

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

### TOP STORY

LAW ENFORCEMENT / DISABILITY RIGHTS **UPDATED**

### Coons's 'Blue Envelope Act' Gains Media Traction — National Disability Advocacy Groups Rally Behind S. 4089

Sen. Coons's Blue Envelope Act (S. 4089), introduced March 12, is generating significant attention heading into the weekend. The bill would authorize DOJ grants to state and local governments to implement blue envelope programs, which provide individuals with disabilities a standardized way to alert law enforcement officers during traffic stops that the driver has a disability. Several national disability rights organizations, including the Autism Society of America, have publicly endorsed the legislation, and Coons's office has amplified their support on social media. The bill remains in the Senate Judiciary Committee with no cosponsors listed yet; staff should monitor for Republican cosponsors next week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz can express genuine support for protecting individuals with disabilities during law enforcement encounters — this aligns with his platform's strong support for first responders and community safety (per Katz's first responders platform). However, Katz should note that unfunded federal grant programs often create bureaucratic overhead rather than practical solutions. Drawing on his experience as a physician who has treated patients 'from the tiniest infants to resilient centenarians,' Katz can argue that he understands disability and vulnerability firsthand and would pursue solutions that empower local law enforcement with training and resources rather than layering on new federal grant bureaucracies.

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 — Weekend Recess; Next Week's Schedule Critical

The Senate is in weekend recess, but the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee where Coons serves as Ranking Member has been conducting a series of FY2027 budget hearings throughout the past two weeks. Following last week's hearings on readiness accounts and Operations & Maintenance funding, the subcommittee is expected to turn to procurement and modernization

accounts next week. Coons has been using these hearings to press for sustained readiness spending while simultaneously criticizing DOGE-driven personnel cuts at the Pentagon. Staff should monitor the subcommittee schedule for Monday/Tuesday announcements.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz supports strong defense and Commander-in-Chief authority (per his veterans and defense platform). He should highlight that Coons's dual posture — demanding robust defense spending while opposing the Administration's efforts to find efficiencies through DOGE — is contradictory. Drawing on Katz's Delaware Senate legislation establishing a five-year plan to restructure and reorganize state government, Katz can argue he has a proven record of pursuing government efficiency without sacrificing essential services, including defense readiness.

SOURCES: [appropriations.senate.gov](https://appropriations.senate.gov) · C-SPAN

DEFENSE / GOVERNMENT REFORM

## **[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Response to Pentagon Civilian Workforce Reduction Announcements**

Reports this week indicated the Department of Defense is implementing additional civilian workforce reductions as part of DOGE-aligned efficiency initiatives. Coons, as Defense Appropriations Ranking Member, has been vocally opposed to these cuts. Staff should verify whether Coons issued a specific statement or letter to the Secretary of Defense this week regarding the impact on Delaware-based defense civilians, particularly at Dover AFB and other Delaware installations.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's veterans platform and his support for Dover AFB, Katz should affirm that Delaware's defense workforce is critical and that any efficiency measures must protect frontline military and civilian personnel at installations like Dover. However, Katz can pivot to his fiscal responsibility platform and note that the bloated federal bureaucracy needs reform — drawing on his Delaware Senate bill establishing a five-year government restructuring plan — and that Coons's blanket opposition to any spending reform is why the debt continues to spiral.

SOURCES: [Coons.senate.gov](https://coons.senate.gov) · [Dover Air Force Base](https://www.dover.af.mil/)

RECENT LEGISLATION

JUDICIARY / LAW ENFORCEMENT / DISABILITY RIGHTS

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

Coons introduced this bill to authorize DOJ grants for blue envelope programs protecting individuals with disabilities during traffic stops. The bill was read twice and referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. No cosponsors listed as of March 14. Staff should track whether any Republican senators sign on, which would change the bill's political profile significantly.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's first responders platform, Katz understands the challenges law enforcement faces and supports policies that improve community-police interactions. As a physician who has treated patients across the full spectrum of society (per his biography), Katz can credibly speak to disability issues. He should frame his approach as empowering local police departments with training and resources rather than creating new federal grant programs that may take years to implement.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](https://www.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 programs. The bill was referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 5 and has seen no further action. This type of legislation exemplifies Coons's pattern of directing U.S. taxpayer-backed financial mechanisms toward international environmental programs.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's energy and environment platform, which emphasizes leveraging private sector knowledge, resources, and technology to address environmental challenges, Katz can argue that Coons prioritizes sending taxpayer resources abroad for international conservation while Delaware's own environmental needs — including beach preservation and clean water — demand attention. Katz authored Delaware's National Scenic Byway legislation (SB 241), demonstrating that he delivers tangible environmental results at home rather than symbolic gestures overseas.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) – S. 4011

IMMIGRATION / OVERSIGHT

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

Coons's bill imposing additional reporting requirements and oversight mechanisms on ICE operations remains stalled in the Senate Judiciary Committee with no new cosponsors or

committee action reported. The bill would restrict certain enforcement practices and mandate public reporting on detention conditions and deportation proceedings. No Republican senators have endorsed the legislation.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** This is a clear contrast opportunity. Katz supports secure borders and strong ICE enforcement (per his core platform positioning). Coons's ICE Accountability Act seeks to hamstring immigration enforcement at a time when border security remains a top voter concern. Katz should frame this as evidence that Coons is more interested in tying the hands of law enforcement than in protecting Delaware communities from the consequences of illegal immigration.

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

HEALTHCARE / PHARMACY

## **[STAFF VERIFY] Coons Cosponsor Activity on PBM Transparency Legislation**

Previous briefs flagged Coons as a cosponsor of bipartisan pharmacy benefit manager transparency legislation. Staff should verify the exact bill number, current cosponsor count, and whether any Senate Commerce or HELP Committee markup has been scheduled. PBM reform is a rare bipartisan issue where Coons may claim credit for healthcare cost reduction.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's healthcare platform, which identifies 'excessive costs, inefficiencies, and fragmentation' as defining problems in U.S. healthcare, PBM transparency is squarely in his wheelhouse. Katz should get ahead of Coons on this issue by proposing more aggressive PBM reforms — as a physician with 40+ years in healthcare, Katz has firsthand knowledge of how PBM practices inflate drug costs. He should frame Coons as a latecomer to healthcare cost reform while Katz has been advocating for systemic change throughout his career.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) — [Coons Sponsored Legislation](#)

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, home to the 436th and 512th Airlift Wings and the largest military installation in Delaware. Coons has historically secured MILCON funding for Dover AFB through his Appropriations Committee seat. Staff should monitor whether the Administration's FY2027

budget submission (expected in the coming weeks) includes any new Dover AFB projects, and whether Coons has pre-positioned earmark requests.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's veterans platform, which calls for a VA advanced medical facility in southern Delaware and robust support for military communities, Katz should affirm strong support for Dover AFB funding. This is an area where Katz can acknowledge bipartisan common ground while pivoting to note that he would fight for Dover AFB as aggressively as Coons — but without voting for bloated omnibus spending packages that add trillions to the national debt.

SOURCES: [Dover Air Force Base](#) · [Appropriations.senate.gov](#)

VETERANS / DELAWARE

## Coons Pushes for VA Medical Facility Expansion in Sussex County — Ongoing

Coons continues to advocate for expanded VA healthcare services in southern Delaware, including support for a new outpatient specialty care facility serving veterans in Kent and Sussex counties. His office has publicized this effort as a key Delaware deliverable. No new appropriations action has been reported this week, but the issue remains active as the FY2027 process unfolds.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** This is directly on Katz's platform turf. Katz's veterans platform explicitly calls for a 'VA Advanced Medical Facility in Southern Delaware' for veterans in Kent and Sussex counties. Katz should aggressively claim ownership of this issue, noting that Coons is only now pushing for a facility that Katz has been championing as a core campaign commitment. As a physician, Katz can speak with unique authority about the healthcare needs of veterans — per his platform emphasis on 'mental health issues, physical health concerns' facing veterans.

SOURCES: [Coons.senate.gov](#) · [VA.gov](#)

FEDERAL FUNDING / DELAWARE

## [STAFF VERIFY] FY2026 Continuing Resolution / Omnibus Status and Delaware Earmarks

Staff should confirm the current status of FY2026 federal funding — whether the government is operating under a continuing resolution or an enacted omnibus. If an omnibus was passed, verify which Coons earmark requests for Delaware were included, particularly for the Port of Wilmington infrastructure improvements, environmental restoration projects, and community

development grants. Coons will likely publicize these deliverables as evidence of his effectiveness for Delaware.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's economy and cost of living platform, which calls for fiscal responsibility and reducing regulatory burdens, Katz should scrutinize Coons's earmarks for cost-effectiveness and question whether they represent genuine priorities or political pork. Katz's track record of authoring legislation to restructure Delaware state government (five-year reorganization plan) demonstrates his commitment to ensuring taxpayer money is spent wisely rather than used as political currency.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](#) - Appropriations

## 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 the President's military posture toward Iran. No new floor vote has been scheduled, but Coons has continued to make public statements arguing that any military action against Iran requires explicit congressional authorization. The Foreign Relations Committee held a classified briefing earlier this week on Iran, and Coons participated in a subsequent open session pressing administration officials on diplomatic engagement.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's core platform supporting strong defense and Commander-in-Chief authority, this is a fundamental contrast. Katz should argue that Coons's effort to constrain the President's ability to respond to Iranian threats in real-time endangers American service members and weakens deterrence. Katz can frame this as Coons putting politics over national security, while Katz — as someone who deeply respects the military chain of command (per his veterans platform) — would support the President's constitutional authority to protect American lives.

SOURCES: [Foreign.senate.gov](#) · [Congress.gov](#)

UKRAINE / FOREIGN AID

### **[STAFF VERIFY] Ukraine Supplemental Aid — Status Update**

Coons has been one of the Senate's most vocal advocates for continued military and economic assistance to Ukraine. Staff should verify whether any new supplemental aid package language has been circulated this week, whether Coons has made additional floor or committee

statements, and the current status of European burden-sharing negotiations. Coons frequently argues that supporting Ukraine is essential to NATO credibility and U.S. strategic interests.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz should articulate a clear position on Ukraine that balances strong defense principles with fiscal responsibility (per his economy and cost of living platform). He can argue that while he supports American leadership, Coons has been a blank-check advocate for Ukraine aid without adequate accountability for how funds are spent — the same lack of oversight Coons applies to domestic spending. Drawing on Katz's government restructuring legislation, he can call for rigorous auditing and transparency requirements on all foreign military assistance.

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

GOVERNMENT REFORM / FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## DOGE Cuts to State Department / USAID — Coons Opposition Continues

Coons delivered floor remarks earlier this week criticizing DOGE-driven workforce reduction plans targeting the State Department and USAID, calling the reductions 'reckless' and arguing they undermine American diplomatic capacity. No new developments over the weekend, but Coons is expected to continue this line of attack next week as more agency-specific reduction plans are announced. Staff should monitor for any new Coons letters or holds on nominations related to this issue.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz should draw on his Delaware Senate legislation establishing an independent council to evaluate state services and develop a five-year restructuring plan to argue that government reform must be done thoughtfully but must still be done. Coons's reflexive opposition to any efficiency measures is why the federal government continues to bloat. Katz can position himself as the candidate who understands both the need for reform and how to execute it responsibly — unlike Coons, who defends the status quo.

SOURCES: [Coons.senate.gov](https://coons.senate.gov) · C-SPAN

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: Coons is well-funded and active on national security. Key vulnerabilities this week: (1) The Iran war powers debate offers a clean contrast on Commander-in-Chief authority; (2) The ICE Accountability Act remains a liability for Coons on border security; (3) The Sussex County VA facility is a direct platform overlap — Katz should move aggressively to claim this issue with his healthcare expertise; (4) Coons's blanket opposition to DOGE-driven reforms invites a 'status quo vs. reform' framing that plays to Katz's government restructuring record (SB 61 term limits, five-year restructuring plan). Healthcare remains Katz's strongest contrast area — per his 40+ year career and platform calling for a paradigm shift from illness treatment to prevention.

SOURCES: GovTrack — Sen. Coons · DrMikeKatz.com

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

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