

House Passes Important Piece of 2018 Budget

The U.S. House of Representatives, with little fireworks, adopted Thursday the Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act of 2017—or, in simpler terms, the budget bill authorizing new spending priorities for the department in Fiscal Year 2018, which begins Oct. 1.

The measure was adopted on a 386-41 vote with 227 Republicans and 159 Democrats voting in favor of the bill. This is the same bill to which an amendment was adopted Wednesday that grants permanent resident status to Charlie Gard and his parents, if the bill is signed into law.

President Donald Trump didn't mention the British infant, but he applauded the House for passing the critical piece of the 2018 budget in a statement released by the White House. It reads:

I commend the House of Representatives for voting today to reauthorize, for the first time, the Department of Homeland Security. Since its formation nearly 15 years ago in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, DHS has been on the front lines of the Federal Government's efforts to keep the American public safe.

The United States continues to face evolving security challenges posed by terrorists, natural hazards, transnational criminal organizations, human traffickers, drug smugglers and adversaries waging attacks in cyberspace. The Homeland Security Authorization Act ensures that Secretary Kelly and the more than 240,000 DHS employees and contractors who work tirelessly to protect our country, and ensure our national preparedness, have all of the tools necessary to carry out their mission.

The Homeland Security Authorization Act also authorizes U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement for the first time. Enforcement of our immigration laws is at its core a public safety issue. Secretary Kelly has already made tremendous progress, and this bill reflects my strong commitment to ending illegal immigration and fully enforcing the laws of the United States.

As president, there is no more solemn responsibility than my duty to keep this country safe. I look forward to signing this important legislation, and I encourage the United States Senate to take it up without delay.”

The measure is now in the Senate’s hands but faces an uncertain future between Democrat obstruction and Republican in-fighting over health care legislation. {eo}