

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

TOP STORY

GOVERNMENT REFORM / WEEKEND MEDIA

Coons Appears on Sunday Talk Shows to Criticize DOGE-Led Federal Workforce Reductions

Sen. Coons is expected to make the Sunday show rounds today to push back against the ongoing DOGE-driven federal workforce restructuring, arguing that cuts to agencies like the EPA and HHS are harming Delaware constituents. Coons has been a vocal critic of Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency initiative, calling it 'government by wrecking ball' and warning of degraded federal services in Delaware. [STAFF VERIFY: Confirm specific Sunday show appearances and exact quotes for March 8.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** While Coons reflexively defends bloated bureaucracy, Dr. Katz has a proven record of demanding government restructuring — drawing on his Delaware Senate initiative establishing an Independent Council to develop a Five Year Plan to Restructure and Reorganize State Government. Katz can say: 'I've actually written the blueprint for making government leaner and more accountable. Chris Coons has spent 15 years defending the status quo.'

DEFENSE & PENTAGON

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Statement on FY2027 Defense Budget Request Preview

The White House FY2027 defense budget request is expected in the coming weeks, and as Ranking Member of the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, Coons is likely preparing a response framework. Coons has previously signaled concern about proposed shifts in defense spending toward border enforcement accounts and away from traditional readiness programs. Staff should monitor for any pre-budget statements or Dear Colleague letters circulated this week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Dr. Katz supports strong defense spending AND border security — these are not mutually exclusive. Per his veterans and defense platform, Katz advocates for sustaining a robust military force as essential for preserving global peace and

maintaining international stability, while also supporting secure borders and strong ICE enforcement. Coons creates a false choice between defending America abroad and defending America's borders.

DELAWARE MILITARY INFRASTRUCTURE

Dover Air Force Base Mortuary Affairs Operations Continue Under Scrutiny

Dover AFB remains central to national defense operations, and Coons regularly champions its role in appropriations discussions. No new specific developments reported this weekend, but Coons's office has been highlighting the base's economic impact — approximately 30,000 jobs in Kent County — as part of broader messaging against defense restructuring. [STAFF VERIFY: Any new Coons statements on Dover AFB this week.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Dr. Katz can fully embrace Dover AFB's importance — per his veterans platform, he calls for advanced VA medical facilities in southern Delaware and robust support for military communities. The difference: Katz will fight for Dover AFB funding based on strategic military necessity, not as a Washington insider trading favors. Coons's 15-year tenure hasn't prevented repeated BRAC scares.

RECENT LEGISLATION

IMMIGRATION / LAW ENFORCEMENT

[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Expected to Cosponsor ICE Accountability and Oversight Act

Reports from Democratic caucus sources indicate Coons is among Senators expected to cosponsor legislation imposing new reporting requirements and operational constraints on ICE enforcement activities. The bill would require judicial review for certain detention decisions and limit ICE operations near schools and hospitals. Staff should confirm Coons's cosponsorship status and bill number when formally introduced.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Dr. Katz supports secure borders and strong ICE enforcement — full stop. As a physician who has treated patients across every walk of life (per his 'Meet Mike' biography), Katz understands community safety. Tying the hands of ICE officers doesn't protect communities — it endangers them. Coons is prioritizing progressive ideology over the safety of Delaware families and first responders, whose support Katz champions per his first responders platform.

[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Reintroduction of Global Health Security Act Provisions

Coons has historically championed global health security legislation and is expected to push for reauthorization of pandemic preparedness funding through the Foreign Relations Committee this session. His previous iterations have included significant overseas health infrastructure spending. Staff should track any new bill introductions or cosponsorship activity in this space during the current week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's healthcare platform, America's own healthcare system is 'marked by excessive costs, inefficiencies, and fragmentation.' As a physician with 40+ years in the U.S. healthcare industry, Dr. Katz will ask: Why is Chris Coons spending billions on foreign health infrastructure when Delaware communities still lack affordable, coordinated care? Patients over politics means fixing healthcare at home first.

Coons Previously Cosponsored PRESS Act (S. 2074) — Status Update

The PRESS Act, which Coons cosponsored to create a federal shield law for journalists, passed the Senate in a prior session but has been reintroduced in the 119th Congress. Coons continues to champion the bill through his Judiciary Committee seat. The bill has bipartisan support but faces uncertainty given current executive branch tensions with media organizations.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's Delaware Senate record of championing transparency — including his live-streaming resolution (Katz SR 14) and open redistricting resolution (Katz SR 9) — Dr. Katz can support press freedom principles while pivoting: 'I didn't just talk about transparency — I legislated it in Dover. I forced the Delaware Senate onto live-stream. Coons talks about press freedom in Washington while his party works to suppress speech they disagree with.'

[STAFF VERIFY] FY2026 Continuing Resolution Status and Delaware Impact

The federal government continues operating under a continuing resolution, with full-year FY2026 appropriations still unresolved. Coons has warned that CR-level funding is

shortchanging Delaware priorities including Amtrak Northeast Corridor upgrades, Army Corps of Engineers coastal resilience projects, and community health centers. A March deadline for the next CR or omnibus is approaching. Staff should confirm latest CR expiration date and any Coons floor statements.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's economy and cost-of-living platform, fiscal responsibility demands actual budgets, not endless continuing resolutions. Drawing on his state Senate experience establishing a Five Year Plan to Restructure and Reorganize State Government, Katz understands planning and accountability. After 15 years in the Senate, Coons still can't deliver a functioning budget process — that's not leadership, that's failure.

HOUSING / DELAWARE FUNDING

[STAFF VERIFY] Delaware Housing and Community Development Grants

Coons's office has touted HUD Community Development Block Grant funding for Delaware communities, particularly in Wilmington and Dover. With Delaware median home prices surging 53% from 2018–2023, Coons has aligned with Democratic proposals for federal affordable housing investments. Staff should verify any specific CDBG announcements or new housing-related earmark requests filed by Coons for FY2027.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's homeownership platform, the American Dream of homeownership is slipping away — and Coons's answer is always more federal spending rather than addressing root causes. Dr. Katz champions tax incentives and discounted interest rates for first-time homebuyers, zoning reforms to reduce construction costs, and increasing affordable housing supply. Coons has been in office while Delaware home prices surged 53% — his approach clearly isn't working.

FOREIGN POLICY & DIPLOMACY

FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Positioning on Iran Nuclear Negotiations

As a senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Coons has been navigating a complex position on the administration's approach to Iran. Reports suggest Coons has privately urged diplomatic engagement while publicly expressing concern about Iran's enrichment progress. With tensions elevated in the Persian Gulf region, Coons's posture on potential

military authorization remains a key watch item. Staff should monitor for any new SFRC hearings or Coons statements on Iran this coming week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's defense and veterans platform emphasizing strong Commander-in-Chief authority, Dr. Katz believes America must project strength, not ambiguity. Coons tries to have it both ways on Iran — talking tough at home while undermining military options in Washington. Delaware's military families at Dover AFB deserve a Senator who is clear-eyed about threats, not one who hedges for political convenience.

TRADE / FOREIGN RELATIONS

Coons Africa Policy and AGOA Reauthorization Push

Coons has long positioned himself as a leading Senate voice on U.S.-Africa policy and continues to push for reauthorization and modernization of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). He has argued that deeper U.S.-Africa trade ties counter Chinese influence on the continent. The current AGOA authorization faces an expiration timeline that Coons is working to address through SFRC. [STAFF VERIFY: Any recent Coons op-eds or hearings on AGOA in the past two weeks.]

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's economy and energy platforms, America-first trade policy should prioritize domestic job creation, energy independence, and reducing regulatory burdens on U.S. businesses — as demonstrated by his Delaware Senate bill repealing the corporate income tax (Katz SB 100). Coons focuses on Africa trade frameworks while Delaware businesses struggle with rising costs and overregulation. Dr. Katz will ask: What has AGOA done for workers in New Castle County?

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. Weekend note: With Congress in recess-adjacent mode, Coons is likely in Delaware for constituent events. Staff

should track any town halls, local media appearances, or fundraising events scheduled for this week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Strategic note for Katz: Coons is well-funded and active on national security. Key vulnerabilities this cycle: DOGE/government spending debate (Katz has restructuring credentials from his state Senate Five Year Plan initiative), ICE oversight bill opposition (Katz supports strong enforcement), healthcare policy (Katz's home turf as a physician with 40+ years of experience), and government transparency reform (Katz authored lobby reform SB 141, term limits SB 61, and live-streaming SR 14 in Dover). Press the 15-year incumbent vs. physician-reformer contrast hard in early messaging.

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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