

SFGATE

Trump to outline spending plans in speech to Congress

Tokunbo Salako

February 28, 2017

Donald Trump will make his first major speech to Congress on Tuesday and outline his plans for the year ahead.

It's a chance for the US president to stabilise the rollercoaster ride that's been his first month in office.

Already we know he plans to honour his campaign promise and spend big on boosting the military.

Speaking to a bipartisan gathering of US governors on Monday he said: "This budget will be a public safety and national security budget, very much based on those two with plenty of other things, but very strong, and it will include an historic increase in defence spending to rebuild the depleted military of the United States of America at a time we most need it."

Trump wants to spend \$54 billion on military hardware and manpower, with the money coming from what he calls a "revved up" economy.

The White House says most of the cash will come from cuts in several other departments such as environmental protection and foreign aid budgets; but some defence experts don't think Trump's measures will pass.

Benjamin Friedman, research fellow in defence and homeland security studies at the CATO Institute said: "The reason it won't get through Congress as it stands is that while the Democrats agree in principle that we should increase defence spending, they don't agree on how. So they're not going to agree, Democrats, to cut the Environmental Protection Agency and State Department's budget massively to fund a defense increase".

While some Republicans say the boost in defence spending is not enough, the House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi says if Trump's address is anything like his inaugural speech it "will be a very sad evening" for the country.

"The president's Muslim and refugee ban dishonors our values, violates our constitution and undermines our nation's fight against terror. He has launched a cruel deportation dragnet that

will tear families apart, and has hauled law-abiding immigrants out of church shelters, courtrooms and schools,” said Pelosi.

Details have not been released of Trump’s plans to overhaul Obamacare or how he’ll pay to rebuild US roads and bridges.

Democrats aim to show their displeasure with Trump by inviting an array of guests to the House to highlight their opposition to the president’s agenda.