

Spending bill bogs down in Senate

by UPI

WASHINGTON - A \$410 billion bill that would keep the federal government operational through September stalled in the U.S. Senate, forcing a stopgap measure to be prepared.

The omnibus spending measure was one vote shy of the 60 votes needed to advance it, prompting Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid, of Nevada, to say Congress would approve a stopgap budget measure to keep the government running through Tuesday, The New York Times said.

Senate Republican aides told the Times they expected the bill to be approved next week after Republican lawmakers were allowed to offer additional amendments.

Republican and Democratic senators objected to the bill, which includes thousands of earmarks costing billions of dollars.

Aides to U.S. President Barack Obama said he would sign the bill, despite concerns about the earmarks, because it was "last year's business." Congressional members had criticized Obama, saying he wasn't doing enough to curb the wasteful spending.

The U.S. House of Representatives approved the bill last week 245-178, with 20 Democrats voting against it.

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