

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

TOP STORY

GOVERNMENT REFORM / DELAWARE IMPACT

Coons Leads Democratic Push Against DOGE-Driven Cuts to Federal Workforce in Delaware

Sen. Coons held a press conference Thursday in Wilmington highlighting the impact of ongoing DOGE-recommended federal workforce reductions on Delaware's federal employees, particularly at IRS facilities and VA offices in the state. Coons called the reductions 'reckless austerity that hollows out services Delawareans depend on' and announced he would introduce an amendment to the upcoming continuing resolution to shield certain federal positions. He cited estimates that Delaware could lose over 1,200 federal jobs under the current trajectory. [STAFF VERIFY exact job-loss figures and amendment language when filed.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz can thread the needle here — support government efficiency while protecting Delaware workers. 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 has a proven, methodical approach to right-sizing government rather than Coons's reflexive defense of the status quo. Messaging: 'I've actually written the playbook for smart government reform — evaluate services first, then restructure. Coons just wants to protect the bureaucracy.'

DEFENSE & PENTAGON

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

Coons Questions Pentagon Officials on FY2027 Defense Budget Request at Appropriations Subcommittee Hearing

As Ranking Member of the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, Coons participated in a closed-session briefing this week on the administration's preliminary FY2027 defense spending framework. In public remarks afterward, Coons expressed concern about proposed shifts in procurement spending away from legacy platforms toward autonomous systems, warning that Dover Air Force Base's C-5M Super Galaxy mission could face scrutiny. He emphasized the need to protect Delaware's defense infrastructure. [STAFF VERIFY hearing date and Coons's specific public statements post-briefing.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz should affirm strong support for Commander-in-Chief authority on force modernization while making Dover AFB non-negotiable. Per Katz's veterans and defense platform emphasizing that 'sustaining a robust military force is essential for America's continuous ability to preserve global peace,' Katz can position himself as both pro-modernization and pro-Dover: 'I'll fight for a 21st-century military AND Dover Air Force Base — we don't have to choose.'

NATIONAL GUARD

[STAFF VERIFY] Status of National Guard Funding Amendment Coons Circulated in February

In late February, Coons's office circulated a draft amendment to bolster National Guard readiness funding, reportedly including provisions for Delaware Army National Guard facility upgrades. Staff should confirm whether this amendment has been formally introduced or attached to any vehicle, and track any cosponsors.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** This is a bipartisan area where Katz can acknowledge shared goals. Per Katz's platform supporting first responders and veterans, Katz should issue a supportive statement on Guard readiness funding while pivoting: 'Our Guard members deserve modern facilities — something I'd fight for on Day One. But after 15 years in the Senate, why is Coons still circulating amendments instead of delivering results?'

RECENT LEGISLATION

IMMIGRATION / LAW ENFORCEMENT

Coons Cosponsors the Protecting America's Communities Act — ICE Oversight Legislation

Sen. Coons signed on as a cosponsor of S. 987, the Protecting America's Communities Act, which would impose additional reporting requirements on ICE enforcement operations and create an independent oversight board for immigration detention facilities. The bill, led by Sen. Booker (D-NJ), has 18 Democratic cosponsors and zero Republican support. Coons framed his support as 'ensuring accountability in enforcement' during a brief hallway interview. [STAFF VERIFY bill number and exact cosponsor count.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** This is a strong contrast area. Per Katz's platform supporting secure borders and strong ICE enforcement, Katz should go direct: 'While Chris Coons wants to put bureaucratic handcuffs on the men and women of ICE, I'll back the agents keeping Delaware

safe. We need more enforcement, not more oversight boards designed to slow enforcement down.' Highlight Katz's support for law enforcement credentials and his first responders platform commitment to ensuring officers know 'we unequivocally got their back.'

HEALTHCARE / FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Coons Reintroduces the Global Health Security Act (S. 1134)

Coons reintroduced the Global Health Security Act this week, which would authorize \$5 billion over five years for international pandemic preparedness and global health infrastructure. The bill focuses on USAID-administered programs and WHO coordination. Coons cited lessons from COVID-19 and emerging avian influenza risks. [STAFF VERIFY bill number, authorization amount, and introduction date.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's healthcare platform calling for a 'paradigm shift' from treating illness to preventing it, Katz can argue the priority should be domestic health system reform first: 'As a physician who spent 20 years in the operating room, I know we need pandemic preparedness — but \$5 billion to foreign bureaucracies while Delaware families can't afford their premiums? Let's fix American healthcare before we fund the WHO. Coons has his priorities exactly backward.'

ECONOMY / SMALL BUSINESS

Coons Files Amendment to Small Business Regulatory Relief Package

Coons filed an amendment to the pending Small Business Regulatory Modernization Act that would expand SBA loan eligibility thresholds and create a new grant program for minority-owned businesses in underserved communities. While marketed as pro-small business, the amendment includes new ESG compliance reporting requirements for grant recipients. [STAFF VERIFY amendment number and specific provisions.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's economy platform calling to 'alleviate regulatory burdens on small businesses' and his Delaware Senate bill SB 100 to repeal the corporate income tax, Katz can expose the bait-and-switch: 'Coons says he supports small business, then buries new ESG mandates in the fine print. I actually passed legislation to cut business taxes and reduce red tape in Delaware. Small business owners need less government paperwork, not more of Coons's compliance traps.'

Coons Announces \$14.2M in Federal Grants for Delaware Water Infrastructure

Coons's office issued a press release Thursday announcing \$14.2 million in EPA water infrastructure grants for Delaware, including \$8.6 million for Sussex County wastewater system upgrades and \$5.6 million for New Castle County lead pipe replacement. Coons credited his Appropriations Committee position for securing the funds. [STAFF VERIFY exact grant amounts and EPA program names.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Acknowledge the win for Delaware but pivot to Katz's broader infrastructure vision. Per Katz's platform on energy and environment advocating for 'clean water and air' and leveraging 'private sector knowledge, resources, and technology,' Katz can say: 'Clean water for Delaware is a priority I share — but \$14 million is a band-aid. I'll push for public-private partnerships that deliver real infrastructure modernization, not drip-feed grants that let career politicians take credit every election cycle.'

[STAFF VERIFY] FY2026 Military Construction Funding for Dover AFB

Staff should verify the status of FY2026 military construction projects at Dover Air Force Base that Coons requested through the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. In prior years, Coons secured MILCON funding for base infrastructure improvements. Any new announcements or delays should be tracked for campaign response.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's veterans platform calling for a 'VA Advanced Medical Facility in Southern Delaware,' Katz should tie any Dover MILCON discussion to the broader need for military and veteran infrastructure investment in Delaware: 'Our service members at Dover and our veterans across the state deserve world-class facilities. I won't just fight for one base project — I'll deliver a comprehensive plan including the advanced VA medical facility Southern Delaware desperately needs.'

Coons Calls for Diplomatic Engagement with Iran Amid Escalating Tensions

In a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing Wednesday, Coons urged the administration to pursue renewed diplomatic channels with Tehran despite the collapse of nuclear negotiations

in late 2025. Coons warned that military escalation 'would be catastrophic for American interests and regional stability' and questioned whether the administration's maximum pressure campaign was producing results. He stopped short of criticizing specific military deployments but emphasized congressional war powers. [STAFF VERIFY hearing date, witness list, and exact Coons quotes.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's strong defense posture and support for Commander-in-Chief authority, Katz should draw a sharp line: 'Chris Coons wants to return to the failed diplomacy that empowered Iran's nuclear ambitions. As someone who believes in peace through strength, I trust our Commander-in-Chief to use all tools — including credible military deterrence — to protect America. Coons's approach has been tried and it failed. Delaware deserves a Senator who won't handcuff our President on national security.'

UKRAINE / NATO

Coons Meets with Ukrainian Parliamentary Delegation on Capitol Hill

Coons met with a visiting Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada delegation this week to discuss ongoing U.S. security assistance and reconstruction funding. Coons reiterated his support for sustained Ukraine aid and pressed for additional anti-corruption conditions on reconstruction grants. He also called for expedited NATO interoperability programs. [STAFF VERIFY meeting date, delegation members, and any resulting legislation or commitments.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz can support Ukraine's sovereignty while demanding accountability. Per Katz's fiscal responsibility platform and his Delaware Senate record on lobby reform (SB 141) and government transparency (SR 14 on live-streaming government proceedings), Katz should say: 'I support standing with our allies, but every dollar sent overseas must be accounted for. My record is one of transparency and accountability in government spending — something Chris Coons only talks about when cameras are rolling.'

2026 RACE CONTEXT

CAMPAIGN INTELLIGENCE

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 Q4 2025 FEC filing showed approximately \$4.8M cash on hand. No major independent polling has been released this cycle, though internal Democratic surveys reportedly show Coons with a comfortable lead. [STAFF VERIFY Coons's latest FEC filing and any new public polls.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Strategic note for Katz: Coons is well-funded and active on national security. Key vulnerabilities this week: his ICE oversight cosponsorship (strong contrast with Katz's border security stance), the DOGE/federal workforce debate (Katz's government restructuring record from the Delaware Senate is a real differentiator), and global health spending vs. domestic healthcare priorities (Katz's home turf as a physician with 40+ years in healthcare). Katz should increase earned media around the ICE bill contrast and prepare a healthcare policy rollout to seize the narrative before Coons's next recess town halls.

Sources: [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) · [GovTrack](https://www.govtrack.us) · [NPR](https://www.npr.org) · [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov) · [Ballotpedia](https://www.ballotpedia.org) · C-SPAN

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