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Senate Votes to End COVID National Emergency, Sending Bill to Biden's Desk

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The Senate passed a resolution, 68-23, on March 29 to end the COVID-19 national emergency sooner than scheduled.

The [measure](#), which was introduced by Rep. Paul Gosar (R-Ariz.) and passed the House on Feb. 1, now heads to President Joe Biden, who is expected to sign it, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.)

told Democrats, according to media reports.

The White House planned to end both the [COVID national emergency](#)—which then-President Donald Trump enacted on March 13, 2020—on May 11. However, this bill will terminate the national emergency a month earlier than scheduled.

The administration is also set to end the [COVID public health emergency](#)—which Trump’s Department of Health and Human Services enacted on Jan. 31, 2020—on May 11. A separate measure to end that, called the Pandemic is Over Act, passed the House on Jan. 31. The Senate has yet to take it up.

Biden’s reported about-face on the resolution comes after the White House initially objected to the GOP-led resolution.

“At present, the Administration’s plan is to

extend the emergency declarations to May 11, and then end both emergencies on that date. This wind-down would align with the Administration's previous commitments to give at least 60 days' notice prior to termination of the PHE," said the Office of Management and Budget in a Jan. 30 [statement](#).

"To be clear, continuation of these emergency declarations until May 11 does not impose any restriction at all on individual conduct with regard to COVID-19," continued OMB. "They do not impose mask mandates or vaccine mandates. They do not restrict school or business operations. They do not require the use of any medicines or tests in response to cases of COVID-19."

OMB expressed alarm that ending the COVID emergency earlier than scheduled could have an adverse effect on the U.S.

healthcare system and “tens of millions of Americans.”

Nonetheless, ahead of the vote, Senate Democrats [told](#) Axios that they planned to vote for the resolution to end the national emergency.

“We’re going to be voting to end the COVID emergency,” Sen. Jackie Rosen (D-Nev.) said.

However, Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) [told](#) Axios he would vote against the resolution.

“They have given us a plan,” he said. “When you say to the world and everybody, ‘Okay, this is going to end May 11, and here’s why,’ then people are taking reasonable steps to do what they can before May 11.”

The senator remarked there is “not so much difference between now and May 11 that I think we need to shortcut that. In fact, it’s

going to help people. They got some advanced notice and they've been planning around May 11 as the date.”