

# Shutdown #4

Here is a link to an FBI report on what the shutdown is doing to safety and law enforcement and all that is related to those concerns. The report is entitled *Voices from the Field* (<https://www.fbiaa.org/sites/default/files/downloadable/FBIAA%20Voices%20from%20the%20Field.pdf>). The FBI describes it as follows:



*“Voices from the Field* contains reports from FBI Special Agents nationwide. These stories illustrate how the government shutdown affects our work and identifies the risks that may emerge as it continues...*”*

*“FBIAA is releasing *Voices from the Field* to ensure that Congress, the Administration, and the public are aware of the real and daily challenges faced by FBI agents and the risks to national security posed by a prolonged shutdown.”*

The report goes on to detail dozens of highly specific instances where FBI offices across the nation are now prevented from doing their jobs in the areas of counter-

intelligence and counter-terrorism, cybersecurity, drug and gang crime, crimes against children, sex trafficking, healthcare and securities fraud, etc.

Richard G. related by email some personal and family history that has a bearing on the FBI's current predicament. He says,

"My father, long deceased, was an FBI agent. They can make tons more money in the private sector. That's the reason he retired at 52 years of age and went into the private sector.

"Lots of dedicated government employees are pawns in this charade. We'll probably lose lots of them to private sector where, if an employee works, companies are required by law to pay them!

"Fingers crossed that some goodwill will come of this ugly period."

Note we are hearing more and more anecdotes about federal employees who are not getting paid now rethinking their career paths. In nearly every case they are torn between service to the country and escaping this shutdown charade, and they express intense resentment for being used as political pawns.

Let's not forget the Coast Guard, which is also on duty and protecting the nation while not getting paid – the only branch of the military working without pay. (See "'Unacceptable': Coast Guard's top officer criticizes lack of payment in government

shutdown," [https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2019/01/23/unacceptable-coast-guards-top-officer-criticizes-lack-payment-government-shutdown/?utm\\_term=.8ba96bb4f6fa](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2019/01/23/unacceptable-coast-guards-top-officer-criticizes-lack-payment-government-shutdown/?utm_term=.8ba96bb4f6fa).)

We note that "Senate Minority Leader Schumer (D-N.Y.) blocked a request to pay the Coast Guard on Thursday after Republicans refused to also open the rest of the federal government" (<https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/426824-schumer-blocks-bill-to-pay-coast-guard>). Thus the intransigence on both sides

continues, and deepens.

We are getting a lot of email about the shutdown. All those who are finger pointing at the other side are wasting effort, in my view. They certainly don't alter the landscape. It serves no purpose to write to me and tell me I should blame Trump more than Pelosi or that Trump is right and Pelosi is the problem. And it doesn't help to tell me that the wall is needed or to tell me that the wall is a waste of money.

As a more positive step, I recommended calls to government officials of both parties. I made mine. My message was the same to each of them, regardless of party: "You [congressman or senator] must reopen this government by finding a path to enough votes to do it. You are the responsible party."

Jay sent a thoughtful note, which I will share:

"What makes all of this the more regrettable is that it turns on \$5 billion, 'chump change' in the realm of U.S. government accounts. So here's an idea: suggest that Mr. Trump find the money elsewhere, use it for the wall, and then declare an end to the shutdown, as: (a) enough money will be available to proceed with the wall; (b) he will have circumvented his opponents' efforts to stop the wall; (c) his opponents will claim, correctly, that they did not yield to Mr. Trump and vote for something they do not like and for which they promised not to vote. The wall, if built, will not stop drug thugs. But if it is patrolled, it will deter some from trying to cross the Sonoran Desert, an often-lethal undertaking, at least during the summer. Walls didn't save China from the Mongols (mid-1200s) or Manchus (mid-1600s). But these were armed and highly skilled invaders. A wall may focus Mexicans' attention on their governments' failures – over many decades – to build public safety institutions. Note the plurals. Mexican leaders' negligence embitters the lives of Mexicans. This is partly Mexican voters' fault: they do not punish those who abuse them. Americans do punish those who abuse them: such are

not returned to office and may even be imprisoned. One final note: in the present environment, I'd never say to any public official, 'I will hold *you* personally responsible.' That could reasonably be construed as a personal threat. Rather, I'd say, 'I'll hold *you* politically responsible and will vote for another candidate, when comes the next election.'"

Thank you to Jay.

Folks. The telephone message to a Congressional Representative or Senator is a way to express your view. It is direct. I leave my name and address. I don't expect return calls but sometimes get them. More importantly, the call has the strength of a message that shows that you are a constituent who is willing to make an effort, at least for the minute or two it takes to make the call.

Thank you.

### **U.S. House of Representatives**

<https://www.house.gov/representatives>

### **U.S. Senate**

<https://www.senate.gov/senators/>

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