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Senate Fight Over FBI HQ Halts Funding Bill Progress

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A heated dispute over where to build the next Federal Bureau of Investigation headquarters has brought the U.S. Senate's funding process to a standstill, creating fresh uncertainty about whether lawmakers can avoid a government shutdown before the September 30 deadline.

On Thursday, the Senate Appropriations Committee was scheduled to advance one of its critical funding bills that supports multiple federal agencies. But an unexpected vote derailed those plans. Senator Chris Van Hollen, a Democrat from Maryland, introduced an

amendment prohibiting the use of funds for moving the FBI headquarters from the planned Greenbelt, Maryland campus to the Ronald Reagan Building in downtown Washington, D.C.

The amendment passed narrowly, 15–14, with only Republican Senator Lisa Murkowski of Alaska joining all Democrats in support. Van Hollen defended the measure, noting that Greenbelt, Maryland, was selected after a multi-year, bipartisan site selection process as the most secure and mission-appropriate location.

“This is good news for the men and women in the FBI,” Van Hollen said, emphasizing that the Greenbelt location was the product of a lengthy, bipartisan selection process that considered security and mission needs.

But the decision instantly sparked backlash among Republicans. Senator John Kennedy of Louisiana criticized the amendment for nullifying President Trump’s recent plan to redirect previously appropriated funds toward placing the FBI headquarters in the Reagan Building in D.C., highlighting taxpayer costs and broader implications.

“This is a big deal,” Kennedy remarked. “I think the president is going to be furious.”

The dispute prompted Committee Chair Susan Collins to suspend the meeting, explaining that although unrelated bills (including agriculture and legislative branch funding) advanced, the controversy over the FBI site was too divisive for immediate resolution.

Senators have now gone home for the week and will revisit the issue when they return. Murkowski said she expects more information from the FBI about the rationale for redirecting funding toward the Reagan Building rather than proceeding with the Greenbelt facility.

The dispute over the FBI headquarters underscores how deep partisan rifts can now impede even relatively routine appropriations measures in the Senate. With the clock ticking toward the end of the fiscal year, lawmakers will need to find common ground soon to keep the government running.

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