the Office of Head Start and Administration for Native Americans at the Department of Health and Human Services, among others. Operations are expected to return to normal when Congress passes another government funding bill.

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