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## BILL TO DEFUND HOMELAND SECURITY UNLIKELY TO PASS SENATE

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Late last year, Republicans decided to fund the Homeland Security department only through February in hopes of using the agency's funding as a lever to force change on immigration once the GOP controlled both houses of Congress. But the bill will need 60 votes to clear the Senate, meaning at least six Democrats or Democratic-leaning independents would have to vote yes.

That looks to be nearly impossible. A survey of several Democratic senators who have been critical of the executive action found most saying they would not support the effort.

"I'm not looking for a political fight. I'm looking to solve a problem," Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D., N.D.) said in a statement. An aide said the senator is likely to oppose any Homeland Security spending bill that blocks the executive action.

Sen. Angus King (I., Maine), is also opposed, said his spokeswoman, Kathleen Connery Dawe. "Sen. King does not support the House bill to defund the president's executive action on immigration," she said. "Withholding funds from the Department of Homeland Security would be particularly dangerous at a time of worldwide terrorist threats." An aide to Sen. Claire McCaskill (D., Mo.) said she believes "the only responsible way for Republicans to supersede this executive order is to finally consider, debate and vote on comprehensive immigration reform."

An aide said Sen. Joe Manchin (D., W.Va.) would likely vote against the House bill, and a spokesman for Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D., N.H.), who voiced concerns about executive action this fall, said she opposes defunding Mr. Obama's November action.

An aide to Sen. Jon Tester (D., Mont.) said the senator is opposed to using the Homeland Security budget to roll back the executive order. Mr. Tester said in a statement: "If the House had passed the comprehensive, bipartisan immigration bill that the Senate passed a year and a half ago, we wouldn't be having this conversation right now. I wish the president wouldn't have gone out on his own, but threatening the Department of Homeland Security's budget doesn't solve the immigration crisis or strengthen our borders."

None of the Senate Democratic offices interviewed indicated they would support the move, but one, Sen. Joe Donnelly (D., Ind.), was noncommittal. "Senator Donnelly will take a look at any immigration-related proposals as they come forward," a spokeswoman said.

Of course, even if the measure passed both houses, the plan was certain to draw a presidential veto, and neither house has the votes needed to override that.

The package taking shape in the House was an expansive pushback on Mr. Obama. It would kill his plan, announced in November, to temporarily shield millions of people from deportation, primarily parents of U.S. citizens and permanent residents who have been in the U.S. for at least five years. It would also kill a 2012 program that offered similar shelter

to people brought to the U.S. illegally as children – a sharp turnout from two years ago, when leading House Republicans were discussing a GOP version of the Dream Act, which offers a permanent legal status for this group.

In addition, the plan would roll back Mr. Obama’s directive to prioritize deportation of recent border crossers and those with serious criminal records – a policy that gives a measure of security to illegal immigrants who do not meet those criteria. It was also expected to revive the Secure Communities program, which uses local law enforcement to hold illegal immigrants who they encounter. In November, Mr. Obama ratcheted that program back.

In the House, Republicans said the prospect that the bill would falter in the Senate should not preclude them from trying to pass their favored approach now.

During a private meeting of House Republicans on Friday morning, “there was a lot of discussion about not worrying so much these days about the Senate,” said Rep. Mick Mulvaney (R., S.C.).

“Let’s quit trying to second guess what the Senate’s going to do and let’s do our job and then work it out from there,” said Rep. Matt Salmon (R., Ariz.).