



The Witching Hour: Senate Passes Massive Budget Deal In Middle of the Night



AP File Photo/Jose Luis Magana

by [Caroline May](#) 30 Oct 2015

While most Americans slept, the Senate early Friday morning passed a massive budget deal suspending the debt limit into March 2017 and increasing federal spending over the next two years.

By a vote of 64 to 35 in the 3am hour, the Senate passed the deal. President Obama is expected to sign the legislation, which passed through the House earlier this week, into law.

Conservatives have cringed at the agreement saying it busts spending caps, engages in accounting “gimmicks” and grants Obama unlimited borrowing power. They have also expressed frustration at the way in which the legislation was hastily considered.

“At its core, this deal with President Obama provides what President Obama has demanded throughout,”

Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL),

80%

a former budget committee chairman, said on the Senate floor Thursday.

All 35 “no” votes were Republicans, a majority of the GOP caucus.

Eighteen Republicans voted for the measure: Sens.

Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN)

21%

Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH)

34%

Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY)

53%

Capito (R-WV),

Sen. Thad Cochran (R-MS)

31%

Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME)

14%

Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX)

51%

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC)

38%

Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT)

43%

Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL)

20%

Sen. John McCain (R-AZ)

36%

Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY)

46%

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)

18%

Sen. Pat Roberts (R-KS)

53%

Sen. Mike Rounds (R-SD)

18%

Sen. John Thune (R-SD)

48%

Sen. Thom Tillis (R-NC)

27%

Sen. Roger Wicker (R-MS)

28%

Sen. David Vitter (R-LA) did not vote.

71%

Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY)

93%

attempted to obstruct the bill, calling on conservatives to join him in blocking the bill.

“If anything, we should be passing more stringent budget caps. It disappoints me greater than I can possibly express that the party that I belong to that should be the conservative party doesn’t appear to be conservative. This is a big problem,” he said on the floor of the Senate Thursday afternoon.

While conservatives chafed at the deal Republican leadership acknowledged the legislation is not perfect but pointed to goals the deal does accomplish.

“I share some concerns other colleagues have raised, but here’s the bottom line: this is a fully offset agreement that rejects tax hikes, secures long-term savings through entitlement reforms, and provides increased support for our military,” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said on the Senate floor Thursday.

“All this at a time when we confront threats in multiple theaters. Each of these items was a Republican goal heading into the negotiation. Each of these items was achieved in the agreement before us,” he added.

Obama and Senate Democrats cheered the agreement’s passage.

“This agreement is a reminder that Washington can still choose to help, rather than hinder, America’s progress, and I look forward to signing it into law as soon as it reaches my desk,” Obama said in a statement Friday morning. “After that, Congress should build on this by getting to work on spending bills that invest in America’s priorities without getting sidetracked by ideological provisions that have no place in America’s budget process.”

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