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OPINION: Guest writer

End the shutdown

Arkansas families deserve better

October 24, 2025 by Ryan Norris Special to the Democrat-Gazette

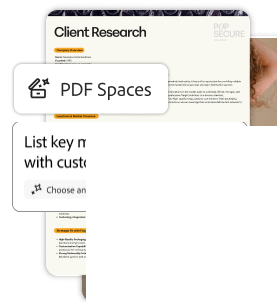


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Arkansans are feeling the sting of government failure. The government has been shut down for more than two weeks and, with no end in sight, the "Schumer Shutdown" could end up being the longest shutdown in history.

These theatrics from Democratic leadership in Washington are inflicting real pain in the Natural State. There are over 14,000 federal civilian employees here in Arkansas, hardworking parents, veterans, and public servants.

Many are furloughed or working without pay, facing delayed mortgages and skipped meals.

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Our farmers, who are reliant on the Farm Service Agency, are watching loan programs grind to a halt, threatening harvests in the Delta and Ozarks. National parks like the Buffalo River, vital to tourism, are operating on skeleton crews.

TSA agents at Northwest Arkansas National Airport are reporting for duty unpaid, risking flight delays that strand travelers and cripple our economy.

Each week, this chaos erodes \$15 billion from our national GDP, hitting Arkansas' small businesses, farms, and military families hardest.

We are not alone, either. Our neighbors in Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Tennessee are also facing tens of thousands of furloughs and potential job losses, hundreds of millions of dollars in costs the state governments must make up, rising bills for kitchen-table conversations like flood insurance, restricted services for our veterans, and much more.



In these moments, Americans showcase our resilience and often come together to take care of each other in the form of free meals or helping hands. But we can help each other and point to solutions to end the pain at the same time.

We need government to work for us, not get in the way.

That is why, at Americans for Prosperity, we champion free markets and limited government that empowers people, not paralyzes them. Shutdowns like this--fueled by partisan posturing from Senate Democrats under Leader Schumer--betray our trust. They waste taxpayer dollars, undermine national security by straining recruitment and supply chains, and close regional veterans' benefits offices when heroes need them most.

It is clear Americans have had enough.



Democrat senators: Open the government now. Americans are suffering while you celebrate political points.

But at Americans for Prosperity, we know we must go further. Congress must end this cycle of dysfunction so that we aren't governing by crisis every year. That's why we are leading a national conversation about making government work for Americans. Americans for Prosperity is focused on solutions that bring real accountability to Washington, push government to live within its means, and make sure politicians answer to the people they serve. We should pass Sen. James Lankford's (R-Okla.) Prevent Government Shutdowns Act, a bipartisan fix that provides automatic continuing appropriations to keep lights on, while locking lawmakers in D.C. until budget bills pass--no more fleeing to fundraisers while the government is in chaos.

Congress can pair it with Rep. Blake Moore's (R-Utah) Comprehensive Congressional Budget Act, which would modernize the broken process so Congress considers inclusive, annual budgets built around appropriations and covering all spending and revenues. It would establish a better regular order that members of Congress want to do.

These aren't Republican wish lists; they're common-sense safeguards endorsed across the aisle. Arkansas can't afford more shutdowns--we're a state of innovators and entrepreneurs, not D.C.'s collateral damage.



Senators, heed the call: Reopen government today, and get to work on reforms to make sure we never govern by shutdown again. Make government work for us; our families' futures demand it.

Ryan Norris is the state director of the Arkansas Chapter of Americans for Prosperity and a resident of Maumelle.

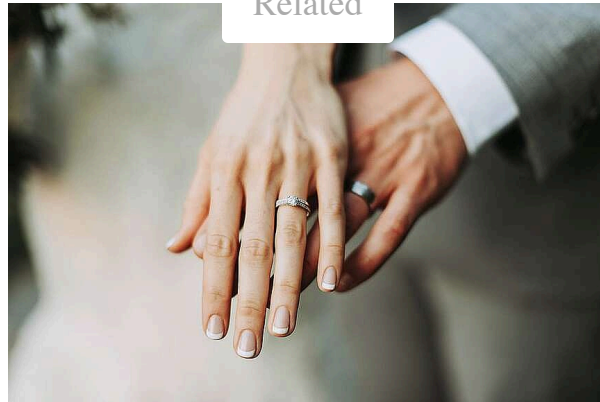
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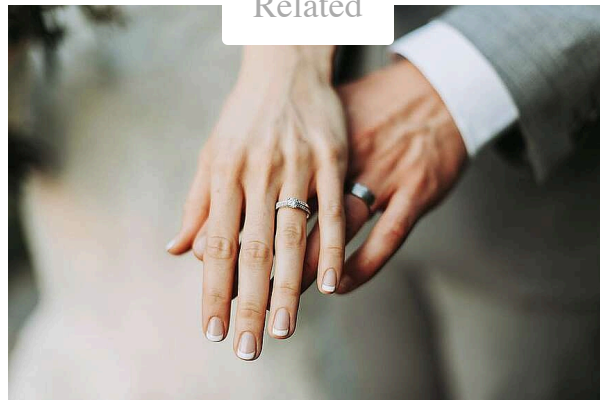
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