



U.S. government shutdown affects 800,000 workers without pay



Washington, January 15 (RHC)-- In the U.S., the partial government shutdown -- now the longest in U.S. history -- is in its 25th day, with still no apparent end in sight. U.S. President Donald Trump is holding out for congressional approval of a multi-billion dollar package to build his wall on the southern border with Mexico.

Trump has so far refused to consider any spending measures that do not include his \$5.7 billion in border wall funding. Despite the U.S. president's claims last week that Republican senators were "unified" on the shutdown, a number of Republican senators have expressed support for reopening the government, as 800,000 federal employees either continue to work without pay or are furloughed.

In recent days, reports emerged that the White House may attempt to divert disaster relief funding, including money designated for ongoing hurricane relief work in Puerto Rico, if Trump calls a national emergency to build his border wall. This came as the largest congressional delegation ever visited the island of Puerto Rico to discuss the ongoing economic crisis and post-hurricane recovery.

Meanwhile, despite being affected by the government shutdown, the Bureau of Land Management is holding public meetings in Alaska to push forward plans for new oil and gas leases in the Arctic.



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Artículo Editado por Pavel Jacomino
15/01/2019 16:02:48
