

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE) — Congressional Activity Brief

TOP STORY

GOVERNMENT REFORM / SPENDING

Coons Leads Democratic Push Against DOGE-Driven Cuts to Federal Workforce, Cites Delaware Federal Employees

Sen. Coons is expected to take the Senate floor this week to oppose the latest round of DOGE-recommended federal workforce reductions, arguing they threaten critical services at Delaware installations including Dover Air Force Base civilian operations and the VA Medical Center in Wilmington. Coons has circulated a Dear Colleague letter urging Democratic senators to block any continuing resolution that codifies DOGE staffing targets. He framed the debate as protecting 'the people who actually make government work' during a Sunday appearance on CNN's State of the Union. [STAFF VERIFY exact floor schedule and letter details.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz should acknowledge the importance of Delaware federal jobs — especially at Dover AFB — while pivoting to his proven record of government restructuring. Drawing on Katz's Delaware Senate legislation establishing an independent council to develop a five-year plan to restructure and reorganize state government, Katz can argue he supports smart, strategic reform rather than blanket opposition to efficiency. 'Coons reflexively defends bureaucratic bloat; I've actually written the legislation to make government leaner and more accountable.'

DEFENSE & PENTAGON

HEARING — DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee Holds Hearing on FY2027 Readiness Posture

As Ranking Member of the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, Coons is scheduled to participate in a closed hearing on FY2027 military readiness and force structure with senior Pentagon officials this week. Coons has previewed his focus on ensuring adequate funding for the C-5M Super Galaxy fleet maintenance at Dover AFB and protecting Delaware National Guard modernization funds. He has publicly questioned whether DOGE-recommended Pentagon administrative cuts could inadvertently harm warfighter readiness. [STAFF VERIFY exact hearing date — may be March 4 or 5.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz should affirm strong defense spending and Dover AFB investment while drawing on his platform's support for Commander-in-Chief authority and robust military force. Per Katz's veterans platform calling for sustained military readiness as 'essential for America's continuous ability to preserve global peace,' Katz can say: 'I'll fight for every dollar Dover AFB needs — but I won't use defense as a shield to block responsible reform of Pentagon waste.'

DEFENSE / IRAN

[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Statement on Iran Sanctions Enforcement and Naval Deployments

Reports indicate Coons may issue a statement this week regarding additional naval deployments to the Persian Gulf amid renewed tensions with Iran over nuclear enrichment thresholds. Coons has historically supported diplomatic engagement and the JCPOA framework while voting for targeted sanctions. Staff should monitor Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services feeds for any formal statement or co-signed letter. [STAFF VERIFY — no confirmed public statement as of briefing time.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz supports strong Commander-in-Chief authority and a posture of maximum deterrence. He can draw a clear contrast: 'Senator Coons spent years advocating for the Iran nuclear deal that empowered the regime. I believe in peace through strength — not appeasement deals that put American servicemembers at risk.' Per Katz's defense and veterans platform emphasizing protection of sovereignty and democratic values.

RECENT LEGISLATION

COSPONSORSHIP — GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Coons Cosponsors PROTECT Federal Workers Act (S. _____)

Coons joined several Senate Democrats in cosponsoring legislation that would require congressional approval before any executive branch entity — including DOGE — could implement reductions-in-force exceeding 5% of any federal agency's workforce. The bill also mandates 180-day impact assessments before major restructuring. It has been referred to the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. [STAFF VERIFY exact bill number — introduced late February 2026.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's Delaware Senate legislation (SB 217, 146th General Assembly) prohibiting members of the General Assembly from being employed by the

state while in office, and his five-year government restructuring plan, Katz can argue: 'I believe in government accountability and smart reform — not protecting the status quo. Coons wants to make it nearly impossible to streamline government. I've actually authored restructuring legislation that makes government work better for taxpayers.'

LEGISLATION — FOREIGN AFFAIRS / HEALTH

Coons Reintroduces Global Health Security Act

Sen. Coons is reported to have reintroduced his Global Health Security Act, which would authorize \$5 billion over five years for international pandemic preparedness and global health infrastructure. The bill builds on his prior legislative efforts dating to the 119th Congress and has been referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Coons framed the legislation as essential to preventing the 'next COVID.' [STAFF VERIFY exact bill number and cosponsors for 119th Congress version.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's healthcare platform emphasizing a paradigm shift toward prevention and his extensive medical background, Katz can say: 'As a physician, I know pandemic preparedness matters — but we should be investing in American public health infrastructure first. Coons wants to send \$5 billion overseas while Delaware families still struggle with healthcare costs and access. My plan focuses on fixing our broken domestic health system before writing blank checks abroad.'

IMMIGRATION

[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Activity on ICE Oversight / Immigration Legislation

Coons has been reported among Senate Democrats exploring legislation to impose additional oversight requirements on ICE enforcement operations, potentially limiting cooperation between ICE and local law enforcement. No bill text has been publicly filed as of this briefing. Staff should monitor Judiciary Committee filings where Coons sits. [STAFF VERIFY — no confirmed bill introduction.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz's platform supports strong ICE enforcement and secure borders. 'While Senator Coons looks for ways to handcuff ICE, I'll back our border agents and ensure Delaware communities are safe from criminal illegal immigration. Law enforcement needs support, not more bureaucratic obstacles.' Per Katz's first responders platform emphasizing unwavering community support for those who protect public safety.

APPROPRIATIONS — MILCON

FY2026 Continuing Resolution: Delaware Military Construction Funding in Limbo

With the federal government operating under a continuing resolution through mid-March, Coons has raised concerns that \$87 million in previously earmarked military construction projects at Dover AFB — including runway improvements and a new logistics facility — remain unfunded at full-year levels. Coons sent a letter to Appropriations Chair Collins urging a bipartisan omnibus or minibus to unlock these projects. [STAFF VERIFY exact funding figures and letter date.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz can acknowledge the importance of Dover AFB funding while pivoting to fiscal responsibility. Per Katz's economy platform emphasizing fiscal discipline and infrastructure investment through public-private partnerships: 'I'll fight for Dover AFB every day — but the reason these projects are stuck is because Washington can't pass a real budget. As a business owner, I know you can't run anything on continuing resolutions. We need fiscal discipline, not governing by crisis.'

EARMARKS — DELAWARE

[STAFF VERIFY] Delaware Community Project Funding / Earmarks for FY2027

Coons's office has opened the FY2027 Community Project Funding request portal for Delaware organizations. In prior cycles, Coons has directed tens of millions in earmarks to Delaware nonprofits, municipal infrastructure, and education programs. Staff should compile a list of FY2026 Coons earmarks to identify any questionable spending or projects that underperformed. [STAFF VERIFY portal opening date and compile FY2026 earmark list for oppo research.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's comprehensive lobby reform legislation (SB 141, 146th General Assembly) and his transparency initiatives including live streaming of the Delaware State Senate (SR 14), Katz can argue: 'Every taxpayer dollar must be transparent and accountable. I wrote the lobby reform and transparency laws in Dover. In Washington, I'll make sure earmarks serve Delaware families — not connected insiders.'

Coons Leads Senate Foreign Relations Delegation to Munich Security Conference Follow-Up

Following the February Munich Security Conference, Coons has been conducting follow-up calls with European counterparts on burden-sharing and NATO defense spending commitments. He released a statement praising European allies for accelerating toward the 2% GDP defense spending target while warning against 'American retreat from alliance commitments.' As a senior member of Foreign Relations, Coons is positioning himself as a leading voice on transatlantic policy. [STAFF VERIFY specific call readouts or scheduled SFRC hearings this week.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz can agree NATO allies should spend more on defense while questioning Coons's priorities: 'I'm glad Europe is finally paying its fair share — something Senator Coons failed to demand for 15 years. But while he's focused on European diplomacy, Delawareans are dealing with inflation, healthcare costs, and a broken border. We need a Senator who puts Delaware first.' Per Katz's economy and cost of living platform emphasizing kitchen-table priorities.

Coons Comments on China Trade and Technology Competition

In a Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee session last week, Coons questioned witnesses on China's AI and semiconductor capabilities, emphasizing the need for allied coordination on export controls. Coons has supported the CHIPS Act implementation but has called for additional guardrails to prevent subsidized companies from expanding production in China. He is expected to push for a markup of new technology competition legislation this spring. [STAFF VERIFY subcommittee hearing date and witness list.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's economy platform supporting investment in innovation and R&D incentives, Katz can say: 'I support keeping America ahead in the technology race — but we need to pair export controls with an aggressive domestic innovation agenda. Senator Coons talks a good game on China, but his party's regulatory burden is driving tech companies offshore. As a business owner, I know over-regulation kills American competitiveness.' Drawing on Katz's platform to reduce regulatory burdens on businesses.

Race Snapshot: Coons vs. Katz (General: Nov. 3, 2026)

Sen. Coons (D) is running for a third full term. Republican primary: Dr. Mike Katz vs. John Shulli — primary set for September 15, 2026. Delaware is historically Solid Democratic. Coons has missed 3.0% of Senate roll call votes since 2010. His legislative profile focuses on International Affairs (27%), Commerce (21%), and Labor (10%). Committees: Appropriations (Defense Subcommittee Ranking Member), Foreign Relations, Judiciary. Coons's FEC filings show a robust war chest; Q4 2025 numbers showed approximately \$4.2 million cash on hand. [STAFF VERIFY latest FEC filing details.] No independent public polling of the DE Senate race has been released in 2026 to date.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Strategic note for Katz: Coons is well-funded and active on national security. Key vulnerabilities this cycle: the DOGE/government spending debate where Katz's restructuring record provides credibility; ICE/immigration enforcement where Coons is out of step with Delaware's moderate swing voters; healthcare policy where Katz's 40+ years as a physician and his DHIN innovation record are powerful differentiators; and government transparency where Katz authored lobby reform (SB 141), term limits (SB 61), live streaming (SR 14), and redistricting transparency (SR 9) legislation in Dover. Katz should continue building name ID downstate and among veterans communities near Dover AFB.