



Congress Finalizes Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Spending March 22, 2018

Department of Health and Human Services Budget

Health and human services programs fared well under the budget. The bill rejects the Trump administration's proposed program cuts and eliminations. Significant increases are slated for child care, opioids treatment, and some increases to child welfare programs.

Although the Senate had reached a bipartisan agreement to fund the *Affordable Care Act's* cost sharing reduction payments to insurers, the agreement was dropped from the final measure. The payment have been provided to insurers to assist low- to moderate-income subscribers in meeting their health insurance co-pays and deductibles.

The largest increase in the health and human services budget is a \$2.4 billion boost in child care funding, nearly doubling the fund to \$5.2 billion in FY 2018.

Given the huge increases in opioid addiction and death, the FY 2018 bill increases funding by \$2.55 billion, to \$3.6 billion. The increases will invest in a wide range of initiatives. They include: \$415 million to expand behavioral health and substance use disorder prevention and treatment services and facilitate the development of an appropriately trained workforce, especially in rural communities; \$1 billion for a new *State Opioid Response Grant*, with a 15 percent set-aside for states with the highest mortality rate related to opioid use disorders. And, to address the spike in child welfare caseloads, \$40 million is provided for mental health and substance use prevention and treatment for children and families in the foster care and child welfare systems.

The Labor-HHS bill also increases a number of child welfare programs. Incentive payments for adoption and legal guardianships were doubled from \$37 million to \$75 million. The *Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act* (CAPTA) which assists states in implementing child safety plans was increased for the first time since FY 2005, rising from \$25 million to \$85 million. Also receiving a boost - from \$385 million to \$445 million - is the *Promoting Safe and Stable Families Act* (PSSF) funding state and county programs to support at-risk families in an effort to keep the children with their family.

The bill increases Head Start by six percent, to a FY 2018 level of nearly \$9.9 billion.

Appropriators rejected the Administration's proposal to eliminate the *Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)*, the *Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)* and the *Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)*. CSBG is level funded at \$715 million while LIHEAP was increased by seven percent, to \$3.6 billion in FY 2018. SSBG again escaped elimination, receiving current level funding of \$1.7 billion.

Also included in the budget for programs under the Department of Health and Human Services is a seven percent increase in *Older Americans Act* funding for congregate and home delivered meals, for a FY 2018 level of \$736 million for those programs.

Department of Labor

Rejecting the Administration's proposed 40 percent cuts in workforce training programs, the spending bill increases funding under the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)*. Included is a four percent increase to \$846 million for adult training and a three percent increase to \$903 million for youth training.

USDA/Nutrition Programs

Mandatory spending for the *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)* is projected to be \$74 billion. That amount fully funds the program and is \$4.5 billion below the FY 2017 level due to declining enrollment and a continuing improved economy. The *Women, Infants and Children (WIC)* program is funded at \$6.2 billion which is projected to meet the needs of program participants.