

## **As Shutdown Reaches Day 28, Franklin Center and Ripon Society Holds Bipartisan Discussion with 2 Leaders Who are Trying to Bring It to an End**

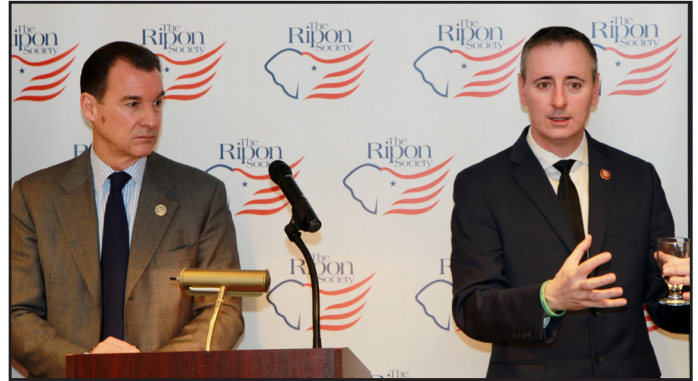
Washington, D.C. – With the ongoing shutdown of the federal government now reaching 28 days – the longest in U.S. history, the Franklin Center and Ripon Society hosted a bipartisan breakfast discussion yesterday morning with two leaders who are trying to bring the stalemate to an end.

The leaders were Republican Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick, who represents the 1st District of Pennsylvania, and Democratic Congressman Tom Suozzi, who represents the 3rd District of New York. First elected to the House in 2016, Fitzpatrick and Suozzi are members of the Problem Solvers Caucus, a group dedicated to working across the aisle and finding bipartisan solutions to the challenges facing America. To that end, they traveled to the White House on Wednesday to meet with the President and see if an agreement to reopen the government can be reached.

“We appreciate Congressman Fitzpatrick and Congressman Suozzi for taking the time to join us yesterday morning,” stated Franklin Center President & CEO Jim Conzelman. “These are busy times, to say the least. They are also uncertain times. From the need to stem the flow of illegal immigrants across the southern border to the need to get civil servants back to work, America is facing a number of real problems that demand real solutions – solutions designed not to cater



Bipartisanship was the focus of yesterday's discussion.



Reps. Tom Suozzi (left) and Brian Fitzpatrick (right) discuss the record-length government shutdown.

to any political base, but to serve the American people as a whole.

“It’s been done before. 23 years ago this month, Congress had just concluded what was the longest government shutdown at the time. Neither side wanted to budge, and neither side wanted to give an inch. But eventually, cooler heads prevailed. The agreement that was reached in 1996 to reopen the government after 21 days led to agreements to balance the budget and reform welfare over the course of the following year.

“One can only hope a similar conclusion is reached in the current shutdown debate. When an agreement is reached, I know it will be because of the efforts of leaders like Brian Fitzpatrick and Tom Suozzi, who are putting country before party and doing what they believe serves the interests of the American people best.”

According to Conzelman, yesterday’s discussion was the 1st event the Franklin Center has held so far in 2019. It was also, he noted, the first of many bipartisan events the organization plans to hold. “In this polarized environment,” he concluded, “we need to do more to bring Republicans and Democrats together. That’s one of our goals for 2019, and something we hope to achieve in the coming year.”

The Franklin Center for Global Policy Exchange, a non-profit, non-partisan public policy organization which has promoted enlightened, balanced, and unbiased international policy discussion on major international issues for over 30 years. The Franklin Center also hosts bipartisan events with Members of Congress on a variety of topics here in Washington, D.C. and across the country.

For more information on the organization, please visit its website at [www.franklincenter.us](http://www.franklincenter.us).

FC