

Congress Stays Busy with Politics

May 29, 2026

Last week, Congressional Republicans did not meet President Trump’s Memorial Day deadline to push through legislation that would allocate \$70 billion for ongoing border and immigration enforcement. This legislation—known as Reconciliation 2.0—is politically tricky for many Republicans who must survive a MAGA-centric primary season and still appeal to moderate voters in November’s mid-term election.

Congress will return from its Memorial Day recess in early June to continue work on Reconciliation 2.0 as its legislative to-do list grows. The stakes are high right now for Republicans. The challenges they face in passing their own legislation showcases internal discord and time lost on a shrinking legislative calendar. The fate of Reconciliation 2.0 will also influence Republican leadership’s decision to push a third reconciliation bill ahead of November midterms. As summer campaign season officially begins, members of Congress will be eager to spend less time in D.C. debating politically hard issues and more time in their states and districts making the case for reelection.

The summer Congressional session will also focus more on appropriations bills for FY2027. Expect healthcare chatter in June and July as the House and the Senate Appropriations Committees turn toward funding the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for FY2027. Even with his influence, it is unlikely that Congress will accept the President’s proposed 30-percent cut to NIH and nearly 12 percent cut to HHS in FY2027. Expect members of Congress from both parties to defend HHS and its current structure and organization.

While FY2026 funding is technically done, industries and sectors from across the country are voicing concern over the Trump Administration’s plans to spend appropriated funds as Congress has directed. This is growing concern among the healthcare sector, especially NIH-grant recipients. With a little over four months left in FY2026, calls are growing for Congress to more closely scrutinize the Administration’s funding allocation timelines.



Look for more updates from ASTCT's Government Relations on FY2027 HHS funding and FY2026 spending, especially as they relate to ASTCT members. Learn more about ASTCT Payer and Government Relations activities, and how you can get involved, on [ASTCT's Advocacy](#) webpage or contact [Molly Ford](#), ASTCT's Director of Government and Payer Relations.

