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LOCAL NEWS

Trump announces deal with lawmakers to end government

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Donald Trump said on Friday he has reached a tentative agreement with U.S. lawmakers for three weeks in stop-gap funding that would end a partial U.S. government shutdown now in its 35th day, with a senior Democratic aide saying money the president demanded for a border wall is not included.

The president had previously insisted on the inclusion of $5.7 billion to help pay for a wall along the vast U.S.-Mexico border in any legislation to fund government agencies.

"I am very proud to announce today that we have reached a deal to end the shutdown and reopen the federal government," Trump said in remarks in the White House Rose Garden.

"In a short while, I will sign a bill to open our government for three weeks until Feb. 15. I will make sure that all employees receive their back pay very quickly, or as soon as possible," Trump said.

With the effects of the shutdown spreading on Friday, Trump said a bipartisan congressional conference committee would meet to come up with a plan for border security.

Trump triggered the shutdown, which began on Dec. 22 and idled some 800,000 government employees, with his wall-funding demand but Democrats, who control the House of Representatives, rejected it on the grounds that a wall would be costly, ineffective and immoral. Trump, whose Republicans have a majority in the Senate, has said it is necessary to curb illegal immigration and drug trafficking.

The arrangement, which would require passage in the House and Senate and Trump's signature, would leave his request for wall funding for later talks, a House Democratic aide said. The House could pass the measure as soon as later Friday if Republicans agree to hold a vote, the aide said.

U.S. President Donald Trump announces a deal to end the partial government shutdown as he speaks in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington, U.S., January 25, 2019. REUTERS/Kevin Lamarque

A Senate Republican aide said Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell was expected to press for passage of a three-week funding bill on Friday.

"We do not need 2,000 miles of concrete wall from sea to shining sea. We never did," Trump said. "We never proposed that. We never wanted that because we have barriers at the border where natural structures are as good as anything that we could build.

"Our proposed structures will be in predetermined, high-risk locations that have been specifically identified by the Border Patrol to stop illicit flows of people and drugs," Trump said.

FUNDING AT LAST YEAR'S LEVELS

The temporary funding bill would extend agency funding at the last fiscal year's levels and would include some money for border security - but not a wall.

Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy, a senior member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said he wanted to hear what Trump had to say before he would assume there was an iron-clad deal.

In one of the many effects of the shutdown, hundreds of flights were grounded or delayed at airports in the New York area and Philadelphia on Friday as more air traffic controllers called in sick.

The Federal Aviation Administration issued a ground stop for flights destined for New York's LaGuardia Airport on Friday morning before lifting it about an hour later. Staff shortages also delayed flights at Newark Liberty International Airport and Philadelphia International Airport, the FAA said.

Hundreds of thousands of federal workers have been furloughed or, as with some airport workers, required to work without pay. Some federal agencies have reported much higher absence rates among workers as they face an indefinite wait for their next paychecks.

Trump hails new Senate talks after shutdown bills fail

The lapse in funding has shuttered about one-quarter of federal agencies, with about 800,000 workers either furloughed or required to work without pay. It is the longest such shutdown in U.S. history. Many employees as well as contractors were turning to unemployment assistance, food banks and other support. Others began seeking new jobs.

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Editor's Choice

Cricket - West Indies v England - First Test - Kensington Oval, Bridgetown, Barbados - January 25, 2019 Staff update the scoreboard Action Images via Reuters/Paul Childs

U.S. President Trump announces a deal to end the partial government shutdown at the White House in Washington

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov speaks during a news conference following a meeting with Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita in Morocco's capital Rabat

Palestinian demonstrators pose for a selfie during a protest at the Israel-Gaza border fence, in the central Gaza Strip

Venezuela's opposition leader Juan Guaido holds a news conference in Caracas

FILE PHOTO: A logo of CVS Health is displayed on a monitor above the floor of the New York Stock Exchange shortly after the opening bell in New York

Jan 25, 2019; San Diego, CA, USA; Jon Rahm plays his shot from the third tee during the second round of the Farmers Insurance Open golf tournament at Torrey Pines Municipal Golf Course - South Course. Mandatory Credit: Orlando Ramirez-USA TODAY Sports

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) speaks to the media after U.S. President Donald Trump announced a deal to end the partial government shutdown on Capitol Hill in Washington

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COMMUNITY

2019 Is The Year Of The Pig On The Chinese Zodiac

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

The Pig is the twelfth of all zodiac animals. According to one myth, the Jade Emperor said the order would be decided by the order in which they arrived to his party. Pig was late because he overslept. Another story says that a wolf destroyed his house. He had to rebuild his home before he could set off. When he arrived, he was the last one and could only take twelfth place.

Personality and characteristics

Pigs might not stand out in a crowd. But they are very realistic. Others may be all talk and no action. Pigs are the opposite.

Though not wasteful spenders, they will let themselves enjoy life. They love entertainment and will occasionally treat themselves. They are a bit materialistic, but this is motivation for them to work hard. Being able to hold solid objects in their hands gives them security.

Men born in the Pig year are optimistic and gentle. They are very focused. Once they decide on a goal, they'll put everything into it.

They are not the best with money. Though cool-headed, they are also gullible. They trust others easily and are often scammed. This can cause them to lose a fortune.

Women born in the Pig year are full of excitement. They attend social events whenever possible and treat everyone genuinely. Combined with their easygoing personality, they gain everyone's trust.

However, they are sometimes over-friendly. In their excitement, they can forget to give others personal space. They also have good fortune with wealth. As long as they keep at it, the efforts will not go to waste. Though they don't start with an advantage, their hard work will keep money flowing in.

Compatibility

Most compatible with Pig: Tiger, Rabbit, Goat

Pigs are the most compatible with Tigers. The brave Tiger gives Pigs the security they need.

Least compatible with Pig: Snake, Monkey

Pigs and Snakes have clashing personalities and are the least compatible. They have biases against each other and can't compromise. It's hard to get along with Monkeys as well. The relationship is full of tension.

Careers fit for Pigs

Pigs are gentle and rarely lose their temper. Even when they do, it's never a dramatic commotion. They'll always try to compromise and settle things quickly. Because their goal in life is for everyone to live in harmony, they are suitable for careers related to charity and fundraisers.

Health and lifestyle

Pigs mostly have a great build and a resilient body. They are always spirited, as if they will never run out of energy. Their natural health is something Pigs are proud of.

But sometimes they can be overconfident and overlook some minor symptoms. If neglected for too long, even the smallest things can become grave.

Pigs in the Year of the Pig (2019)

The year of one's zodiac sign is their **本命年**(ben ming nian). It is traditionally the most unlucky year with trouble and danger lurking at every corner.

Similar to the previous year, Pigs may find luck in some areas of their life, but others will require hard work to avoid potential pitfalls. Pigs will most likely experience many emotional ups and downs, making them feel frustrated and sad at times.

This will not be a transitional year for Pigs, and it is best to try and "stick it out" in situations if at all possible. While that can be terribly frustrating, try to remember that a key element to utilizing your luck is timing. Next year will bear good fruit for Pigs, but the time isn't right to harvest the fruits of your labor. Instead, familiarize yourself with possible oversights and improve upon them so you may take advantage of similar situations as they occur in the future. This is a key element in many Asian religions, that is to say, you may be stuck consulting the same problem over and over until you solve it.

Careers

Pigs' 2019 horoscope reveals that changing careers may bring unforeseen consequences, and in most cases should be avoided. Instead, keep your nose to the grindstone and be wary of conflict. Pigs have a way of directly confronting their problems and at times this can impair their ability to see the deeper meaning of an issue. While Pigs can expect confrontation this year it will be best to face these problems with patience and practicality, two tools that are in Pigs "tool belt" but aren't always utilized when they should be.

Luckiest Months: April 8th – July 20th

Unluckiest Months: September 12th – December 2nd

Education

The education forecast for Pigs, however, reveals some good fortune. For those seeking higher education, it seems the stars are aligned in your favor. The 2019 Pig horoscope shows that investing in education will position them to take better advantage of future opportunities.

Health

Health can be rated as a mediocre category for Pigs this year. While there are no major illnesses on your horizon, Pigs will have to pay attention to minor ailments to keep them from growing into something large.

If you feel ill, don't delay in consulting a physician or healer, this is a major key to staying healthy this year. Other than this, maintain a consistent exercise regimen and a diet made up of healthy, unprocessed foods. Add more fruits and vegetables to your diet for an extra boost to your immunity

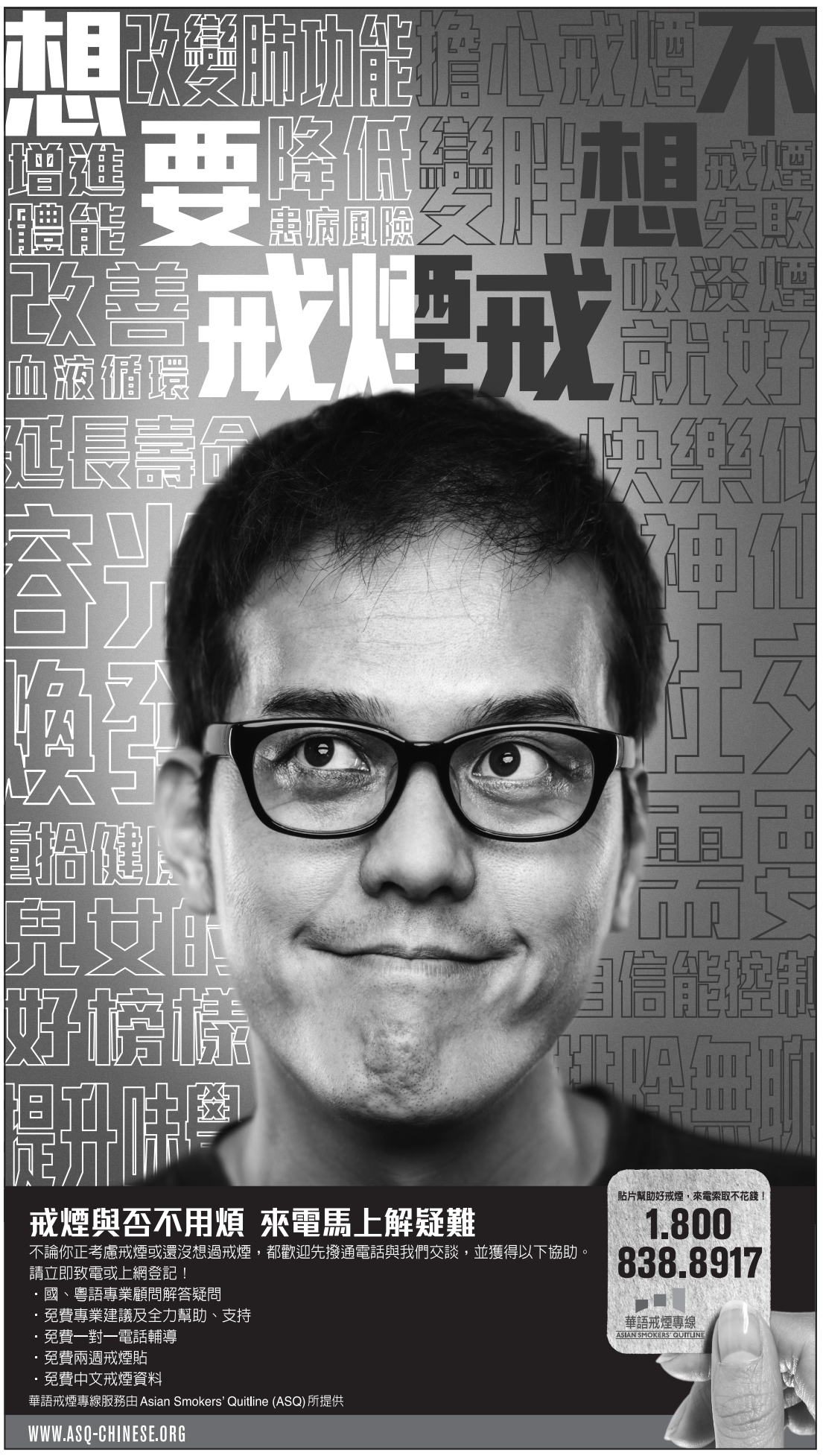
Relationships

The love forecast for Pigs is also pretty unremarkable for 2019. It seems that while this is not the year for true romance, Fortunately for Pigs, the lack of reltionship drama means they can focus on making new friends and connections. Extending their network could have a significant impact on Pigs' future, and in some respects be more rewarding than an intimate relationship. Remember not to be too quick to jump into a relationship as it may lead to more problems than it is worth, focus instead on enlarging your circle of friends.

Lifestyle

Pigs are in for almost an unfair year it seems. This year is about favoring the characteristics of Pigs in order to succeed, but for Pigs, to whom this comes naturally, they will have a difficult year and must practice patience and discipline.

It is important to remember not to be short sighted. You could focus on this year and say it is unfair, or you could focus on the future and realize that this time is meant to set up opportunities for the long term and practice the elements that will make you successful in your future endeavors.



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BUSINESS

President Trump Announces A Short-Term Opening Of The Federal Government

President Trump announced a short-term end to the government shutdown (3 weeks) from the Rose Garden at the White House.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

President Trump announced Friday that he will back a short-term funding bill to reopen the government that does not include funds to construct a wall along the southern border.

Delivering his remarks from the Rose Garden at the White House, Trump said, "I am very proud to announce today that we have reached a deal to end the shutdown and reopen the federal government," Trump said.

The president said he would sign a bill that would open the government for three weeks. In that period, he said, a bipartisan committee of House and Senate lawmakers will meet to develop a funding proposal for Homeland Security.

He expressed optimism that the resulting pitch would include funds for his long-promised border wall, which he maintained "should not be controversial."

"After 36 days of spirited debate and dialogue, I have seen and heard from enough Democrats and Republicans that they are willing to put partisanship aside, I think, and put the security of the American people first," Trump said in remarks delivered from the Rose Garden.

Trump said federal workers will receive backpay "as soon as possible" as part of the deal, which he has asked Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) to bring the measure up for a vote "immediately."

The announcement comes after days of Trump insisting that Republican lawmakers were united in the push to secure wall funding, and that he would not cave on the issue.

The Senate on Thursday rejected a pair of proposals to reopen the government, including one offered up by the White House.

Notably, a measure to re-open the government for a few weeks that was backed by Senate Democrats also won six GOP votes.

Following the Senate votes, Trump told reporters he would support a "reasonable agreement" among Senate leaders.

"I have other alternatives if I have to," Trump said when asked about the prospect of a deal without wall funding. "And I'll use those alternative if I have to. But we want to go through the system. We have to have a wall in this country."

Trump's demand for more than $5 billion to fund the wall triggered the partial government shutdown that began on Dec. 22. Democrats have staunchly opposed providing any money for the structure.

Part of an existing wall on the border between the U.S. and Mexico.

Trump had suggested earlier this month that he may declare a national emergency to secure funding for a border wall, but later backed off the idea and said he'd prefer Congress address the issue.

On Friday, he hinted that an emergency declaration remained a possibility if lawmakers are unable to broker a deal to his liking.

"As everyone knows, I have a very powerful alternative, but I didn't want to use it at this time," Trump said. "Hopefully it will be unnecessary."

The urgency to reopen the government seemed to be heightened among some lawmakers on Friday after the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) temporarily halted flights into and out of LaGuardia Airport in New York City, citing staffing shortages because of the shutdown.

Hundreds of thousands of federal workers have been furloughed or required to work without pay during the shutdown. Many government employees have missed two paychecks as of Friday.

(Courtesy the hill.com)

Related

City Mayors Across The Country "Watching The Clock"

The mayors of major U.S. cities are watching the clock—most of the time, helplessly—as the federal government's partial shutdown finishes its fourth week, with consequences slowly mounting for their cities and residents.

Already, essential federal subsidies that help low-income people pay rent have expired, and if the shutdown crawls into a second month—which many think is likely—the impacts to federal food aid recipients could be catastrophic.

Furloughed and unpaid working federal employees, union members, contractors and supporters

But soon, the longer-term impacts of prolonged federal government absence will start to trickle down to cities in far more dramatic ways.

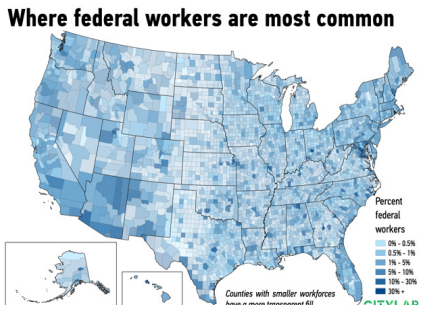
On top of those impacts to their residents, mayors are grappling with halted, slowed, or imperiled federal funds for development, transportation, police, and other projects.

"The lack of federal funds will affect public safety, road repair, housing, and other essential services," Steve Benjamin, the mayor of Columbia, South Carolina, and the president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, said in a statement.

Less Funding For Food Assistance, Escalating Demand

But food pantries across the country are bracing for an even bigger crisis. Furloughed workers without pay could mean a sudden and dramatic uptick in customers, straining supply and budgets even more, and if the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) loses funding, pantries' supplies will dwindle as another rush of people come their way.

Where federal workers are most common



Food pantry workers in Athens, Ohio.

In Cincinnati, Hamilton County could be forced to step in and provide additional funding to keep anti-opioid centers open should the shutdown extend past 30 days.

When the government shut down, grants from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) also expired.

"If no one's there to process the applications or the requests for reimbursements, we are very concerned we won't get funding," Amanda Meyers, executive director of the Wichita Family Crisis Center, told the Wichita Eagle. "Without the funding we won't be able to keep the doors open."

Across the country, community-based nonprofits are struggling to keep doors open.

The Looming Threat of Home Loss

Millions of Americans live in public housing or make ends meet with the help of government-sponsored rent subsidies that help keep them in their homes. As the shutdown churns forward, those renters increasingly face eviction and housing insecurity, as CityLab's Kriston Capps reported last week.

Renters who receive Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance have seen their monthly payments end, and could face eviction at any point. The public housing operating fund and the housing choice voucher program received funding through February, but should the shutdown extend past that, local housing authorities that help connect low-income renters to stable housing would run out of money.

Food pantry workers in Athens, Ohio.

Infrastructure Plans and Disaster Recovery Could Reach a Standstill

Small cities rely on federal funding for crucial housing and infrastructure projects, and to recover from disasters.

These funds, via Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), won't be cut off entirely. According to HUD. these grants specifically related to disaster relief will continue to reach municipalities that need them. Non-disaster related funds can be a different story while HUD workers are furloughed.

craigslist

The Washington Post reports that many furloughed workers from across the country are selling their belongings en masse on Craigslist to make ends meet. Buzzfeed reports that furloughed workers are being targeted online with ads to become Uber, Lyft, and Postmates drivers.

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According to the Department of Transportation's shutdown report, the FTA won't be able to distribute grant money or reimbursements, which usually help cover transit agencies operating expenses.

The report also says that FTA employees won't be able to provide "environmental, legal, civil rights, and other reviews essential to advancing projects to the point of obligation," meaning that new transit project plans will stall until the shutdown ends.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors released a statement last week pillorying the federal government for failing to solve this problem, and more action could be on the way from the nation's mayors.

"The start of [the U.S. Conference of Mayors convening] is on January 22 in Washington. 250 mayors are gathering there, and prayerfully, this is resolved by then," said Benjamin. "If it's not, it will be the top of the agenda." (Courtesy https://www.nextgov.com)

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