Psst, Congress, you have a little food stuck in your Cromnibus

Congress has just passed the so-called <u>Cromnibus</u> — a giant \$1.1 trillion spending bill to keep government programs running. Last year, as you may remember, Republicans tried to force some of their favorite legislative issues by refusing to pass a spending bill — and ultimately shut down the government.

Pretty much everyone agrees that was <u>a bad idea</u>, which is probably why neither side took those extreme measures this year. Instead, politicians went the other direction, agreeing to vote for the spending bill if they could stuff the bill with goodies for various lobbies as well as tweaks to some lower-profile policies.

Food and farming got a lot of tweaks. If Obama signs the bill, as everyone expects, here's what will change:

Funding for GMO regulatory officials:

There's \$740,000 in the budget bill for the USDA's Biotechnology Regulatory Services. Does this mean independent government testing of new GMOs? No, it means that the agency will have more bandwidth to process applications for new biotech products.

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