

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

TOP STORY

DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS / FY2027 BUDGET / DOGE **UPDATED**

FY2027 Defense Budget Hearings Midweek — Coons Presses Pentagon on Civilian Workforce Cuts and Force Readiness

The Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee is deep into its FY2027 budget hearing series this week, with Coons as Ranking Member using his questioning time to challenge Pentagon leadership on DOGE-aligned civilian workforce reductions and their impact on military readiness. Coons has framed his opposition around the argument that indiscriminate cuts to defense civilians undermine depot maintenance, logistics, and base operations — including at Delaware installations like Dover AFB. Staff should verify whether today's specific hearing featured testimony from the Secretary of Defense or service secretaries and whether Coons made specific remarks about Delaware workforce impacts.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz supports strong defense and fiscal responsibility simultaneously — per his economy platform, he advocates 'restructuring and reorganizing' government for efficiency (drawing on Katz's Delaware Senate legislation establishing a Five-Year Plan to Restructure and Reorganize State Government). Katz can argue that Coons opposes all efficiency reforms rather than proposing smart ones, and that a physician-leader understands triage: cut waste, protect readiness. Katz's platform explicitly calls for 'sustaining a robust military force' (per his veterans platform), showing he won't sacrifice defense capability for bureaucratic inertia.

• TALKING POINTS

- Coons says no to every efficiency reform — I've actually done government restructuring in Delaware's State Senate.
- You can cut waste and protect warfighters at the same time — it takes leadership, not just opposition.
- Dover AFB needs a Senator who fights for the mission AND demands accountability from the Pentagon bureaucracy.
- I authored legislation to restructure Delaware state government — Coons has spent 15 years growing the federal one.
- Strong defense means smart spending, not blank checks for bureaucratic bloat.

DEFENSE & PENTAGON

DEFENSE / GOVERNMENT REFORM / DOGE **UPDATED**

Pentagon Civilian Workforce Reductions — Coons Escalation Expected at Midweek Hearings

DOGE-aligned civilian workforce reductions at the Department of Defense continue to advance, with reports of hiring freezes and voluntary separation incentives affecting maintenance depots, logistics commands, and base support functions nationwide. Coons, leveraging his Ranking Member perch, has been among the most vocal critics, arguing the cuts are 'hollowing out' military readiness. Staff should verify whether any Delaware-specific RIF notices or hiring freeze impacts at Dover AFB or other Delaware defense facilities have been publicly reported this week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's Delaware Senate legislation establishing an Independent Council to Restructure and Reorganize State Government, Katz can credibly argue he supports data-driven efficiency reforms — not blanket opposition to all spending discipline. Coons's reflexive resistance to any workforce reform protects bureaucracy, not warfighters.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- I restructured Delaware state government with a five-year plan — Coons just says 'no' to every reform.
- Protecting every government job isn't the same as protecting national security.
- Delaware's defense workers deserve a Senator who fights for them AND demands the Pentagon run efficiently.
- Coons conflates opposing reform with supporting the troops — Delawareans know better.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION / DELAWARE

Dover AFB FY2027 Military Construction Request — Awaiting Budget Detail Release

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 nation's largest aerial port. As Defense Appropriations Ranking Member, Coons will seek to shape MILCON priorities for

Dover including potential facility modernization and infrastructure upgrades. Staff should verify whether specific Dover AFB MILCON line items have been released in budget justification documents this week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's veterans and defense platform — 'Sustaining a robust military force... is essential for America's continuous ability to preserve global peace' — Katz should affirm full-throated support for Dover AFB modernization. He can acknowledge Coons's MILCON advocacy while pivoting: Dover needs investment AND a Senator who will fight to keep the base competitive against BRAC threats by strengthening Delaware's overall business and defense ecosystem.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Dover AFB is Delaware's crown jewel — I'll fight for every dollar of modernization funding.
- Supporting our military isn't just about one appropriations line — it's about making Delaware the best place to base, train, and deploy.
- Coons talks about Dover at budget time; I'll work year-round to protect the installation.
- A strong Dover AFB starts with a strong Delaware economy — they go hand in hand.

SOURCES: Senate Appropriations Committee · Dover Air Force Base — Official

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 this week regarding the Administration's expanded National Guard deployment authorization along the southern border. Coons has historically expressed skepticism about using military assets for border enforcement, which contrasts sharply with Katz's strong border security stance.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz's platform supports strong defense and Commander-in-Chief authority. If Coons opposes National Guard border deployments, Katz can frame this as Coons undermining both border security and military readiness by second-guessing operational deployments. Per Katz's positioning on secure borders and strong ICE enforcement, he can argue Coons prioritizes politics over protecting American communities.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Our military exists to protect Americans — that includes securing the border.
- Coons wants to tie the Commander-in-Chief's hands while our border remains wide open.

- I support our National Guard — whether they're deployed overseas or defending the homeland.
- Delaware families deserve a Senator who takes border security seriously.

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

RECENT LEGISLATION

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

S. 4089 — Blue Envelope Act Completes First Week in Judiciary Committee — No Cosponsors Movement

Coons's Blue Envelope Act (S. 4089), introduced March 12, authorizes DOJ grants to state and local law enforcement agencies to implement 'blue envelope' programs designed to improve interactions between officers and individuals with autism spectrum disorder during traffic stops. The bill has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Staff should verify whether any Republican cosponsors have signed on or whether Judiciary has scheduled a hearing.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** As a physician and pediatric-trained anesthesiologist (per Katz's healthcare background), Katz has unique credibility on disability and neurodevelopmental issues. He can praise the concept of better-trained first responders — consistent with his first responders platform calling for 'comprehensive commitment to support the needs of our first responders, including... equipment and resource shortages' — while questioning whether another federal grant program is the most efficient mechanism versus state-level training mandates. Katz's Delaware Senate record on government reform (SB 141, lobby reform; Five-Year Restructuring Plan) shows he prefers accountability over new spending.

• TALKING POINTS

- As a pediatric physician, I understand autism and neurodevelopmental challenges firsthand — this issue matters.
- Better training for first responders is critical, but Washington doesn't need a new grant program for every good idea.
- I'll work with Delaware law enforcement directly — not create more federal bureaucracy.
- Coons introduces bills that sound good but go nowhere — where are the results after 15 years?

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

ENVIRONMENT / FOREIGN AID

S. 4011 — Tropical Forest and Coral Reef Conservation Act Reauthorization — No 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. The bill would extend U.S. funding for international tropical forest and coral reef conservation through debt-for-nature swap programs with developing nations.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing on Katz's energy and environment platform, which emphasizes 'leveraging science and technology to create a healthy, resilient and competitive America' and his demonstrated environmental stewardship (authoring Delaware's Brandywine Valley National Scenic Byway legislation, SB 241), Katz can argue he supports conservation — but American conservation, for American landscapes. Spending taxpayer dollars on debt-for-nature swaps with foreign governments while Delaware's own coastline faces erosion and flooding is misplaced priorities.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- I passed conservation legislation in Delaware — the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway. I protect our land, not foreign debt swaps.
- Coons prioritizes international spending while Delaware's beaches and coastline need protection.
- Conservation starts at home — then we can talk about helping the world.
- Every dollar sent overseas for coral reefs is a dollar not spent on Delaware's environment.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](https://www.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 Immigration and Customs Enforcement operations, including detention facility conditions and enforcement priorities.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz's platform supports secure borders and strong ICE enforcement. He can frame Coons's ICE Accountability Act as an attempt to hamstring immigration enforcement through bureaucratic red tape at a time when border security demands maximum operational flexibility. Per Katz's positioning: ICE agents need support, not more paperwork. Katz should note the bill has zero cosponsors after a month — even Democrats aren't signing on.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Coons wants to bury ICE in paperwork instead of letting agents enforce the law.
- Zero cosponsors after a month — even his own party won't back this anti-enforcement bill.
- Delaware families want secure borders, not weaker immigration enforcement.
- I support the men and women of ICE — Coons is trying to tie their hands.
- The ICE Accountability Act should be called the ICE Obstruction Act.

SOURCES: [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) — S. 3891 · [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov)

APPROPRIATIONS & DELAWARE FUNDING

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 for Delaware were included and their dollar amounts. If under a CR, identify which Delaware projects are stalled and the impact on state agencies, nonprofits, and military installations.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's economy platform calling for 'fiscal responsibility and a stable, prosperous future,' he can argue that Washington's chronic inability to pass budgets on time — a dysfunction Coons has presided over for 15 years — hurts Delaware communities that depend on predictable federal funding. Katz's Delaware Senate record of authoring government restructuring legislation demonstrates he understands how to make government work.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Fifteen years in the Senate and Coons still can't get a budget passed on time.
- Delaware nonprofits and military families shouldn't have to wait for Washington to get its act together.
- I balanced priorities in the Delaware Senate — I'll bring that discipline to Washington.
- Continuing resolutions are government by dysfunction — Delaware deserves better.

SOURCES: [Senate Appropriations Committee](https://www.senate.gov/committees/committees_list.asp?committee=10) · [Coons.senate.gov](https://www.coons.senate.gov)

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 cited long drive times to the Wilmington VA Medical Center as justification for expanded southern Delaware services. No new legislative vehicle or funding announcement has been identified this week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's veterans platform, he has explicitly called for a 'VA Advanced Medical Facility in Southern Delaware,' making this a shared priority — but Katz can claim he was ahead of Coons. As a physician with 40+ years of healthcare experience (per his healthcare platform), Katz can argue he understands healthcare facility planning, operational efficiencies, and the specific clinical needs of veterans far better than a career politician. Katz should ask: why has Coons been in the Senate since 2010 and Sussex County veterans still don't have adequate specialty care?

• TALKING POINTS

- I've been calling for a VA medical facility in southern Delaware — where has Coons been for 15 years?
- As a physician, I know what veterans need: accessible specialty care, not more promises.
- Sussex County veterans shouldn't have to drive two hours for the care they earned.
- I'll use my medical expertise to design a facility that actually works for our veterans.
- Talk is cheap — Coons has had 15 years to deliver and southern Delaware veterans are still waiting.

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

DELAWARE

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

ExxonMobil Texas Redomiciliation — Delaware's Corporate Franchise Erosion Continues; 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 significant signal that Delaware's historic dominance as America's corporate home is eroding. Delaware's corporate franchise tax revenue, which constitutes roughly one-third of the state's general fund, is directly threatened by this trend. Coons has not publicly addressed the ExxonMobil decision or the broader competitiveness challenge facing Delaware's incorporation

business. Staff should verify if any new companies have announced redomiciliation away from Delaware this week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Drawing directly on Katz's Delaware Senate bill to repeal Delaware's corporate income tax (SB 100, 146th General Assembly), Katz has a concrete legislative record of fighting to make Delaware more business-competitive. Coons's silence on ExxonMobil choosing Texas over Delaware is deafening. Per Katz's economy platform — 'reducing the corporate tax burden, incentivizing business investment' — he can argue that Delaware needs a Senator who fights for the state's economic foundation, not one who ignores it.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- I introduced legislation to repeal Delaware's corporate income tax — Coons has done nothing as companies flee to Texas.
- ExxonMobil — a \$623 billion company — looked at Delaware and said 'no thanks.' That's a failure of leadership.
- One-third of Delaware's budget depends on corporate franchise revenue. Where's the urgency from our Senator?
- Texas is eating Delaware's lunch on business climate — and Chris Coons won't even talk about it.
- I'll fight to keep Delaware the best place in America to do business.

SOURCES: Reuters · Delaware Division of Revenue

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 IRS offices in Wilmington, USDA facilities, or other federal installations. Delaware has a significant per-capita federal workforce, making DOGE cuts a particularly sensitive local issue.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's Delaware Senate legislation establishing a Five-Year Plan to Restructure and Reorganize State Government, he has a proven record of pursuing government efficiency reforms with accountability. Katz can thread the needle: protect Delaware federal workers from arbitrary cuts while supporting smart, data-driven restructuring. Coons's blanket opposition to all efficiency measures isn't protecting Delaware jobs — it's protecting Washington's status quo.

- **TALKING POINTS**

- I'll protect Delaware's federal workers from arbitrary cuts — but I won't protect wasteful bureaucracy.
- Smart restructuring saves taxpayer money and protects essential services — I've done it in the Delaware Senate.
- Coons opposes all reform. I'll fight for Delaware workers AND demand accountability from Washington.
- Delawareans deserve to know exactly how many local federal jobs are at risk — where's the transparency?

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

DELAWARE ECONOMY / QUALITY OF LIFE **NEW**

[STAFF VERIFY] Delaware Population and Outmigration Trends — 2025 Census Estimates

Staff should check whether updated Census Bureau population estimates or IRS migration data for Delaware have been released. Recent trends have shown Delaware experiencing slower population growth compared to Southern competitor states (Florida, Texas, North Carolina), along with net outmigration of higher-income residents. These trends directly relate to Delaware's tax competitiveness, housing affordability, and overall quality of life — all issues where Coons's federal policy record can be scrutinized.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's homeownership platform — noting Delaware median home prices surged 53% from \$221,100 in 2018 to \$339,400 in 2023 — and his economy platform calling for tax reforms and reduced regulatory burdens, Katz can argue that Delaware is losing residents because Washington policies championed by Coons (high taxes, regulatory burden, inflation) have made the state less affordable and competitive. Katz's SB 100 (repealing corporate income tax) shows he understands economic competitiveness.

- **TALKING POINTS**

- People are leaving Delaware because they can't afford to stay — that's a failure of 15 years of Coons's policies.
- Home prices up 53% in five years. Wages flat. Where's the affordability plan?
- Texas and Florida are growing because they compete for families and businesses. Delaware needs to compete too.
- I'll bring the same pro-growth approach to Washington that I championed in Dover.

SOURCES: [U.S. Census Bureau](https://www.census.gov) · [IRS SOI Migration Data](https://www.irs.gov)

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 push for a vote and has argued the Administration lacks congressional authorization for offensive military operations against Iran. Staff should verify whether any new statements or Senate floor activity occurred this week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz's platform supports strong defense and Commander-in-Chief authority. He can frame Coons's war powers push as dangerous signaling to Iran at a moment of maximum geopolitical tension — telling our adversaries that the Senate wants to tie the President's hands. Katz should argue that a credible military deterrent requires the adversary to believe force will be used, and Coons is undermining that credibility.

• TALKING POINTS

- Coons wants to tell Iran we won't fight back. That's not diplomacy — that's weakness.
- The Commander-in-Chief needs flexibility to protect American lives — Coons wants to take it away.
- A credible deterrent means our enemies believe we'll act. Coons is signaling we won't.
- I'll support the President's authority to defend America — period.

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

GOVERNMENT REFORM / FOREIGN AFFAIRS

DOGE Cuts to State Department / USAID — Coons Opposition Continues

Coons has continued his vocal opposition to DOGE-driven workforce reductions at the State Department and USAID, having delivered floor remarks last week calling the reductions 'reckless' and arguing they undermine American diplomatic capacity and national security. Staff should verify whether Coons has introduced any amendment or legislative vehicle to block or reverse specific State/USAID cuts this week.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Per Katz's economy platform emphasizing fiscal responsibility, he can argue that foreign aid and diplomatic spending deserve the same scrutiny as every other part of the budget. Coons's reflexive defense of the State Department and USAID status quo ignores legitimate questions about effectiveness and waste. Drawing on Katz's Five-

Year Restructuring Plan from Delaware's Senate (his legislation for an independent council to evaluate state services), Katz can say: audit first, then fund what works.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- Every taxpayer dollar — including foreign aid — deserves accountability. Coons disagrees.
- I'll support diplomacy that advances American interests, not bureaucracy for its own sake.
- Coons calls every reform 'reckless' — his real objection is to accountability itself.
- We can have a strong diplomatic corps and demand it be efficient. Those aren't mutually exclusive.

SOURCES: [Coons.senate.gov](https://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 or committee statements this week, and whether any appropriations vehicle for Ukraine aid is advancing.

⚡ **KATZ CONTRAST POINT:** Katz can take a nuanced position — supporting Ukraine's sovereignty while demanding full accounting of how U.S. aid is spent and insisting that European allies carry a larger share of the burden. Per Katz's fiscal responsibility platform, he should argue that open-ended commitments without measurable outcomes and allied burden-sharing are unsustainable. Coons writes blank checks; Katz would demand receipts.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- I support Ukraine's fight — but American taxpayers deserve to know where every dollar goes.
- Our European allies need to step up. Coons lets them off the hook.
- Blank checks aren't a strategy. Accountability and burden-sharing are.
- Fifteen years in the Senate and Coons still hasn't demanded a real audit of Ukraine aid.

SOURCES: [Senate Foreign Relations Committee](#) · [Coons.senate.gov](https://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: Coons is well-funded and active on national security. Key vulnerabilities this week: (1) continued silence on ExxonMobil/Delaware business climate erosion — hammer the corporate franchise revenue risk; (2) Iran war posture — Coons is constraining military authority while threats escalate; (3) DOGE/government spending debate — Coons opposes all reform, Katz has restructuring credentials from Delaware Senate; (4) ICE oversight bill has zero cosponsors after a month — weaponize the isolation; (5) VA Sussex County facility — Katz's physician background and explicit platform plank give him ownership of this issue. Healthcare policy remains Katz's home turf — look for opportunities to tie Coons's committee focus on international affairs to neglect of domestic healthcare priorities.

• **TALKING POINTS**

- After 15 years, what has Coons actually delivered for Delaware? Ask him.
- I'm a doctor, not a career politician — I solve problems, I don't just give speeches.
- Coons focuses on international affairs while Delaware families struggle with healthcare costs and housing prices.
- Delaware needs fresh leadership — not a third term of the same old Washington dysfunction.
- Patients over politics — that's not just a slogan, it's how I've lived my entire career.

SOURCES: GovTrack — Sen. Coons Profile · Dr. Mike Katz Campaign

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

CONFIDENTIAL — CAMPAIGN USE ONLY