

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

### TOP STORY

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS / FY2027 BUDGET **UPDATED**

### FY2027 Defense Appropriations Hearings Resume — Coons Takes Center Stage as Ranking Member on Pentagon Budget

The Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee resumes FY2027 budget hearings this week, with Coons positioned as Ranking Member to shape Democratic priorities on military spending, force structure, and civilian workforce levels. Coons is expected to use hearing time to press Pentagon witnesses on DOGE-aligned civilian workforce reductions while simultaneously advocating for increased spending on areas like climate resilience and allied support. This is a critical week for Coons to define his defense profile ahead of 2026 campaign season, as the hearings will generate significant press coverage and floor speech material.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz should emphasize his strong defense and Commander-in-Chief authority platform — supporting robust military funding, readiness, and troop modernization rather than using defense hearings as a vehicle for climate spending and partisan DOGE attacks. Drawing on Katz's veterans platform and his advocacy for a VA Advanced Medical Facility in Southern Delaware, Katz can argue he prioritizes warfighters and veterans over Washington political theater. Katz's support for fiscal responsibility means demanding Pentagon efficiency without hollowing out military capability.

#### • TALKING POINTS

- Coons uses his defense seat to push climate mandates and partisan oversight — I'll use it to fund readiness, modernization, and support for our troops at Dover AFB.
- We need a Senator who strengthens our military, not one who turns budget hearings into political showtrials against efficiency reforms.
- As someone who's fought for veterans' healthcare in Delaware, I know what real defense priorities look like — not Washington posturing.
- Fiscal responsibility means cutting Pentagon waste, not protecting bureaucratic bloat to score political points against DOGE.
- Our adversaries aren't waiting — Delaware deserves a Senator focused on deterrence and strength, not partisan delay.

DEFENSE / GOVERNMENT REFORM / DOGE **UPDATED**

## Pentagon Civilian Workforce Reductions — Coons Expected to Escalate Opposition at Hearings This Week

The Department of Defense continues implementing DOGE-aligned civilian workforce reductions affecting installations nationwide, including potential impacts on Delaware's defense sector. Coons, as Defense Appropriations Ranking Member, has been the leading Democratic voice opposing these cuts, framing them as threats to military readiness and civilian livelihoods. With hearings resuming Tuesday, Coons is expected to question senior DOD officials on the scope, timeline, and readiness impact of reductions. Staff should monitor hearing transcripts for Coons statements targeting specific Delaware-impacted positions.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's platform calling for government restructuring (his Delaware Senate initiative establishing an independent council to evaluate state services and develop a five-year restructuring plan), Katz can argue he supports smart, methodical efficiency reforms — not blanket opposition to every modernization effort. Coons reflexively defends bureaucratic status quo rather than proposing constructive alternatives.

### • TALKING POINTS

- I authored a five-year government restructuring plan in the Delaware Senate — I know how to cut waste without cutting readiness.
- Coons says 'no' to every efficiency reform but never offers a plan to fix Pentagon bloat himself.
- Delaware's defense workers deserve a Senator with a plan to protect critical jobs, not one who just attacks reform for political points.
- Smart government reform saves taxpayer dollars AND strengthens our military — Coons opposes both.
- Blanket opposition to efficiency isn't leadership — it's career preservation.

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

DEFENSE / BORDER SECURITY

## [STAFF VERIFY] Coons Statements on National Guard Border Deployment Expansion

Staff should verify whether Coons has issued any formal statement, floor remarks, or social media posts regarding the Administration's expanded National Guard deployment authorization along the southern border. As Defense Appropriations Ranking Member, Coons

would have standing to comment on National Guard funding and deployment authority. Any opposition statements create a sharp contrast opportunity on border security.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's platform supporting secure borders and strong ICE enforcement, any Coons opposition to National Guard border deployment provides a clean contrast. Katz supports the Commander-in-Chief's authority to deploy forces to secure the border and protect American sovereignty — a core campaign position.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- I support our Commander-in-Chief's authority to deploy the National Guard to secure our border — period.
- Delaware families deserve a Senator who backs border security, not one who undermines it from his defense committee seat.
- Coons wants to fund every overseas mission but fights deploying our own Guard to protect American communities.
- Strong borders aren't partisan — they're a national security imperative.
- As a physician, I've seen the human cost of fentanyl flooding across an unsecured border.

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

RECENT LEGISLATION

JUDICIARY / LAW ENFORCEMENT / DISABILITY RIGHTS **UPDATED**

## S. 4089 — Blue Envelope Act Enters First Full Working Week in Committee

Coons's Blue Envelope Act (S. 4089), introduced March 12, begins its first full working week in the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill authorizes DOJ grants to state and local governments to implement 'blue envelope' programs designed to protect individuals with disabilities — particularly autism — during traffic stops by providing identification tools for law enforcement. The bill has drawn support from national disability advocacy organizations. No cosponsors or committee hearing has been announced yet.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** This is a sympathetic bill that Katz should not oppose frontally. Drawing on Katz's first responders platform and his emphasis on supporting law enforcement with proper training and resources, Katz can note he supports practical tools for first responders while questioning whether another federal grant program is the most efficient delivery mechanism versus state-level implementation. Katz's Delaware Senate record of authoring practical, bipartisan legislation (e.g., Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway, SB 241) shows he knows how to get things done locally.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Protecting individuals with disabilities during traffic stops is common sense — but we should ask whether another federal grant bureaucracy is the best path or whether states can implement this faster.
- As someone who's championed first responders, I know they need practical tools, not Washington red tape.
- I passed real legislation in Delaware's Senate — scenic byway protections, lobby reform, transparency — without waiting for federal grant programs.
- Let's empower Delaware's police departments directly rather than routing everything through DOJ bureaucracy.
- Good intentions don't always require new federal programs — sometimes they just need state leadership.

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

ENVIRONMENT / FOREIGN AID

## **S. 4011 — Tropical Forest and Coral Reef Conservation Act Reauthorization — No New Movement**

Coons's reauthorization of the 1998 Tropical Forest and Coral Reef Conservation Act (S. 4011), introduced March 5, remains in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee with no new cosponsors or committee action reported. The bill provides debt-for-nature swap authority allowing developing countries to redirect debt payments toward conservation programs. In the current fiscal environment with mounting national debt, foreign conservation spending faces headwinds from both parties.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's energy and environment platform, which emphasizes science-based, private-sector-driven environmental solutions and America-first energy policy, Katz can argue that forgiving foreign debt for overseas conservation while American taxpayers struggle with inflation and housing costs reflects misplaced priorities. Katz's environmental record — authoring Delaware's National Scenic Byway legislation (SB 241, 146th General Assembly) — shows he prioritizes conservation at home.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Coons wants to forgive foreign debt for overseas conservation while Delaware families can't afford their mortgages.
- I authored Delaware's Scenic Byway preservation law — I believe in conservation that starts at home.

- American taxpayers shouldn't subsidize tropical forest programs abroad when we have \$35 trillion in national debt.
- Private-sector innovation and international cooperation — not debt forgiveness schemes — are the path to real environmental progress.
- Let's protect Delaware's beaches and open spaces before we write checks for foreign conservation.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](#) — S. 4011 · [Senate Foreign Relations Committee](#)

IMMIGRATION / OVERSIGHT

## S. 3891 — ICE Accountability Act — Still Stalled in Judiciary Committee

Coons's ICE Accountability Act (S. 3891), introduced February 12, remains stalled in the Senate Judiciary Committee with no new cosponsors or committee action. The bill would impose additional reporting requirements and oversight mechanisms on ICE operations, which critics argue would burden enforcement operations and signal hostility toward immigration enforcement at a time when the Administration is expanding border security measures.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's platform supporting secure borders and strong ICE enforcement, this bill is a direct contrast opportunity. Katz should frame S. 3891 as Coons attempting to hamstring ICE with bureaucratic reporting mandates at exactly the moment the agency needs maximum operational flexibility to enforce immigration law and protect Delaware communities from fentanyl trafficking and criminal illegal immigration.

### • TALKING POINTS

- Coons wants to bury ICE in paperwork instead of letting them do their job protecting our communities.
- The ICE Accountability Act is really the ICE Obstruction Act — designed to slow down enforcement.
- Delaware families dealing with the fentanyl crisis need more ICE enforcement, not less.
- I support strong ICE enforcement and secure borders — Coons supports tying agents' hands with red tape.
- There's a reason this bill has zero momentum — even Democrats know it's the wrong message right now.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](#) — S. 3891 · [Coons.senate.gov](#)

APPROPRIATIONS & DELAWARE FUNDING

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION / DELAWARE **UPDATED**

## Dover AFB FY2027 Military Construction Request — Critical Week for Budget Details

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 Delaware's largest military installation. As Defense Appropriations Ranking Member, Coons has strong positioning to advocate for Dover AFB MILCON projects. This week's hearings may reveal specific dollar figures and project timelines. Staff should monitor hearing testimony and Coons's press releases for Dover-specific funding announcements.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's strong defense platform and his veterans policy advocacy, Dover AFB funding is an area where Katz can acknowledge bipartisan support for Delaware's military infrastructure while pivoting to argue that Coons's broader defense posture — opposing DOGE efficiency reforms, pushing climate mandates in defense spending, and constraining Commander-in-Chief authority on Iran — undermines the overall defense posture that keeps installations like Dover relevant and funded.

### • TALKING POINTS

- Dover AFB is Delaware's crown jewel — I'll fight for every dollar it needs, without attaching partisan strings.
- Supporting Dover means supporting a strong national defense — not using military budgets to fund climate experiments.
- Coons claims credit for Dover funding while voting to constrain the military's operational flexibility.
- Our military families at Dover deserve a Senator who backs the full defense mission, not just the ribbon-cutting.
- I'll fight for Dover AFB modernization as part of a stronger overall defense — not as a political bargaining chip.

SOURCES: Senate Appropriations Committee · [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.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-requested earmarks were included for Delaware projects and their dollar amounts. If still on a CR, note the expiration date and any Delaware-specific impacts from flat funding levels. This is essential background for both debate prep and earned media strategy.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's fiscal responsibility platform and his Delaware Senate initiative to establish a five-year plan to restructure and reorganize state government, Katz can frame chronic CR governance as a symptom of Washington dysfunction that Coons has enabled during 15+ years in the Senate. Katz's record of proposing structural reforms (SB for independent restructuring council) shows he brings a solutions-oriented approach.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- After 15 years in the Senate, Coons still can't deliver a budget on time — that's not leadership, it's failure.
- I proposed a five-year government restructuring plan in Dover — imagine what a real reformer could do in Washington.
- Continuing resolutions hurt Delaware — our military, our schools, our infrastructure all suffer from funding uncertainty.
- Coons talks about bipartisanship but can't even get a basic budget passed.
- Delaware deserves a Senator who treats the budget like a doctor treats a patient — with urgency and a plan.

SOURCES: Senate Appropriations Committee · Congress.gov

DELAWARE

BUSINESS CLIMATE / CORPORATE GOVERNANCE / DELAWARE ECONOMY **UPDATED**

## **ExxonMobil Texas Redomiciliation Spotlights Delaware Business Climate Erosion — Coons Still Silent**

ExxonMobil's board unanimously recommended redomiciling from New Jersey to Texas — not Delaware — with CEO Darren Woods praising Texas's pro-business environment. This is a major signal that Delaware's historic dominance as America's corporate home is eroding. For a state that derives roughly one-third of its general fund revenue from corporate franchise taxes and entity fees, the failure to attract a \$623B company is a significant warning. Coons has issued no public statement addressing Delaware's competitive positioning or what he is doing to protect the franchise tax base.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing directly on Katz's Delaware Senate bill repealing Delaware's corporate income tax (SB 100, 146th General Assembly) and his platform emphasis on reducing corporate tax burdens to incentivize business investment, this is a premier contrast issue. Katz has a legislative record of fighting to make Delaware more business-friendly; Coons

has been silent while the state's competitive advantage erodes. Katz's economy platform explicitly calls for 'reducing the corporate tax burden' and 'incentivizing business investment.'

• **TALKING POINTS**

- When I was in the Delaware Senate, I introduced SB 100 to repeal the corporate income tax and make Delaware the most business-friendly state in America — Coons can't even comment on losing ExxonMobil to Texas.
- Delaware's franchise tax revenue is the backbone of our state budget — and it's under threat while our senior Senator stays silent.
- Texas is eating Delaware's lunch on corporate competitiveness — where is Chris Coons?
- I've fought to reduce corporate tax burdens and attract business to Delaware — Coons has been in Washington for 15 years watching our competitive edge disappear.
- A \$623 billion company chose Texas over Delaware — that should be a five-alarm fire for every Delawarean.

SOURCES: Reuters · Delaware Division of Revenue

VETERANS / DELAWARE / HEALTHCARE

## 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 highlighted bipartisan support for improved veterans' healthcare access in a region where many veterans currently travel long distances for specialty care. No new funding announcements or project milestones have been reported this week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's veterans platform, which explicitly calls for a 'VA Advanced Medical Facility in Southern Delaware,' this is shared territory where Katz should assert ownership. As a physician with 40+ years of healthcare experience, Katz can argue he understands what veterans actually need from a clinical standpoint — not just a press release. Katz's healthcare platform emphasizing the shift from treating illness to preventing it applies directly to veterans' care delivery.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- I've been calling for a VA Advanced Medical Facility in Southern Delaware — as a doctor, I know what that facility needs to look like clinically, not just politically.
- Kent and Sussex County veterans shouldn't have to drive hours for specialty care — this is personal to me as a physician.

- Coons has talked about this for years — I'll bring the medical expertise and urgency to actually get it built.
- My healthcare platform focuses on prevention and integration — exactly what our veterans' care system needs.
- A physician in the Senate will deliver for Delaware's veterans in ways a career politician never can.

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

GOVERNMENT REFORM / DELAWARE JOBS

## **[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 or reported, including impacts at Dover AFB (civilian positions), IRS facilities, USDA offices, and other federal installations in the state. Quantifying Delaware job losses would provide concrete data for both attack and defense messaging.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's platform supporting fiscal responsibility and his Delaware Senate initiative for a five-year government restructuring plan, Katz can thread the needle: supporting smart government efficiency while demanding that any workforce reductions protect critical Delaware-based positions, especially at defense installations. The key message is reform with a plan — not blanket opposition like Coons, and not reckless cuts without local impact assessment.

### • TALKING POINTS

- I support smart government reform — I wrote the playbook for it in Delaware's Senate with my five-year restructuring plan.
- Unlike Coons, I won't reflexively oppose every efficiency measure — but I'll demand Delaware's critical federal jobs are protected.
- Government reform shouldn't mean Delaware pays the price — I'll fight for Dover AFB civilian positions while cutting waste elsewhere.
- Coons opposes all reform; Washington insiders want zero accountability — I'll bring a physician's precision to cutting waste while preserving what works.
- Delaware needs a Senator who can reform government and protect our jobs — not one who just says 'no' to everything.

SOURCES: [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov) · [The News Journal \(Delaware\)](https://www.thenewsjournal.com)

WAR POWERS / IRAN / FOREIGN RELATIONS

## 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 use his Foreign Relations Committee seat and media appearances to argue that any military action against Iran requires explicit congressional authorization. This position puts him at odds with the Administration's stance on Commander-in-Chief authority and executive flexibility in the face of Iranian nuclear and proxy threats.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's platform supporting strong defense and Commander-in-Chief authority, this is a direct ideological contrast. Katz believes the President must retain flexibility to respond to Iranian threats swiftly without being handcuffed by congressional pre-authorization requirements. Coons's position telegraphs weakness to Tehran at a critical moment in nuclear negotiations and regional stability.

### • TALKING POINTS

- I support the Commander-in-Chief's authority to respond to threats from Iran — Coons wants to telegraph weakness by tying the President's hands.
- Iran's mullahs don't wait for congressional votes — our President shouldn't have to either when American lives are at stake.
- Coons's War Powers push is a political exercise that emboldens our adversaries and endangers our allies.
- A strong America deters conflict — Coons's approach invites it by signaling indecision.
- Delaware's military families at Dover AFB need a Senator who backs their Commander-in-Chief, not one who undermines him.

SOURCES: Senate Foreign Relations Committee · Coons.senate.gov

GOVERNMENT REFORM / FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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

Coons delivered floor remarks last week criticizing DOGE-driven workforce reduction plans targeting the State Department and USAID, calling the reductions 'reckless' and arguing they undermine America's diplomatic and development capabilities abroad. He has positioned himself as the leading Senate defender of the foreign affairs bureaucracy. No new floor action or

votes are expected this week, but Coons may use Foreign Relations Committee hearings to press Administration officials on the scope of reductions.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's fiscal responsibility platform and his emphasis on American energy independence and economic competitiveness, Katz can argue that bloated foreign aid bureaucracies like USAID have become vehicles for wasteful spending that doesn't serve American interests. Coons's instinct to defend every government agency from any reform reflects a career politician's loyalty to Washington institutions over Delaware taxpayers.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Coons has never met a government bureaucracy he wouldn't defend — even ones that waste billions in taxpayer money overseas.
- American taxpayers deserve to know their money is being spent effectively, not just thrown at foreign aid programs with no accountability.
- I support diplomacy that advances American interests — not a bloated State Department that serves its own institutional interests.
- Every dollar wasted on USAID overhead is a dollar not invested in Delaware's infrastructure, schools, or veterans.
- Coons calls reform 'reckless' — I call 15 years of zero accountability reckless.

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

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, whether Coons has made new floor statements or committee remarks, and whether any vote is expected in the coming weeks. Track any dollar figures Coons has publicly supported and compare to domestic spending priorities in Delaware.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's fiscal responsibility platform, any new Ukraine supplemental spending should be scrutinized against domestic needs. Katz can frame this as a priorities question: Coons finds unlimited money for Ukraine but can't solve Delaware's housing affordability crisis (median home price up 53% from 2018-2023 per Katz's homeownership platform), infrastructure needs, or veterans' care gaps in Sussex County.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Before we send another blank check to Ukraine, let's invest in Delaware — our roads, our veterans, our housing crisis.
- Coons has unlimited enthusiasm for foreign spending but no urgency for Delaware families priced out of homeownership.
- Delaware home prices are up 53% since 2018 — where's Coons's supplemental for that?
- I support a strong international posture but not at the expense of Delaware's working families.
- Every dollar we spend abroad is a dollar we need to justify to Delaware taxpayers.

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

## 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. No new public polling has been released. This week's defense hearings and the ExxonMobil redomiciliation story provide Katz two strong contrast narratives: national security leadership versus Coons's war powers constraints, and Delaware business competitiveness versus Coons's silence on franchise erosion.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Strategic note for Katz: This week offers two high-value messaging opportunities. First, the FY2027 defense hearings put Coons on camera — monitor for any statements constraining military flexibility, defending USAID bureaucracy, or inserting climate priorities into defense spending. Second, the ExxonMobil-to-Texas story has local economic urgency — Katz's SB 100 (corporate income tax repeal) gives him a concrete legislative record to cite. Key vulnerabilities remain: Iran war posture, DOGE/government spending debate, ICE oversight bill, healthcare policy (Katz's home turf as a physician with 40+ years experience).

#### • TALKING POINTS

- This week exposes the core choice: a career politician who defends Washington bureaucracies, or a physician-reformer who fights for Delaware.
- Coons has been in the Senate 15 years — what has changed for Delaware? Home prices up 53%, businesses leaving, veterans still underserved.
- I bring a doctor's discipline, a reformer's record, and a conservative's principles to this race.

- Delaware doesn't need another decade of Coons — it needs fresh leadership with real-world experience.
- Patients over politics — that's not just a slogan, it's how I've lived my career and how I'll serve in the Senate.

SOURCES: GovTrack — Sen. Coons Profile · DrMikeKatz.com

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

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