

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Frustration over Global Entry, worker pay as partial shutdown persists

By Johanna Jainchill   By Robert Silk  | Mar 05, 2026



The decision to suspend Global Entry sparked sharp criticism from groups across the travel lobby. Photo Credit: Arne Beruldsen/Shutterstock

As the partial government shutdown entered the end of its third week, travel associations called on Congress to pay TSA workers, while travel management companies said the ongoing suspension of Global Entry was ratcheting up travel anxiety.

The partial shutdown began Feb. 14 when Congress and the Trump administration failed to reach a deal on funding legislation for the Department of Homeland Security due to disagreements stemming from the administration's immigration operations.

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John Rose, chief risk advisor for Altour, said last week that the agency's most consistent client feedback "centers on increased arrival times, missed ground connections, tighter same-day meeting schedules and a general erosion of predictability in international return travel."

"For executives who structure travel with precision, the loss of expedited re-entry is not just an inconvenience; it introduces measurable friction into productivity and duty-of-care planning."

Rose said that clients had been asking for increased buffer times and clearer arrival guidance and were looking to alternatives for quick U.S. entry, such as using CPB's Mobile Passport Control app, which provides access to a dedicated entry lane.

"This situation reinforces how dependent modern corporate travel programs are on trusted traveler infrastructure," he said. "When that infrastructure pauses, even temporarily, it has ripple effects across scheduling, cost management and risk posture."

The decision to suspend Global Entry sparked sharp criticism from groups across the travel lobby, with some saying it would stretch CBP personnel thinner while increasing security risks.

Meagan Kinkade, director of advisor success at Brownell, said the upcoming spring break period was a particular concern. As long as Global Entry remains closed, flyers should leave themselves extra time for connections between an international arrival and a domestic connection. She suggested a minimum connecting time of two hours.

Travel groups: Workers must be paid during shutdowns

A group of travel associations, include the U.S. Travel Association, Airlines for America and the American Hotel & Lodging have called on Congress to pass legislation ensuring that federal aviation employees continue to receive pay during government shutdowns.

"Funding disruptions should not compromise the safety and reliability of America's air travel system, and this campaign aims to compel Congress to act," the groups said in a statement, in which they launched the "Pay Federal Aviation Workers" campaign.

The groups also called on Congress to immediately and fully reopen the government and pay transportation security officers, including those at TSA and CBP.

The bills are the Aviation Funding Sovereignty Act and the Aviation Funding Stability Act, which would ensure all traffic controllers are paid regardless of the government's funding status; and the Keep America Flying Act, which would provide the same protections to

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TSA officers.

Geoff Freeman, CEO of U.S. Travel, said that TSA officers, who screen nearly a billion passengers a year and have an average salary of around \$35,000, "simply cannot afford to miss a paycheck."

"Right now, Congress is allowing them to do that work without one. Every time Washington fails to fund the government, these essential workers pay the price. So do travelers. So does the economy. That is why America's travel industry has come together, because this workforce is too important, and the stakes are too high, for this to keep happening."

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