The US Senate has agreed to the formation of a bicameral conference committee to resolve differences in the House and Senate versions of the defense authorization bill. The two chambers have until the end of the lame-duck session to reconcile the differences in order to avoid a government shutdown. The bill would include funding for the Department of Defense, foreign operations, and military construction. The conference committee will be responsible for reconciling the differences in the bill, which includes increases in defense spending, funding for military construction, and marriage equality for military personnel. The bill also includes provisions for the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Homeland Security. The conference committee will meet for the first time next week, and is expected to complete its work by the end of the month.