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Sent: Friday, March 7, 2025 8:02 AM
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Subject: [EXTERNAL] Executive Insight Brief

THE *Roosevelt* GROUP



Executive Insight Brief

March 7, 2025

Notable Headlines

- [Supreme Court rejects Trump's request to keep billions in foreign aid frozen](#)
- [EU leaders commit to working together after Trump signals that Europe must defend itself](#)
- [President Trump pauses Mexico and Canada tariffs until April 2](#)
- [House Republicans hit the brakes on town halls after blowback over Trump's cuts](#)
- [Trump puts new limits on Elon Musk](#)

View From The Hill

The week predominantly focused on President Trump's address to a joint session of Congress on Tuesday evening. In a speech of [record-breaking](#) length, the president highlighted many of his administration's early—and controversial—executive actions, spurring raucous applause from republicans in the chamber and drawing boos, jeers, and protest signs from democrats. Rep. Al Green (D-TX) was [ordered](#) escorted out of the chamber by Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA), who directed the Sergeant at Arms to restore order when Rep. Green refused to stop heckling Trump. Several congressional democrats [left](#) throughout the speech in protest, including Sen. Bernie Sanders and members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. Green was censured by the House on Thursday for the disruption.

Trump [called](#) on congress to repeal the bipartisan *CHIPS Act*, which came as a surprise to many in the GOP, as well as an end to the war in Ukraine. The [speech](#) was both wide-ranging and politically charged, with the president touching on issues like immigration, tariffs, federal cost cutting, and even surviving his attempted assassination last July. The evening was indicative of the fraught and bitterly divided political [climate](#) and resembled more of a political rally than typical addresses. Newly minted Sen. Elissa Slotkin (D-MI) [provided](#) the traditional televised response to the address by a member of the opposing party, taking Trump to task over the cost of living and sewing political divisions.

On to, frankly, the more consequential issue lawmakers faced this week: government funding. With the current continuing resolution (CR) running on fumes until one week from today, consensus has almost universally shifted to the need for an additional CR that will likely run through the remainder of the federal fiscal year, ending Sept. 30. The House plans to release text over the weekend with a vote next week. However, this comes as a massive blow to defense hawks in congress, who argue the Department of Defense has never been forced to run on a year-long CR and such a move now would only hamper U.S. national security. What's more, while the House [may](#) be able to pass a CR on a razor-slim, party-line vote, the Senate faces longer odds since overcoming a democratic filibuster in the upper chamber would require sixty votes, meaning Sen. Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) will need to garner at least a few democratic votes from Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY), not to mention all of his GOP members. This comes amidst [signals](#) from leaders on the appropriations committees that they are approaching agreement on the topline funding numbers that would potentially facilitate a regular spending bill.

DOGE leader Elon Musk visited with House and Senate republicans this week, amidst growing concerns from lawmakers about how the Trump administration is administering federal funds appropriated by Capitol Hill. Republicans largely want Musk to develop a proposed package of budget recissions so that congress can vote many of the cuts into law, a move that would likely improve the administration's outcome in court cases involving cuts.

Rep. Sylvester Turner (D-TX) passed away [unexpectedly](#) Tuesday evening, after attending the president's address. Turner, a former mayor of Houston, was only in his first term in the House, after winning an election to replace the late Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX).

Pentagon News

The Pentagon has confirmed a [pause in U.S. military aid](#) to Ukraine after a tense Oval Office meeting between President Trump, Ukrainian President Zelensky, and Vice President Vance. The discussion grew heated over Ukraine's gratitude for U.S. support, leading Zelensky to leave without a deal and the cancellation of all events. Trump later claimed Zelensky disrespected the Oval Office and said talks could resume when he was "ready for peace." Zelensky [responded](#) on X, expressing gratitude and a willingness to return to negotiations, reaffirming Ukraine's commitment to the minerals and security deal that exchanged

Along with freezing aid, the Trump administration has also halted intelligence sharing to pressure Kyiv into peace talks with Russia. A U.S. official confirmed that military targeting data is no longer being provided. U.S. officers have been stationed at Ukrainian bases to help verify Russian target lists, comparing Ukrainian intelligence with U.S. data for accuracy. The CIA has also [assisted](#) Ukraine in building three secret signals-intelligence bases to intercept Russian communications, reducing reliance on U.S. intelligence. CIA Director John Ratcliffe and National Security Advisor Mike Waltz suggested the freeze could be lifted if negotiations resume.

The Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) has awarded a [prototype contract](#) for Thunderforge, which is an initiative aimed at [integrating artificial intelligence](#) into military planning and wargaming. Initial use plans will be carried out by U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) and U.S. European Command (EUCOM). Scale AI was awarded the contract with Andruil and Microsoft also joining "Team Thunderforge." Scale AI has provided training data to "key AI players" like Google, OpenAI, Microsoft, and Meta. Andruil is bringing its Lattice software platform, while Microsoft brings its large-language models to the table. After initial deployment with INDOPACOM and EUCOM the solution will be "scaled across the combatant commands."

This announcement follows trends of AI companies allowing their technology to be used by and for the military. Thunderforge marks an important step in the continuity of modernization of the armed forces. Over the last several years the Pentagon has been working on tapping into emerging tech and how it may make the warfighter more effective. Bryce Goodman, who leads the Thunderforge program for DIU has said, "Thunderforge brings AI-powered analysis and automation to operational and strategic planning, allowing decision-makers to operate at the pace required for emerging conflicts." DoD is expected to continue to expand their use of emerging technologies and will continue to work with industry to research, test, and develop.

China is set to [boost its defense budget by 7.2%](#) this year, keeping pace with last year's increase but well below the double-digit jumps of the past. The \$245 billion budget underscores China's push for a more advanced military, though the Pentagon estimates actual spending could be significantly higher. With tensions rising in the South China Sea, particularly between China, the U.S., and Taiwan, defense investments continue to climb—especially in high-tech capabilities like

stealth fighters and aircraft carriers. That said, Beijing insists its military buildup remains purely defensive, pointing to its defense spending staying under 1.5% of GDP.

Meanwhile, [Taiwan](#) is also ramping up its military budget, announcing just a day earlier that it will increase defense spending as threats from China mount. Taiwan's current military expenditures sit at about 2.45% of GDP, reflecting growing concerns over regional security.

Next Week's Hearings



Armed Services Committee:

House: NONE

Senate:

- 3/11, 9:30 AM - To receive testimony on stabilizing the Military Health System to prepare for large-scale combat operations
- 3/12, 9:30 AM - To receive testimony on the current readiness of the Joint Force

Appropriations Committee:

House:

- 3/11, 10:30 AM - Innovative techniques in Military Construction

Senate: NONE

Homeland Security Committee:

House:

- 3/4, 10:00 AM - Future of FEMA: Perspectives from the Emergency Management Community
- 3/5, 10:00 AM - Countering threats posed by the Chinese Communist Party to U.S. National Security

Senate: NONE



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