



AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster

Air Force One is seen on the tarmac at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2016, before President Barack Obama boards en route to MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fla. President-elect Donald Trump wants the government's contract for a new Air Force One canceled, saying that costs are "totally out of control."

## 'Cancel It!' Trump says new Air Force One cost ridiculous

By JONATHAN LEMIRE  
Associated Press

NEW YORK — The government should cancel its multibillion-dollar order for new Air Force One presidential planes, Donald Trump declared today, serving notice he's ready to jump in and start making decisions six weeks before his inauguration.

Costs for the two Boeing 747s are "totally out of control," Trump told reporters in the lobby of his New York skyscraper.

The government has contracted with Boeing to build the planes, which would go into service around 2024. That means Trump wouldn't fly on the aircraft, which carry U.S. presidents around the globe, unless he pursued and won a second term. But the Air Force has pressed for a faster schedule, saying the current version is becoming too expensive to repair and keep in good flying shape.

The contract for the planes was to be about \$3 billion, but costs have been reported to be rising. Trump tweeted early this morning, "Boeing is building a brand new 747 Air Force One for future presidents, but costs are out of control, more than \$4 billion. Cancel order!"

Later, he said the costs are ridiculous: "I think Boeing is doing a little bit of a number. We want Boeing to make a lot of money, but not that much money."

### Stocks dip

The price of Boeing stock dipped after his comments but not drastically. Trump had tweeted in 2013 that he owned Boeing stock, but a spokesman said today he sold all of his stocks in June.

The company said in a statement, "We are currently under contract for \$170 million to help determine the capabilities of these complex military aircraft that serve the unique requirements of the president of the United States. We look forward to working with the U.S. Air Force on subsequent phases of the program allowing us to deliver the best planes for the president at the



AP Photo/Andrew Harnik

President-elect Donald Trump speaks to members of the media in the lobby at Trump Tower in New York today before heading out later to travel to North Carolina.

best value for the American taxpayer."

Trump now uses his own plane, a Boeing 757, which he has outfitted with white leather and gold, a large flat-screen television and a bedroom. But as president it is expected that he would travel aboard the Air Force jet, which is equipped with special safety, defensive and communications equipment. Air Force One also has seating for reporters; Trump generally does not allow the press on his own plane.

### 'Thank you' tour

Later today, Trump will be using his 757 to travel to the second stop of his "thank you" tour, in North Carolina, less than a week after his return to rallies at an Ohio appearance that felt more like a raucous campaign stop than a traditional speech by a president-to-be.

At that Cincinnati stop, Trump disparaged the media as "dishonest," inspired loud "Build the wall" chants, took swipes at fellow Republicans and stunned his own aides with his surprise announcement from the stage that he was appointing retired Gen. James Mattis as secretary of defense.

Mattis' selection was being formally announced today, and he is to appear with Trump at the

evening event in Fayetteville.

Later this week there will be rallies in Iowa and Michigan as Trump barnstorms the country to salute his supporters who delivered victories in the battleground states he needed to capture the White House. And on Saturday, Trump will attend the 117th annual Army-Navy football game, spending half the game on Navy's side of the stadium and the other half on Army's side. The game between the two military academies often draws the commander in chief; both Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush have attended in recent years.

### Appointments

Before leaving for North Carolina today, Trump was slated to hold a number of meetings in New York, including with Rex Tillerson, the CEO of ExxonMobil; Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, who is meeting about a diplomatic post, and radio host Laura Ingraham who is being considered for press secretary.

Those interviews come a day after Trump chose retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson to be secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, raising fresh concerns about the lack of experience some of Trump's Cabinet picks

have with agencies they're now being chosen to lead.

Carson, who opposed Trump in the Republican primaries, has no background in government or running a large bureaucracy.

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, Trump's choice to be ambassador to the United Nations, has no foreign policy experience. Steve Mnuchin, a former Goldman Sachs partner and Hollywood executive, is Trump's man to lead the Treasury Department but has never worked in government. And Mattis, a widely praised battlefield commander, spent decades in the Marines but now is tapped to run the nation's largest government agency, the Defense Department, with 740,000 civilian employees in addition to 1.3 million service personnel.

Carson would oversee a budget of nearly \$50 billion that provides rental assistance for more than 5 million households. Demand for that assistance is high in part because housing costs are rising faster than incomes. HUD also promotes home ownership with the Federal Housing Administration underwriting about 1 in 6 mortgages issued in the U.S. The agency is charged with enforcing federal fair housing laws, too.

## Stopgap spending bill unveiled as Congress finishes up for year

By ANDREW TAYLOR  
and ALAN FRAM  
Associated Press

running through April 28, Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., said today.

WASHINGTON — Lawmakers are tacking on money for security around Trump Tower in New York and funds for health care for retired coal miners to a stopgap spending bill that would avoid a government shutdown at week's end.

The temporary budget bill, scheduled to be unveiled today, would keep federal agencies functioning into next spring, giving the new Congress and incoming president Donald Trump time to approve more than \$1 trillion to fund federal agencies through the current government budget year, which ends Sept. 30.

Current spending expires at midnight on Friday. Since the measure is the only must-do bill before Congress adjourns, it's likely to carry several add-ons, including flood relief, money for overseas military operations and help for Flint, Michigan, to fix its lead-tainted water system.

Other items include language to help speed a congressional waiver required next year to confirm retired Gen. James Mattis as secretary of defense and temporary help to maintain health benefits for retired members of the United Mine Workers. Lawmakers will again deny themselves a cost-of-living pay hike that's fallen out of favor.

### Coal minors

One major dispute centered on protecting health care and pension benefits for about 120,000 retired coal miners.

The measure had divided coal-state Republicans. Several supported the bill, but GOP leaders — including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky — were wary of bailing out unionized workers.

McConnell said today that that health care help for miners would be part of the spending bill, though no specifics were provided.

At issue are health benefits for retirees whose companies declared bankruptcy in recent years.

Also the subject of last-minute talks was an Obama administration request for \$35 million to provide security for President-elect Trump, whose home in midtown Manhattan provides unusual and costly complications for the Secret Service. The trucking lobby appeared poised to win permanent relief from recent Transportation Department rules mandating rest for long-haul carriers, but details were unavailable.

The overall measure would keep the government

The Senate, meanwhile, appears on track today to pass a \$6.3 billion measure boosting medical research and speeding drug approvals. It also includes a \$1.8 billion cancer research "moonshot" strongly supported by Vice President Joe Biden, whose son Beau died of the disease, as well as \$1 billion over two years to prevent and treat abuse of opioids and other addictive drugs like heroin. The nearly 1,000-page package cleared the House overwhelmingly last week, with strong backing from President Barack Obama. It contains a long-overdue overhaul of federal mental health programs.

Biden presided over the Senate during an 85-13 procedural tally on Monday and a final vote is expected today despite opposition from liberals like Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass.. She complained that the bill would make it easier for politically well-connected pharmaceutical and medical device industries to win federal approval for their products while raising risks to consumers.

### Water projects

Also Monday, negotiators wrapped up talks on a massive water projects bill that also contains a controversial package of provisions that wades into a complex, long-standing battle over allocating California's water resources. House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., and Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein brokered the accord, which, among other steps, aims to offer relief to farmers and farm communities suffering from the state's longstanding drought.

But California's other Democratic senator, Barbara Boxer, ripped the accord, charging that it would harm drinking water quality and severely weaken the Endangered Species Act, threatening salmon and other species. Boxer is retiring and vowed to filibuster the legislation as her last major act in office.

The stopgap spending measure is needed because of a deadlock between Republicans controlling Congress and the Obama administration over spending levels for the Pentagon and a number of other issues, including opposition from conservatives to advancing a huge "omnibus" spending package in the post-election lame-duck session.

The incoming Trump administration and House GOP leaders are also hopeful of winning increases to the Pentagon budget for the ongoing fiscal year in the early months of calendar 2017.

## Police: Fake news story led gunman to popular DC pizzeria

By MATTHEW BARAKAT  
and JESSICA GRESKO  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The bizarre rumors began with a leaked email referencing Hillary Clinton and sinister interpretations of references to pizza parties. It morphed into fake online news stories about a child sex trafficking ring run by prominent Democrats operating out of a Washington, D.C., pizza joint.

On Sunday, it culminated in violence when police say a North Carolina man fired an assault rifle multiple times inside the Comet Ping Pong restaurant as he attempted to "self-investigate" the conspiracy theory known in the Twitterverse as "Pizzagate."

No one was hurt and the man was arrested. But the shooting alarmed those from neighboring businesses all the way to the White House about the real life dangers of fake news on the internet. One of those posting on the conspiracy theory is the son of President-elect Donald Trump's proposed national security adviser.

White House Spokesman Josh Earnest, asked about the shooting Monday, said, "There's no denying the corrosive effect that some of these false reports have had on our political debate ... It's deeply troubling that some of those false reports could lead to violence."

### The suspect

Edgar Maddison Welch, 28

of Salisbury, North Carolina, was arrested Sunday afternoon outside the popular eatery in an affluent capital neighborhood, police said.

At a first appearance Monday in D.C. Superior Court, Welch appeared handcuffed in a white jumpsuit and was ordered held pending a hearing Thursday. A public defender representing him didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

Comet's owner, James Alefantis, said in a statement Sunday night: "Let me state unequivocally: These stories are completely and entirely false, and there is no basis in fact to any of them. What happened today demonstrates that promoting false and reckless conspiracy theories comes with consequences."

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