

## 12-19-2009: Senate sends Defense spending bill to Obama

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By Humberto Sanchez [CongressDaily](#) December 19, 2009

The Senate on Saturday morning passed the fiscal 2010 Defense spending bill 88 to 10, sending the measure to President Obama for his signature and closing out work on the fiscal 2010 appropriations process.

The action clears the way for the Senate to turn its focus back to healthcare overhaul legislation that Majority Leader Harry Reid is trying to finish before Christmas.

The package includes the \$636 billion for defense programs and two-month extensions of various programs, including unemployment insurance, COBRA health benefits, a fix to Medicare payments to physicians, surface transportation funding, flood insurance and Small Business Administration loans. The package also contains funding for the administration of the food stamp program and a 90-day extension of a law governing transmission of broadcast television signals via satellite services.

Approval of the bill followed 63-33 vote to cut off debate on the defense package. Three Republicans ultimately voted for cloture, but only after all 60 Democrats pledged to support cloture, including Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., an ardent critic of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Feingold initially was not going to back cloture, but changed his mind after Republicans sought to delay action on healthcare by voting against cloture for the spending bill.

The defense bill will be the last of the 12 annual spending bills to be enacted. Last weekend the Senate approved six domestic spending bills that were package together in one \$450 billion measure.

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