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Ladies & Gentlemen,

Below please find this week's edition of *Executive Insight Brief* from The Roosevelt Group.

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Executive Insight Brief

Stay informed with The Roosevelt Group's Executive Insight Brief—your weekly roundup of key developments shaping federal policy, defense, and homeland security. Curated by our expert team, each issue delivers timely analysis and strategic context to help you stay ahead.

On this week's episode of The Roosevelt Group Podcast, Managing Partner [John Simmons](#) is joined by Senior Advisors [Jakob Johnsen](#) and Faiq Raza to discuss the start of Fiscal Year 2026 and the ongoing government shutdown. From chamber dynamics, to the latest updates, to effects on U.S. national security readiness—the team unpacks how we got here and potential timelines Congress may follow to get back on track.

Listen to the full episode [here](#).

Notable Headlines

[Senate passes NDAA after securing amendments deal](#)

[Israeli cabinet ratifies Gaza ceasefire and hostage deal with Hamas](#)

[Trump's trade war has India hugging Britain close](#)

[Most states with National Guard troops in DC plan to withdraw this fall](#)

[Russian strike seriously damages Ukrainian power plant as winter approaches, officials say](#)

View From The Hill

Congress failed for a second week to pass federal funding legislation to end the ongoing government shutdown. As of now, both sides remain dug in, but early indications of the political fallout are beginning to take shape. Republicans struggled to stay on message over the course of the week, with disparate signals about back pay for furloughed federal employees coming from the White House and Congressional leadership. Despite a law passed in 2019 intended to guarantee such pay, President Trump and the White House Office of Management and Budget **indicated** on Tuesday that potentially not all of the 600,000 currently furloughed employees of the U.S. Government would receive back-pay once the shutdown is over. House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA), however, and other Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-SD) have repeatedly stated their intent to include back-pay in whatever funding bill is ultimately passed. Thune also has pushed back on the White House's plans to implement vast layoffs of federal employees during the shutdown.

In addition to the back-pay divergence, President Trump also **indicated** a willingness to strike a healthcare subsidy deal with Democrats, appearing to break from House and Senate GOP leadership, who have consistently argued now is not the time to address insurance premium subsidies created by the *Affordable Care Act*. Breaking from her party, firebrand Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA)

vocally **called** on Congress to pass an extension of the insurance subsidies, citing increased costs to taxpayers should they be allowed to expire at the end of the calendar year. All of this comes as Democrats' big bet on a shutdown just may be paying off, with fresh **polling** suggesting that a slight plurality of voters are blaming President Trump and the GOP for the funding lapse. This is especially welcome news for Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), who faced withering criticism from the party base earlier this year when he provided enough Democratic votes to pass a stopgap funding bill without receiving anything in exchange.

The realities of the shutdown are beginning to become more painful for the average American, which may force lawmakers and the administration into more pressure to act. The Federal Aviation Administration continues to **experience** shortages of Air Traffic Controllers at major airports from Boston to Chicago to Nashville, as key staff call out sick in protest of the shutdown. Airport security lines are expected to increase as TSA screeners also begin to call out sick. Additionally, the big question **looming** over Washington is whether Congress will take action to ensure U.S. servicemembers do not miss a paycheck next week, on October 15th, if the shutdown is still in effect. The prospect of troops not receiving a paycheck is a politically painful one for both parties, and some Members of Congress are urging leadership to take action to pass standalone legislation to avoid such a scenario. The administration is also considering moving funds around to pay personnel, though it remains unclear exactly how that can be done. There is also toying with the idea of trying to move individual spending bills, including defense appropriations, to maximize pressure on Democrats.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth **announced** the formation of a new "barracks task force" during his speech on Tuesday to new military recruits at the Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia. The task force will be in charge of developing a barracks investment plan within the next 30 days. It **plans** to use over one billion dollars allocated through President Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill Act, **signed** in early July, as a **"down payment."**

This **plan** aims to improve living conditions for U.S. service members, after years of neglect during the Global War on Terrorism, which led to poor barracks conditions. Defense Secretary Hegseth cited a 2023 Government Accountability Office (GAO) **report** that observed barracks in poor conditions, including safety

risks like sewage overflow and inoperable fire systems. In May, Navy Secretary John Phelan **found** the state of barracks in Guam “appalling,” and Defense Secretary Hegseth **said**, “Every war fighter of our joint forces deserves housing that is clean, comfortable, and safe.” The task force’s recommendations will guide how funds are distributed among the services and prioritize bases with the most urgent safety concerns.

While the Pentagon focuses on improving the quality of life for service members, the administration simultaneously turned its attention to securing the material resources necessary for the long-term strength of the U.S. military.

On Monday, President Donald Trump **signed** an **executive order** approving the Ambler Road project, a 211-mile mining road through rural Alaska that was halted during the Biden administration. The order directs Federal agencies to “promptly issue such authorizations as necessary” for the project to get underway. Alaskan State and Federal representatives often make the point that the road would be necessary to tap into their state’s rich critical minerals deposits.

In 2024, the Biden administration rescinded the Trump administration’s approval. This year, Congressional Republicans **initially tried** to add language supporting Ambler Road’s development into the large-scale budget bill in June. Their effort stalled when the Senate Parliamentarian **ruled** that the amendment violated bill reconciliation rules. Following that, the House of Representatives passed a **resolution** in July to overturn Biden-era land-use planning that would restrict construction in the planned location of the road. Many Native Alaskan tribes oppose the Ambler Road project, asserting that the project would disrupt subsistence hunting and fishing. Current plans for the road would cut through hundreds of waterways, 26 miles of the Gates of the Arctic National Park, and some tribal land. The project is planned to enable over 168 truck crossings per day.

Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum delivered remarks in the Oval Office as President Trump signed the order. He emphasized that the project would be a non-public road intended to have the smallest possible impact on the environment. Additionally, the Secretary argued that the U.S. cannot afford to miss out on the domestic resources necessary to compete with China in critical technologies like A.I. The Trump administration will also take a 10 percent equity stake in Trilogy Metals, a mining conglomerate that operates in Alaska. The

Pentagon will be able to appoint a member to Trilogy Metals' board for a 3-year term.

The administration's push for domestic critical minerals to compete with rivals proved timely, as China quickly responded by weaponizing its own dominance in the rare-earth sector.

Ahead of a critical meeting between President Trump and China's President Xi Jinping later this month, Beijing announced broad new export controls on rare-earth magnets and their raw materials, citing national security concerns.

China's Ministry of Commerce directly confirmed the targets in a Thursday [press release](#), stating that foreign military uses will not be exempted. The ministry noted, "In principle, export applications to overseas military users, as well as export applications to importers and end-users listed on the export control list and watch list... will not be approved."

China is vastly favored to maintain its power in this sector, [controlling](#) 90 percent of global magnet production. The action signals an intent to influence negotiations over broader tech trade and semiconductors. One thing is now clear: Permanent magnets, vital for everything from electric vehicles to U.S. military platforms like F-35 fighter jets, will now be subject to strict Chinese licensing with new rules specifically clamping down on their use in both the overseas chip sector and military applications.

The announcement, which included adding American defense companies to an "unreliable entities" list, left international partners scrambling for a response. The European Union, which also heavily relies on these materials, called for China to act as a "reliable partner," while simultaneously increasing its investment in regional factories to reduce its dependency on Beijing.