



CONSORTIUM of SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

State of Play: FY 2017 Funding for Social Science Research | July 18, 2016

Congress has adjourned for a seven-week recess and will not be returning to work until after Labor Day. Despite promises for a return to “regular order” in the annual appropriations process, we find ourselves in familiar territory with none of the 12 annual spending bills expected to be enacted into law before the new fiscal year begins October 1. In fact, none of the bills that fund research agencies and programs (the *Commerce, Justice Science* bill and the *Labor, HHS, Education* bill) have yet to make it to the House or Senate floors for debate.

Upon returning to work in September, Congress will be faced with a full plate of must-pass legislation and a limited number of days before breaking again for the fall elections. Among the countless unknowns surrounding a possible endgame strategy for appropriations is one certainty – the need to pass a stopgap funding measure, known as a continuing resolution (CR), to avoid a government shutdown come October 1. The length of the impending CR, though, is still up for debate. Scenarios range from a CR of a couple of months with final action completed in the December timeframe (forcing a lame duck session of Congress after the November elections), to a six-month-long CR that would delay action until after the new Administration and Congress are sworn in, to possibly a year-long continuing resolution that would fund agencies at the FY 2016 level through the end of next fiscal year. These details will need to be sorted out over the next several weeks, and consensus remains far-off. However, all parties appear equally committed to avoiding a government shutdown.

COSSA has been reporting on the status of the FY 2017 appropriations bills over the last several months. The following pages include a recap of progress made to date as it relates to social and behavioral science research. Congress will pick up where it left off when Members return to work in September.

Full details on the various bills considered so far can be viewed on the [COSSA website](#).

FY 2017 APPROPRIATIONS SNAPSHOT				
	Enacted FY 2016	President's Request ¹	House	Senate
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE				
Economic Research Service	85.4	91.3	86	86.8
National Agricultural Statistics Service	168.4	176.6	168.4	169.6
National Institute of Food and Agriculture	1326.5	1374	1341.2	1363.7
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE				
Bureau of the Census	1370	1633.6	1470	1518.3
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION				
Institute of Education Sciences	618	693.8	536	612.5
International Education and Foreign Language Studies	72.2	67.3	72.2	67.3

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES				
National Institutes of Health	32311.3	31311.3	33334	34084
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality	334	363.7	280.2	324
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	6270.7	6039.4	6875.1	6153.4
National Center for Health Statistics	160.4	160.4	160.4	156
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE				
Bureau of Justice Statistics	41	58	48	41
National Institute of Justice	36	48	40	36
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR				
Bureau of Labor Statistics	609	640.9	609	609
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION	7463.5	7564	7406.1	7509.8

¹ Not including mandatory funding proposals

National Science Foundation

The National Science Foundation (NSF) would fare slightly better in the Senate’s FY 2017 spending bill, which recommends a budget of \$7.51 billion for agency (an increase of less than one percent). However, the small increase would be directed almost entirely to major research construction and facilities costs; the Research and Related Activities account, which funds NSF’s six research directorates, including the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate, would be flat funded. While disappointing, the House bill proposes to cut NSF by 0.8 percent below the FY 2016 level, while still keeping Research and Related activities flat.

More notable than the funding levels proposed in the House and Senate bills, though, is the absence of any directives to cut social science funding at NSF, as we saw in last year’s House bill. Both chambers’ bills steer clear of picking winners and losers among the scientific disciplines supported by NSF.

Still, both bills include report language worth keeping an eye on. For example, the report accompanying the Senate bill states, “As part of the peer review process, NSF should include criteria that evaluates how a proposal will advance our Nation’s national security and economic interests, as well as promote the progress of science and innovation in the United States.” While not specific to social and behavioral science, this language is reminiscent of—though potentially much less damaging than—language in the final FY 2013 appropriations bill that limited NSF’s Political Science Program by requiring that all projects funded by the program “promote the national security or the economic interests of the United States.” In contrast, the Senate language directs NSF to add these criteria as part of the merit review process when reviewing *all* NSF grants, but does not appear to require that all projects funded by NSF necessarily have a direct positive impact on U.S. national security or the economy. It is unclear how this language would be interpreted by NSF should a version of it stick in the final FY 2017 appropriations bill.

Similarly, the House bill includes language directing NSF to ensure that award abstract explain “how a project increases economic competitiveness in the United States; advances the health and welfare of the American public; develops an American STEM workforce, including computer science and information technology sectors, that are globally competitive; increases public scientific literacy and public engagement with science and technology in the United States; increases partnerships between academia and industry in the United States; supports the national defense of the United States; or promotes the progress of science for the United States.” This is language taken from the [Scientific Research in the](#)

[National Interest Act](#) (H.R. 3293), a bill that seeks to set a definition of “national interest” for governing projects eligible for NSF support. The language in the House bill is viewed as largely benign.

The outlook for NSF in the final FY 2017 negotiations is a mixed bag. While the flat funding levels are disappointing, significant progress has been made to ensure that social and behavioral science is not targeted for disproportionate treatment again this year.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	FY 2017 Senate
National Science Foundation	7463.5	7564.0	7406.1	7509.8
Research and Related Activities	6033.6	6079.4	6079.4	6033.6
Education and Human Resources	880.0	898.9	880.0	880.0
Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction	200.3	193.1	87.1	246.6
Agency Operations and Award Management	330.0	373.0	340.0	330.0
National Science Board	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4
Office of the Inspector General	15.2	15.2	15.2	15.2

See COSSA’s full analyses for details on FY 2017 NSF funding [[House](#)] [[Senate](#)].

National Institutes of Health

Continuing the momentum generated in FY 2016, Congress is on course to provide the National Institutes of Health (NIH) with another substantial increase in its budget. The Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill (Labor-HHS) would provide NIH a \$2 billion (6.2 percent) increase for a total budget of \$34.1 billion. While the House bill would provide a smaller budget of \$33.3 billion, it is still \$1.25 billion above the FY 2016 funding level. Albeit less than the amount provided by the Senate, the House allocation is also \$2.25 billion above the President’s discretionary budget request.

Both bills provide allocations to specific priorities, including the National Children’s Study, Precision Medicine Initiative (PMI) cohort program, Alzheimer’s disease research, Institutional Development Award, Clinical and Translational Sciences Award, Brain Research through Application of Innovative Neuro-technologies (BRAIN) initiative, along with programs targeted at fighting opioid abuse. Both bills also retain their longstanding provisions prohibiting support of research that could be used to advocate for gun control. Further, the House bill would again prohibit the use of discretionary funds “to support any patient-centered outcomes research,” a provision that fortunately did not make it into last year’s omnibus.

The outlook for an increase in NIH’s FY 2017 funding is optimistic. Either chamber’s recommendation would provide NIH a funding increase above the level of biomedical research inflation for a second year in a row. Ordinarily one would expect a compromise funding level that meets in the middle of the two funding recommendations, but given that it is an election year, it is not out of the realm of possibility that the House could support the Senate’s higher proposal in the final negotiations. During the House markup of its bill, Subcommittee Chair Tom Cole (R-OK) made it clear that he views the House’s recommendation “as the floor [and] not as a ceiling for biomedical research funding.” He also expressed his hope that the NIH allocation is increased as the process moves forward.

The NIH community hopes that Congress will complete the job and pass an omnibus funding bill as opposed to a continuing resolution (CR). A CR would adversely impact programming at Department of Health and Human Services agencies, including delaying new programs and affecting the disbursement of many continuing grants.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	FY 2017 Senate
National Institutes of Health	32311.3	33136.35	33334.0	34084.0
John E. Fogarty International Center for Advanced Study in the Health Sciences	70.1	69.1	72.1	73.0
National Cancer Institute	5213.5	5097.3	5338.4	5429.8
National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences	685.4	660.1	712.8	713.8
National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health	129.9	126.7	134.5	136.2
National Eye Institute	708.0	687.2	737.6	740.8
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute	3113.5	3069.9	3190.5	3242.7
National Human Genome Research Institute	513.2	509.8	531.4	534.5
National Institute on Aging	1598.2	1265.1	1982.1	2067.1
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism	467.4	459.6	480.3	
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases	4715.7	4700.5	4738.9	4961.3
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases	541.7	532.7	555.2	564.1
National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering	343.5	334.0	357.0	361.1
<i>Eunice Kennedy Shriver</i> National Institute of Child Health and Human Development	1338.3	1316.6	1373.4	1395.8
National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders	422.9	416.1	434.1	441.8
National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research	413.4	404.6	425.6	430.5
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases	1816.3	1936.1	1862.1	1891.6
National Institute on Drug Abuse	1050.6	1020.5	1107.7	1103.0
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences	693.5	681.6	710.4	722.3
National Institute of General Medical Sciences	2512.4	2434.1	2583.8	2633.7
National Institute of Mental Health	1518.7	1459.7	1599.7	1619.5
National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities	280.7	279.7	286.4	292.3
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke	1695.2	1659.4	1751.0	1803.3
National Institute of Nursing Research	145.9	143.9	150.0	152.0
National Library of Medicine	395.7	395.1	403.1	412.1

See COSSA's full analyses for details on FY 2017 NIH funding [[House](#)] [[Senate](#)].

National Institute of Justice & Bureau of Justice Statistics

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) both fare better in the House spending bill than in the Senate's, with 11 and 17 percent increases respectively compared to FY 2016 enacted spending levels. The Senate bill maintains the FY 2016 levels. The House recommends \$40 million for NIJ and \$48 million for BJS while the Senate recommends \$36 million for NIJ and \$42 million for BJS.

The House and Senate committee reports also detail different suggested activities for the National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Statistics. The House report includes specific language encouraging NIJ to increase funding for research into human trafficking and language encouraging BJS to develop a data collection process "to accurately capture the number of deaths and injuries from police pursuits and high-risk vehicle events". The House report also includes language supporting the Department's "development and testing of a pilot campus climate survey" regarding sexual assault on college campuses, without responsibility to a certain division within the Office of Justice Programs. The Senate recommends \$4 million to be transferred from the Office of Violence Against Women to the NIJ for "research and evaluation on violence against women and Indian women."

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	FY 2017 Senate
Bureau of Justice Statistics	41.0	58.0	48.0	41.0
National Institute of Justice	36.0	48.0	40.0	36.0

See COSSA's full analyses for details on FY 2017 Justice funding [[House](#)] [[Senate](#)].

Census Bureau

The Senate bill proposes a higher funding level for the Census Bureau at \$1.52 billion, compared to \$1.47 billion in the House bill. While both bills would provide funding over the FY 2016 enacted level, neither provide the amount requested by the Obama Administration for the continued ramp up to the 2020 Decennial Census. Both bills recommend flat funding for the Current Surveys and Programs activity and increases for the Periodic Censuses and Programs line, which funds the Decennial Census, as shown in the chart below. Both the House and Senate remain concerned about containing overall costs of the 2020 Census.

The American Community Survey (ACS), which is often a political hot-potato in the annual spending bills, receives varied treatment in the House and Senate. The report accompanying the House bill continues to reflect concern by some about the "burdensome nature" of the American Community Survey (ACS), but falls short of making the survey voluntary. In contrast, the Senate report includes positive language about the ACS, reiterating support for the survey as "often the primary or only source of data available to States, localities, and Federal agencies that need adequate information on a wide range of topics, including the needs of veterans, retirees, and families with school-age children..." The report goes on to direct the Bureau to continue to identify ways to reduce the number of questions included in the ACS and address concerns about its obtrusiveness.

The Census Bureau is certainly not out of the woods yet. Additional challenges are expected should either bill make it to the floor. Given its large budget, Census is a common target for Members looking to offset

funding for increases in other parts of the bill; a number of amendments have been filed that target the Bureau for cuts, in the event an opportunity arises to introduce them.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	FY 2017 Senate
Bureau of the Census	1370.0	1633.6	1470.0	1518.3
Current Surveys and Programs	270.0	285.3	270.0	270.0
Periodic Censuses and Programs	1100.0	1348.3	1200.0	1248.3

See COSSA’s full analyses for details on FY 2017 Census funding [[House](#)] [[Senate](#)].

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Both the House and Senate bills are more generous to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) top line than the Administration’s budget request. The House number is the higher of the two bills, providing a total of \$6.9 billion in discretionary funds, a \$604.4 million increase compared to FY 2016. A significant part of the increase would be used to establish a new Infectious Disease Rapid Response Reserve Fund. The Senate bill would provide \$6.2 billion, which is \$117.3 million less than in FY 2016 and \$721.7 below the House’s proposal. Both the House and Senate bills include new funding to address the opioid epidemic.

Generally, both bills provide relatively flat funding for most of the CDC’s Centers that focus on areas relevant to the social and behavioral sciences. The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) would receive a \$4 million cut in the Senate’s bill, and level funding of \$160 million under the House.

During the markup of the House bill, Democrats proposed two amendments to lift or work around the “Dickey amendment,” the perceived ban on gun violence research at the CDC. Although both amendments failed, a repeal of the ban could conceivably become a bargaining chip during final conference negotiations.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	FY 2017 Senate
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	6270.7	5967.4	6875.1	6153.4
HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STI, and TB Prevention	1122.3	1127.3	1122.3	1112.3
Chronic Disease Prevention, Health Promotion	1177.1	1117.1	1097.8	1064.6
Health Statistics	160.4	160.4	160.4	156.0
Environmental Health	182.3	182.3	160.8	182.3
Injury Prevention and Control	236.1	268.6	261.1	264.1
Occupational Safety and Health	339.1	285.6	329.1	334.1
Global Health	427.1	442.1	556.7	432.1
Public Health Preparedness and Response	1405.0	1402.2	1485.8	1396.8

See COSSA’s full analyses for details on FY 2017 CDC funding [[House](#)] [[Senate](#)].

While neither FY 2017 bill is exactly positive for Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), when compared to where the agency was at this stage in last year’s appropriations cycle, the picture seems a bit rosier by comparison. You may recall that for FY 2016, the Senate had proposed a 30 percent cut to the agency’s funding and the House would have terminated the agency entirely. For FY 2017, the Senate bill would cut AHRQ by \$10 million, or 3 percent, while the House proposes a steeper 16 percent cut (\$53.8 million).

The cut proposed by the Senate would come from the Health Information Technology (IT) and the Health Services Research, Data, and Dissemination accounts, while the House cut would be felt by all of AHRQ’s research portfolios. Both bills preserve funding for the Medical Expenditure Panel Surveys (MEPS). The committee report accompanying the House bill also contains fairly strong language directing AHRQ to seek out and consolidate areas where its research is duplicative of other HHS activities.

Although a full-year CR appears unlikely, flat funding is probably the best-case scenario for ARHQ. Given the starting point of House and Senate negotiations, in a final conference agreement AHRQ is likely to see a fairly significant cut compared to its FY 2016 appropriation.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	FY 2017 Senate
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality	334.0	363.7	280.2	324.0
Patient Safety	74.3	76.0	64.6	74.3
Health Services Research, Data, and Dissemination	89.4	113.5	58.5	81.9
Health Information Technology	21.5	22.9	15.7	16.5
U.S. Preventive Services Task Force	11.6	11.6	7.4	11.6
Medical Expenditure Panel Surveys	66.0	69.0	65.0	68.9

See COSSA’s full analyses for details on FY 2017 NSF funding [[House](#)] [[Senate](#)].

Department of Education

The Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES) does better under the Senate’s version of the Labor-HHS bill, which would provide \$612 million versus the House bill’s recommendation of \$536 million. It is instructive to remember that the FY 2016 funding bill included only \$409 million for IES, so there is room for optimism that the final allocation for the program could be more.

For the International Education and Foreign Language Studies programs, the House bill would restore the 69 percent cut per the FY 2017 budget request and recommended by the Senate for the Overseas Programs (also known as Title VI) and fund the Domestic Programs (also known as Fulbright-Hays) at the FY 2016 funding level. The FY 2017 proposed allocation for the programs, while disappointing, represents an improvement from the steep cuts to both programs proposed in last year’s bill.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	FY 2017 Senate
Institute of Education Sciences	618.0	693.8	536.0	612.5
Research, Development, and Dissemination	195.0	209.3	154.5	190.0
Statistics (National Center for Education Statistics)	112.0	125.4	103.1	112.0
Regional Education Laboratories	54.4	54.4	54.4	54.4
Research in Special Education	54.0	54.0	49.3	54.0
Special Education Studies and Evaluations	10.8	13.0	10.8	10.8
Assessment	157.2	156.7	136.7	156.7
StateWide Data Systems	34.5	81.0	27.2	34.5
International Education and Foreign Language Studies	72.2	67.3	72.2	67.3
Domestic Programs (Title VI)	65.1	65.1	65.1	65.1
Overseas Programs (Fulbright-Hays)	7.1	2.2	7.1	2.2

See COSSA's full analyses for details on FY 2017 Department of Education funding [[House](#)] [[Senate](#)].

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Both chambers propose flat funding for the Bureau of Labor Statistics at \$609 million. The House bill would move \$9.1 million from the Bureau's Labor Force Statistics activities and redistribute it across Prices and Cost of Living, Compensation and Working Conditions, and Productivity and Technology.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	FY 2017 Senate
Bureau of Labor Statistics	609.0	640.9	609.0	609.0
Labor Force Statistics	273.0	286.3	263.9	273.0
Prices and Cost of Living	207.0	219.7	213.5	207.0
Compensation and Working Conditions	83.5	87.5	85.8	83.5
Productivity and Technology	10.5	11.0	10.8	10.5
Executive Direction and Staff Services	35.0	36.5	35.0	35.0

See COSSA's full analyses for details on FY 2017 BLS funding [[House](#)] [[Senate](#)].

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Both the House and Senate bills would keep funding for both U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) statistical agencies essentially flat. The Senate bill includes slightly more funding for the Economic Research Service (ERS) and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) compared to the House, but these increases are on the scale of 1-2 percent at most.

The House and Senate would both provide small increases to the overall funding level of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), with the Senate providing the more generous boost (nearly 3 percent above FY 2016). However, the big story is NIFA’s Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), which is point of rare agreement for the House, Senate, *and* Administration. Both bills and the President’s budget request propose a \$25 million increase in discretionary funding to the agency, which would increase it by 7.1 percent and bring it to its highest ever appropriation. It seems safe to assume that these funds would be included in any final appropriations agreement.

<i>(in millions)</i>	Enacted FY 2016	Proposed FY 2017	FY 2017 House	FY 2017 Senate
Economic Research Service	85.4	91.3	86.0	86.8
National Agricultural Statistics Service	168.4	176.6	168.4	169.6
Census of Agriculture	42.2	42.2	41.9	42.2
National Institute of Food and Agriculture	1326.5	1374.0	1341.2	1363.7
Hatch Act	243.7	243.7	243.7	243.7
Agricultural and Food Research Initiative	350.0	700.0	375.0	375.0

See COSSA’s full analyses for details on FY 2017 USDA funding [\[House\]](#) [\[Senate\]](#).

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