



October 1, 2002

Daschle Senate's Appropriations Progress Report: The Worst Senate Record in Two Decades

With adjournment only spitting distance away, the good news is that the Defense Department and Military Construction appropriations bills may yet make it to the President's desk. The bad news is that even if those two bills are signed, this is still the worst appropriations record racked up by the Senate in more than two decades.

- The Daschle Senate this year appears headed for a dubious distinction: the ***worst record on passing appropriations bills in more than 20 years***. This session of Congress likely will end with **only 3 bills passing the Senate, and up to two conference reports** making it to the President – **none by yesterday's statutory deadline**.
- The attached table shows RPC's comparison of this year's dismal appropriations record with previous years. Whether one compares Daschle's Senate with others at the September 30 deadline, or at adjournment, there is not a year that was worse – in two decades.
- Looking first the statutory deadline, it's been 17 years since the Senate ***failed to pass more than 3 appropriations bills by the September 30 statutory deadline***. (And that year, 1985, the Senate went on to pass a total of 10 freestanding bills before adjourning.)
- And in two decades, the Senate ***never has failed to move a bill in September***, the last critical month before the end-of-fiscal-year deadline. But it did this year.
- And next, looking at adjournment records, in 20 years the Senate ***never has failed to pass fewer than half of the 13 funding bills by adjournment***. The worst record prior to this year's was 6, set 21 years ago (in 1982).
- It's been a dozen years since the Congress adjourned without a single appropriations bill signed into law as a freestanding vehicle. (But even if the two bills now in conference make it to the President, it still will be the worst achievement record since 1990.) On three occasions in the last 22 years, the session did end with no bills enacted freestanding. But, even in those three years, ***the Senate had a better record of doing its job*** than it likely will by this year's adjournment:
 - In 1990, no bills were signed but the Senate did pass all 13 bills.
 - In 1987, no bills were signed, but the Senate did pass 10 of the 13 bills.
 - And in 1986, no bills were signed, but the Senate did pass 7 of the 13 bills.

Appropriations Process Year-By-Year Comparison

Tracking Passage of the 13 Regular Appropriations Bills

Calendar Year	Senate passed by 9/30	Both Houses Passed Conf. Rept. by 9/30	Senate Passed by Adjournment	Both Houses Approved Conf. Rept. by Adjournment	Signed into Law
2002	3	0	3*	0*	0*
2001	8	0	13	13	10
2000	10	2	11	11	8
1999	12	5	13	12	8
1998	8	4	8	6	3
1997	11	4	13	12	13
1996	9	8	9	8	8
1995	11	2	12	9	8
1994	13	13	13	13	13
1993	11	3	13	13	13
1992	11	6	13	13	13
1991	12	3	12	12	12
1990	5	0	13	13	0
1989	13	1	13	13	5
1988	13	13	13	13	13
1987	4	0	10	0	0
1986	6	0	7	0	0
1985	3	0	10	7	6
1984	8	4	8	5	5
1983	8	6	11	9	8
1982	3	1	6	6	5
1981	1	0	9	8	2
1980	4	2	9	9	5

Prepared by the Republican Policy Committee

* as of 10/1/02