

Washington Update

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information provided by Lewis-Burke Associates and the Coalition for National Science Funding

FY 2008 Supplemental Appropriations Bill Includes Science Funding

Late last week, the U.S. Senate joined the U.S. House of Representatives in giving overwhelming approval to a \$186.5 billion FY 2008 Supplemental Appropriations bill that includes \$400 million for scientific research for four federal science agencies: \$62.5 million for the National Science Foundation (NSF); \$62.5 million for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); \$62.5 million for the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science; \$62.5 million for DOE Defense Environmental Cleanup; and \$150 million for the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The final bill provides \$165.4 billion for the War in Iraq and Afghanistan and authorizes an expanded GI Bill education benefits program to support veterans who have served in the U.S. armed forces since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. The bill extends unemployment compensation benefits for an additional 13 weeks and provides emergency disaster assistance to assist with the recovery from the current Midwestern floods and rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina. Finally, the bill postpones for one year the implementation of proposed regulations affecting the Medicaid program, including a rule that would prohibit Medicaid payments for graduate medical education.

The President has indicated he will sign the compromise bill. Additional details for the final supplemental bill follow:

Science Funding: The science funding in the final bill was one-third of the \$1.2 billion included in the Senate-passed version of the supplemental bill, but it survived as one of a very limited number of domestic funding priorities.

The \$400 million in science funding in the final supplemental bill includes:

- National Science Foundation (NSF) -- \$62.5 million; within this amount, \$22.5 million is for Research and Related Activities (of which \$5 million is for EPSCoR) and \$40 million is for Education and Human Resources [to be split equally between the existing Noyce Scholarship Program and a program within Noyce (newly authorized in the America COMPETES Act) that would provide salary supplements to math and science teachers];
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) -- \$62.5 million for Science, Aeronautics and Exploration;
- Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science -- \$62.5 million with instructions that the funds are to be utilized to eliminate all furloughs and reductions in force and other personnel requirements before funding goes to research efforts;
- DOE Defense Environmental Cleanup -- \$62.5 million; and
- National Institutes of Health (NIH) -- \$150 million to be allocated on a pro-rata basis among the NIH institutes and centers for scientific research.

FY 2009 Appropriations Update

Also last week, the House Appropriations Committee approved its version of the FY 2009 Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations bill which funds four major science agencies - the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

- NSF would receive \$6.85 billion, the same level as the President's budget request and the same level as in the Senate. This amount is \$789 million above the FY 2008 level, and would return NSF to the ten-year doubling track begun in FY 2007. The bill would shift \$50 million in funding from the research account to the education account.
- NASA would receive \$17.77 billion, which is \$155 million more than the President's request and \$45 million below the Senate level. The Science Mission Directorate would receive \$4.5 billion, which is \$76.5 million above the President's request and \$5 million below the Senate level, and the Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate would receive \$68.5 million more than the President's request (\$15 million above the Senate).
- NOAA would receive \$4.3 billion, an increase of about \$350 million over the FY 2008 level, but about \$150 million less than the Senate would provide. The Committee's report includes language urging NOAA to provide additional funding in future budgets for extramural research funding.
- At NIST, despite the President's request to eliminate funding for the new Technology Innovation Program (TIP - grants for which universities, in partnership with small and mid-sized businesses, may apply) and the competitive NIST Research Facilities Construction Grant Program, TIP would receive \$65 million, and the facilities construction program would receive \$30 million.

National Science Foundation (NSF)

The bill would provide NSF with \$6.85 billion, the same level as the President's budget request and the same level as the Senate. This amount is \$789 million above the FY 2008 level, and would return NSF to the ten-year doubling track begun in FY 2007. The bill would shift \$50 million in funding from the research account to the education account.

Of this amount, \$5.54 billion would be for Research and Related Activities, \$50 million below the requested level and the Senate level, but \$723 million above the FY 2008 level. In addition to the \$50 million reduction in the account, the Committee directs NSF to increase funding for the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) by \$19 million. The bill also indicates that the full requested funding should be provided for many of the NSF-wide research initiatives, including the Cyber-enabled Discovery and Innovation program (for which \$100 million was requested). The Committee expresses concern that the increases proposed for the computing, engineering, and physical sciences (about 20 percent) are so much greater than those proposed for the social, behavioral, and economic sciences (8.5 percent), and therefore directs NSF to "provide a more balanced allocation of its resources across the science directorates" in FY 2009.

The Education and Human Resources directorate would receive \$840 million, \$50 million above the requested level and the Senate level, and \$115 million above the FY 2008 level. Most of the additional funding would go to the Noyce Scholarship Program (up \$35 million), the Math and Science Partnership Program (up \$10 million), and a climate change education program NSF was directed to establish by Congress in FY 2008. Funding for the Graduate Research Fellowships program would be reduced \$10 million, but it would still be \$19 million above the FY 2008 level.

The Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction (MREFC) account would receive \$148 million, the requested level. The bill would fully fund three ongoing MREFC projects, the Atacama Large Millimeter Array (ALMA), the Advanced Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (AdvLIGO), and the IceCube Neutrino Observatory. In addition, the bill would provide design funding for several MREFC projects in their final planning stages, but these funds would come from the Research and Related Activities account. Like in the Senate bill, the House bill denies NSF's general request to allow the use of MREFC funds for late-stage design work.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

The bill would provide NASA with \$17.77 billion, which is \$155 million more than the President's request and \$45 million below the Senate level. This amount is \$460 million above the FY 2008 level. Similar to the Senate bill, an additional \$140 million in prior year unobligated balances is also included in this year's House bill.

Under the House bill, NASA's Science Mission Directorate would receive \$4.5 billion, which is \$76.5 million above the President's request and \$5 million below the Senate level. Within this amount, the House bill would provide each account with increased funding:

- An additional \$80 million above the President's request (\$8 million above the Senate) for Earth Science, primarily to implement the National Academies Decadal Survey recommendations (up \$50 million), Glory, and for the Landsat data continuity mission;
- An additional \$76.7 million above the President's request (same as the Senate level) for Planetary Science to provide increased funding for the Mars Exploration program;
- An additional \$18 million above the President's request for Astrophysics (\$3.5 million below the Senate), primarily for increases to James Webb Space Telescope (up \$23 million), Hubble, and Exoplanet missions and with decreases to NuStar (\$41.5 million below the request); and
- An additional \$41 million above the President's request for Heliophysics (\$15 million below the Senate), primarily for Living with a Star and the Solar Terrestrial Probes.

NASA's Aeronautics Research Mission Directorate would receive \$68.5 million more than the President's request (\$15 million above the Senate) to support additional investments in the Next Generation Air Transportation System and to increase research in "green" aircraft. Within this amount an increase of \$26.5 million above the request is for Fundamental Aeronautics: subsonic fixed wing. Exploration would receive \$5.2 million more than the President's request (\$25 million below the Senate), and Education would receive \$71.6 million

more than the request (\$57.2 million above the Senate) with \$12 million more for NASA Space Grant, \$4.5 million more for Higher Education programs, and \$16 million more for EPSCoR programs.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

The bill would provide \$4.3 billion for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) -- this is in excess of \$150 million above the budget request and about \$350 million above last year. Within this total funding for NOAA, the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) would receive \$396.3 million for operations, research and facilities. This is \$24 million above the request. Within OAR, \$60 million would be provided for the National Sea Grant College Program (\$5 million more than the request), \$139.7 million would be provided for the Competitive Research Program for Climate Research, and \$27.8 million would be provided for Ocean Exploration and Research.

The National Ocean Service (NOS) would receive \$472 million for operations and research -- this is \$22.9 million above the request. Within NOS, \$19.5 million would be provided for the Integrated Ocean Observing Systems (IOOS) regional observations. The National Marine Fisheries Service would receive \$744.4 million for operations, research and facilities or \$20 million more than the request. The NOAA office of education would be funded at \$20.5 million, which is about \$5 million above the budget request. The Committee's recommendations include full funding for the GOES-R and NPOESS satellite systems, and the \$74 million necessary for the restoration of climate sensors. The Committee remains concerned about the impact of the GOES-R out-year costs on NOAA's traditional mission areas.

The Committee's report includes language urging NOAA to provide additional funding in future budgets for extramural research funding. The Committee also urges NOAA to make atmospheric sciences a priority within the resources made available in this appropriation and to request sufficient resources in subsequent years to advance this area. With respect to ocean research priorities, the Committee "directs competitive consideration of any region susceptible to coastal hazards within the interagency ocean research priorities plan implementation."

The Senate Appropriations Committee passed the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill for FY 2009 on Thursday, June 19th. Overall, the National Science Foundation received \$6.854 billion, an increase of \$789.10 million, or 13 percent, over the FY '08 Consolidated Appropriations, and equal to the President's request.

Research and Related Activities:

The Research and Related Activities account receives \$5.594 billion, an increase of \$772.52 million, or 16 percent over the FY '08 Consolidated Appropriations, and equal to the President's request. EPSCoR is provided with \$125 million, an increase of \$11.5 million over the request. The Plant Genome program is provided with \$101.22 million, equal to the request. The Astronomy Division was provided with \$252.51 million, an increase of \$2.5 million over the President's request, for late-stage design work on the Advanced Technology Solar Telescope project.

Education and Human Resources:

The Education and Human Resources account is funded at the requested level of \$790.41 million, an increase of \$64.8 million over the FY '08 Consolidated Appropriations. The Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program is provided \$55 million, an increase of \$43.4 million, or 378 percent, over the request.

Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction:

The Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction account is funded at \$152.01 million, \$4.5 million above the requested level of \$147.51 million. The Advanced Technology Solar Telescope was provided with \$7 million, \$4.5 million above the President's request. The Committee denied the request for use of the account for late-stage design activities.

More information and analysis will soon be posted on the OGA budget page:

<http://www.ucar.edu/oga/html/budget/index.html>