

## **Engaging Congress on DHS Funding: Campus Safety Priorities** *Practical Considerations for FY 2026 DHS Funding Talks*

February 2026

### **Context on DHS Funding Negotiations**

Congressional negotiations over FY 2026 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funding remain unresolved, with disagreements over immigration enforcement-related operational standards continuing to delay a path forward. On Tuesday, February 24, the Senate again failed to advance a measure to fund DHS, leaving the department operating under a partial funding lapse and negotiations ongoing.

Publicly discussed policy proposals in these talks have included limits on enforcement near sensitive locations, visible identification requirements for officers, and judicial-warrant standards for entry onto private property.

### **Why Campus Leaders May Want to Weigh In**

Campus leaders can be helpful in these discussions by providing practical, campus-based context, especially where policy choices impact:

- Continuity of campus operations (classes, clinics, residence life, events)
- Access to health and support services (campus health services, counseling, child care)
- Campus safety and crisis response
- Staff's ability to respond lawfully and consistently

### **Top Asks for Outreach**

#### **Sensitive locations protections and enforcement limits near campuses**

Inclusion of clear protections and practical enforcement limits for sensitive locations and campus-adjacent education and health settings, to reduce fear and disruption and preserve access to core services.

- Campuses often include or interact with education, health, child care, counseling, and community-service settings; uncertainty around enforcement near these spaces can disrupt attendance, care-seeking, and student support.
- Clear guardrails help institutions maintain continuity of operations and reduce confusion for students, families, and staff.
- Predictable standards help preserve trust so community members continue to seek support and report safety concerns when needed.

*(Note: "Sensitive locations" often include schools, places of worship, and medical facilities; many campus spaces function similarly even if not labeled that way.)*

## Clear identification and requirement of a judicial warrant

Clear federal standards requiring visible identification and a judicial warrant for entry into nonpublic and private spaces, so campus counsel and staff can respond lawfully and consistently.

- Campuses need clarity on who is present, under what authority, and what documentation is required before staff respond.
- Clear identification and warrant standards reduce confusion and help avoid ad hoc decisions by frontline staff.
- This supports consistent internal protocols, especially for residence halls, private offices, nonpublic academic spaces, and restricted facilities.
- A “judicial warrant” (signed by a judge) is a particularly important standard for institutions trying to follow the law consistently.

*(Note: Public vs. nonpublic space varies by institution. Institutions should consult counsel on how their campus access rules map onto these standards.)*

## Priority Audiences for Outreach

- Senate leadership of both parties
- Members of the [Senate Appropriations Committee](#) (given the appropriations vehicle and active Senate role in negotiations)
- Relevant House and Senate offices representing the institution

## Practical Recommendations

- **Keep it operational and nonpartisan:** Frame your outreach as constructive communication about operational clarity, safety, and institutional compliance (not a broad immigration policy debate).
- **Use brief examples:** Include one or two examples of operational impact (no identifying details).
- **Reach out to both D.C. and district/state staff:**
  - D.C. staff are closer to negotiation language and committee dynamics.
  - District/state staff are often most responsive to concrete local campus impacts and can elevate those realities internally.

## Questions or Support

For questions or staff-level follow-up support, please contact:

**Federal Policy Team** — [federalpolicyteam@presidentsalliance.org](mailto:federalpolicyteam@presidentsalliance.org)