FY14 Budget/Government Shutdown

After a government shutdown for 16 days and hours before the debt ceiling deadline, President Obama signed into law H.R. 2775, the "Continuing Appropriations Act of 2014" last night. The Senate voted 81-18 and the House voting 285-144 to pass the bill. Democrats carried the package, with only 87 of 232 House Republicans voting for the final deal.

Earlier in the day, the Senate was able to broker a deal that reopens the government at the FY13 sequestration level of $986B through January 15. Lifts the debt ceiling through February 7 and develops a budget conference committee that would be required to develop a report by December 13. The plan allows Congress to disapprove of the debt ceiling increase, meaning Congress will formally vote on whether to reject the debt ceiling increase until February 7. President Obama can then veto the legislation if it passes.

Republicans secured one concession from the Affordable Care Act (ACA): an income verification system for individuals who qualify for subsidies under the health care law. Under the agreement, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius will have to certify that the department has established an income verification system as part of the eligibility process. Six months later, the HHS Inspector General will conduct a comprehensive audit of the program.

Below is a summary of proposed provisions that were originally discussed, but were not in the final Senate deal:

- Flexibility in how government agencies make budget cuts to their programs, as they are required to under sequestration
- Repeal of the “extraordinary measures” provision that allows the Treasury to do accounting tactics to avoid default post February 7
- Prohibit employer contributions from the health plans of Members and Congressional staff
- Provisions related to birth control access
- Repeal or delay of the medical device tax
- Repeal, replacement, or delay of any aspects of ACA’s exchanges or individual mandate