

DHS Shutdown Amid U.S.-Iran War Raises Sleeper Cell Risks by up to 35%, New Non-Partisan Report Warns

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, March 4, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A partial government shutdown affecting the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – now in its 19th day – is significantly degrading U.S. national security operations, increasing border vulnerabilities and the risk of undetected Iranian "sleeper" cells by 15-35% compared to fully funded operations, according to a detailed new [analysis](#) released today by [No Shutdown Pay for Congress](#).

The [report](#), "Negative Impacts of the Current U.S. Government Shutdown on National Security and Operations," highlights how the funding lapse (effective February 14, 2026) forces ~90% of DHS's more than 260,000 employees to work without pay while furloughing support staff. This strains critical functions, including border patrols, intelligence analysis, cybersecurity, disaster response, and aviation security, at a time when U.S. military strikes against Iran (initiated February 28, 2026) have escalated threats from Iranian proxies.



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Key findings include:

- Border control threats elevated by 15-25% due to higher absenteeism (historically up to 300% in prior shutdowns) and reduced surveillance.
- Intelligence gaps (e.g., ~50% furloughs in DHS Intelligence & Analysis), reducing coverage by 40-50% and detection rates for high-risk individuals from ~90% to 70-80%.
- Heightened "sleeper" cell access risks of 20-35%, amplified by Iran's support for proxies like Hezbollah amid the ongoing conflict.

- Additional vulnerabilities in cybersecurity (CISA at ~38% capacity), FEMA readiness, Coast Guard operations, and TSA screening (wait times up 20-50% historically).

"This shutdown is much more than just a budget issue – it's a direct threat to the safety of American citizens during a period of heightened international tension," said Jack Magruder, Executive Director of No Shutdown Pay for Congress. "Our non-partisan report draws from verifiable DHS contingency plans, historical data, and expert assessments, showing clear, quantifiable risks that demand immediate resolution through restored funding."

The full report includes specific statistics, comparisons to full-funding scenarios, and citations from sources such as DHS fact sheets, GAO estimates, and intelligence warnings.

No Shutdown Pay for Congress urges Congress to end the partial DHS shutdown to safeguard homeland security operations.

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No Shutdown Pay for Congress (www.shutdownpay.org) is a nonprofit 501(c)(4) advocacy organization dedicated to ending government shutdowns and ensuring federal employees – including essential national security personnel – receive timely pay without disruption. Founded by Norman Understein and Jack Magruder, the organization promotes bipartisan solutions to prevent funding lapses that harm public safety and economic stability.

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