

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

TOP STORY

LAW ENFORCEMENT / DISABILITY RIGHTS **NEW**

Coons Introduces 'Blue Envelope' Bill to Protect Disabled Drivers During Traffic Stops

Sen. Coons introduced S. 4089 on March 12, the 'Blue Envelope Act,' which would authorize DOJ grants to states and localities to implement blue envelope programs. These programs provide individuals with autism, PTSD, hearing loss, or other disabilities a blue envelope containing their vehicle documents and communication cards to present during traffic stops, reducing the risk of misunderstandings with law enforcement. The bill was read twice and referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Several states have adopted similar programs at the local level; this bill would create a federal grant framework to scale the initiative nationwide.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz can acknowledge the well-intentioned goal of protecting disabled individuals during police encounters while pivoting to his strong support for first responders. Per Katz's first responders platform, he emphasizes solving 'staffing and pay deficits, equipment and resource shortages, physical and mental health needs' for law enforcement — Katz can argue that better-trained and better-resourced police forces are the most effective way to improve outcomes for all citizens during encounters, rather than layering new federal grant bureaucracies on top of state programs that already exist.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) — S. 4089 · [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov)

DEFENSE & PENTAGON

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS

FY2027 Defense Appropriations Hearings Continue — Coons Expected to Press on Readiness Shortfalls

The Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, where Coons serves as Ranking Member, is continuing its series of FY2027 budget hearings. Following last week's hearing on readiness accounts, additional sessions on procurement and research/development accounts are expected in coming days. Coons has been using these hearings to criticize the Administration's proposed personnel reductions and what he characterizes as inadequate Operations & Maintenance funding levels relative to force structure requirements.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz supports strong defense spending and Commander-in-Chief authority. Per Katz's veterans platform, he advocates 'sustaining a robust military force' as 'essential for America's continuous ability to preserve global peace.' Katz can credit Coons for securing Delaware defense dollars (Dover AFB) while arguing that Coons undermines readiness by opposing the Administration's efforts to eliminate Pentagon waste and bloat — drawing on Katz's demonstrated commitment to government restructuring (his Delaware Senate legislation establishing a Five-Year Plan to Restructure and Reorganize State Government).

SOURCES: appropriations.senate.gov · C-SPAN

BORDER SECURITY / DEFENSE

[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Reaction to National Guard Border Deployment Expansion

Staff should verify whether Coons issued any formal statement or floor remarks this week regarding the Administration's expanded National Guard deployment authorization along the southern border. Previous briefs flagged reports of Coons expressing skepticism about militarizing border security. Any new comments would be significant given heightened national debate over border enforcement posture.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's platform on secure borders and strong ICE enforcement, any Coons opposition to National Guard border deployments provides a clear contrast. Katz supports robust border security measures and Commander-in-Chief authority to deploy military assets for homeland defense. If Coons criticizes the deployment, Katz can frame this as another example of Coons prioritizing Washington process arguments over the safety of American communities.

SOURCES: [Coons.senate.gov](https://coons.senate.gov)

RECENT LEGISLATION

JUDICIARY / LAW ENFORCEMENT **NEW**

S. 4089 — Blue Envelope Act (Introduced Mar. 12, 2026)

Coons introduced this bill to authorize DOJ grants for blue envelope programs designed to protect individuals with disabilities during traffic stops. The bill was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. No cosponsors listed at time of introduction. This is a new Coons initiative not tracked in previous briefs.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's first responders platform and his background as a physician who has treated patients 'from the tiniest infants to resilient centenarians,' Katz can speak with authority on both disability awareness and law enforcement support. Katz should position himself as favoring direct investment in officer training and first responder resources rather than creating new federal grant programs with administrative overhead.

SOURCES: Congress.gov — S. 4089

ENVIRONMENT / FOREIGN AID

S. 4011 — Tropical Forest and Coral Reef Conservation Act Reauthorization (Introduced Mar. 5, 2026)

Coons sponsored reauthorization of the 1998 Tropical Forest and Coral Reef Conservation Act, which provides debt-for-nature swap authority allowing developing countries to redirect debt payments toward conservation. The bill was referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This reauthorization aligns with Coons's longstanding focus on international development and environmental diplomacy.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's energy and environment platform, he supports environmental stewardship grounded in science-based and private-sector-driven approaches — as demonstrated by his authorship of Delaware's National Scenic Byway legislation (Katz SB 241, 146th General Assembly). Katz can argue that while conservation is important, taxpayer dollars should prioritize domestic environmental needs — clean water and air for Americans — before funding international debt-for-nature swaps in foreign countries during a period of fiscal strain.

SOURCES: Congress.gov — S. 4011

IMMIGRATION / OVERSIGHT

S. 3891 — ICE Accountability Act (Introduced Feb. 12, 2026) — No Movement

Coons's bill imposing new reporting requirements and oversight mechanisms on ICE operations remains in the Senate Judiciary Committee with no additional cosponsors reported since introduction. The bill has not been scheduled for markup or hearing. Given the current political climate favoring enforcement, this legislation faces steep odds in the Republican-controlled chamber.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's platform supporting secure borders and strong ICE enforcement, this bill provides one of the sharpest contrasts in the race. Katz should frame Coons's ICE oversight bill as an attempt to hamstring the men and women enforcing America's

immigration laws at the exact moment border security requires maximum operational flexibility. Katz can tie this to his broader first responders platform, which emphasizes backing those who protect communities rather than burdening them with bureaucratic reporting mandates.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) · [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov)

HEALTHCARE

[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Cosponsor Activity on PBM Transparency Act

Previous briefs flagged Coons cosponsoring bipartisan PBM transparency legislation. Staff should verify the bill number, current cosponsor count, and whether any committee action has been scheduled. PBM reform has bipartisan momentum and could move through the HELP or Commerce committee this session.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's healthcare platform, he has over forty years of experience in the U.S. healthcare system and has long advocated for reducing 'excessive costs, inefficiencies, and fragmentation.' If Coons is genuinely cosponsoring PBM transparency, Katz can acknowledge the shared goal while arguing that as a physician who has actually navigated the healthcare system — from operating rooms to health system management — he brings the expertise to ensure reform actually lowers costs for patients rather than producing another layer of regulation that gets captured by industry lobbyists. Katz can also cite his Delaware lobby reform legislation (Katz SB 141) as evidence he takes on special interests.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov)

APPROPRIATIONS & DELAWARE FUNDING

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION / DELAWARE

Dover AFB FY2027 Military Construction Request — Tracking

The FY2027 budget request is expected to include military construction funding for Dover Air Force Base, Delaware's largest military installation and home to the 436th and 512th Airlift Wings. Coons, as Defense Appropriations Ranking Member, has historically secured significant MILCON dollars for Dover — including \$42M for an operations facility in FY2026. Staff should track whether the FY2027 request maintains or increases Dover investment levels.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's veterans platform, he is a strong advocate for military infrastructure and specifically calls for advanced medical facilities for veterans in southern Delaware. Katz should acknowledge that Dover AFB funding is good for Delaware while noting that Coons's 14 years as senator have not resolved chronic VA access problems in Kent and

Sussex counties — a gap Katz has specifically pledged to close with a 'VA Advanced Medical Facility in Southern Delaware,' per his veterans platform.

SOURCES: [Appropriations.senate.gov](https://www.appropriations.senate.gov) · [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov)

GOVERNMENT REFORM / DELAWARE JOBS **UPDATED**

[STAFF VERIFY] DOGE-Driven Federal Workforce Cuts — Delaware Impact Assessment

Coons has been leading Democratic opposition to DOGE-driven reductions-in-force across multiple federal agencies. Staff should verify whether any Delaware-specific federal workforce impact numbers have been released this week, including potential cuts at USDA facilities, IRS offices, or Social Security Administration field offices in Delaware. Coons has called the cuts 'reckless' — if Delaware-specific job losses are quantified, this becomes a potent local story.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's Delaware Senate legislation establishing an independent council to develop a Five-Year Plan to Restructure and Reorganize State Government, Katz has a demonstrated record of supporting thoughtful government reform — not reckless cuts, but not the status quo either. Katz can argue that Coons's blanket opposition to any federal workforce reform reveals that after 14 years in Washington, he has become a defender of government bloat rather than an advocate for efficient service delivery to Delawareans.

SOURCES: [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov)

FOREIGN POLICY & DIPLOMACY

WAR POWERS / IRAN

Iran War Powers Debate — Coons Continues Push to Constrain Military Action

Coons remains a vocal supporter of Sen. Tim Kaine's War Powers Resolution aimed at restraining President Trump's military posture toward Iran. No new floor vote has been scheduled this week, but Coons has continued to characterize the Iran conflict as 'a war of choice' requiring explicit congressional authorization. The Foreign Relations Committee is expected to take up the matter in the coming weeks.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's platform supporting strong defense and Commander-in-Chief authority, this is a key philosophical divide. Katz should argue that when American forces and allies face threats from Iran, the Commander-in-Chief must have the flexibility to act decisively — and that Coons's push to constrain military options sends a

dangerous signal of weakness to Tehran. Katz can frame this as Coons prioritizing partisan process fights over the safety of American service members.

SOURCES: [Foreign.senate.gov](https://foreign.senate.gov) · [NPR](https://www.npr.com)

UKRAINE / FOREIGN AID

[STAFF VERIFY] Ukraine Aid — Status of Supplemental Package

Coons has been a leading Senate advocate for continued military and economic assistance to Ukraine. Staff should verify whether any new supplemental aid package language has been circulated this week or if Coons made additional public statements pressing for Ukraine funding. European burden-sharing and potential diplomatic negotiations remain key subplots.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's platform on fiscal responsibility and American energy independence, he can argue that any additional Ukraine aid must be paired with fiscal offsets and should not come at the expense of domestic priorities like border security and veterans' care. Katz can also note that achieving American energy independence — a core platform plank — would undermine Russia's energy leverage over Europe and reduce the long-term cost of the conflict to U.S. taxpayers.

SOURCES: [Foreign.senate.gov](https://foreign.senate.gov) · [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov)

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.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Strategic note for Katz: This week's introduction of S. 4089 (Blue Envelope Act) signals Coons is actively seeking law-enforcement-adjacent messaging to inoculate against 'soft on crime' attacks. Katz should not cede this ground — his first responders platform and physician background give him credibility on both public safety and disability issues. Key vulnerabilities remain: Iran war posture (Katz's Commander-in-Chief authority stance), DOGE/government spending debate (Katz's government restructuring record in

Delaware Senate), ICE oversight bill (Katz's border security position), and healthcare policy (Katz's 40+ year medical career vs. Coons's career as a lawyer-politician).

SOURCES: GovTrack - Sen. Coons · DrMikeKatz.com

Sources: Congress.gov · GovTrack · NPR · Coons.senate.gov · Ballotpedia · C-SPAN

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