



Area Agency on Aging 1-B

THE ADVOCATE

Early Edition
October 2013

Countdown to Government Shutdown?

As reported in the last edition of The Advocate, the federal fiscal year is set to expire on September 30th at midnight. Both chambers of Congress remain billions of dollars apart in their proposed appropriations budgets for fiscal year 2014. The U.S. House of Representatives passed a continuing resolution in recent days which was sent to the Senate for consideration. This continuing resolution continues to fund the federal government through the end of the year, allowing more time to reconcile the differences between the proposed appropriations budgets of both chambers.

The continuing resolution that was sent to the Senate would continue sequestration, which cuts federal discretionary spending and it would also defund the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) also known as Obamacare for fiscal year 2014. The continuing resolution in its current iteration is not expected to pass the Senate where leaders are calling it, "Dead." The Senate has outlined plans to rewrite the continuing resolution and return it to the House with the language defunding the ACA removed.

This process could leave only days or hours for the House to vote to pass the modified continuing resolution or to amend the resolution, vote and return it to the senate for consideration. Failure to pass a continuing resolution would allow funding for large pieces of the federal government to expire and thus cause a partial government shutdown. A federal government shutdown of more than a day could result in a halt to the provision of non-essential services provided by the Area Agency on Aging 1-B.

If a shutdown is successfully averted, another pressing issue stands before Congress in mid-October, raising the debt ceiling. Raising the debt ceiling gives the federal government the ability to borrow money to pay its previous and future obligations. Failure to raise the debt ceiling could cause a default on the United States debts putting the full faith and credit of the United States Government at risk.

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