

Congressional Appropriations Process

CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

- “No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in consequence of appropriations made by law” Article I, Section 9 of the US Constitution
- 40% of total federal spending for a fiscal year
- Federal fiscal year : October 1-September 30

APPROPRIATIONS MEASURES

- Regular Appropriations Bill: provides funding in all appropriations for a fiscal year must be enacted by October 1.
- Continuing Resolution: If a regular appropriations bills are not enacted by October 1st a continuing resolution continues funding the federal government
- Supplemental appropriations bill : additional appropriations considered during a fiscal year.

APPROPRIATIONS CYCLE

- President submits his annual budget to Congress on or before the *first Monday of February*.
- President's budget recommends spending levels for various programs and agencies of the federal program (budget authority)
- Once the President submits his budget the federal agencies provide additional details (justifications) on the budget requests. (websites).
- In response to the President's budget, Congress adopts a budget resolution.
- The Congressional Budget Resolution should be adopted by *April 15th*.
- However, if this deadline is not met the House may consider its measures after *May 15*. The Senate can also adopt a rule waiving the requirements of having a budget resolution in place before considering appropriations bills.

- The Budget Resolution establishes the spending ceilings for the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. (302 (a) allocations)
- After House and Senate Committee receive their 302 (a) allocation they divide the allocations among its 12 subcommittees. (302 (b) allocations)
- The House and Senate 12 subcommittees have parallel jurisdiction. A House subcommittee is basically paired with its Senate counterpart.
- The House appropriations Committee usually begin reporting the 12 separate appropriations bills to the full House in **May or June**, usually completing consideration before the **August recess**.

- When the House cannot pass all the bills separately it might pass an omnibus appropriations bill.
- The Senate typically begins reporting bills in June and completing full consideration in **September**.
- During **fall and winter** the appropriations committees are involved in conference to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions of the bills.
- Once a conference report is voted on by both Chambers the bill is then send to the President and he has 10 days to sign or veto the bill. If no action is taken the bill then becomes law at the end of the 10 day period.

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

- Chairman David R. Obey (D-WI)
- Ranking Member Jerry Lewis (R-CA)

Subcommittees

- Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies
- Commerce, Justice, Science ,and Related Agencies
- Defense
- Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies
- Financial Services and General Government
- Homeland Security
- Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
- Labor, Health, and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
- Legislative Branch
- Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies
- State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs
- Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related agencies

Appropriations Request Submission

- The Appropriations Committee has established an internal project submission database.
- Only Members of Congress have access to the database.
- The database becomes available to MOCs by late January and deadline for project submission is usually mid March (March 19, 2010).
- Most offices have established a form/questionnaire they share with constituents who would like to submit a request for consideration.

- There are three types of request :

Project: a funding request for a specific non-governmental entity to carry out a specific project .

Example: Provide \$500,000 for an after school program at School District...

Program: A request to fund specific program in the bill at certain level.

Example: Provide \$500,000 for the National Cancer Institute

Language: A request to include specific bill or report language that does not direct funding to a particular entity but encourages, urges or directs some type of action by an agency.

Example: The Committee encourages the Department of Education to study the impact of the availability of student loans on increases in enrollment rates.

- It is important to submit all the information requested in order for the project/programmatic/language to be considered (project description, budget breakout, explanation of why the project is a good use of tax payer funds.)
- A request can be submitted by multiple MOCs
- The funding request must be for one fiscal year and cannot include multi-year funding
- Each Appropriations subcommittee establishes its own guidelines as to which type of projects or funding request will be considered.
- Not all federal programs are available for appropriations request (accounts).
- MOCs are required to post information on their projects request on their websites. (transparency)

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, EDUCATION AND RELATED AGENCIES

- Chairman David Obey (D-WI)
- Ranking Member Todd Tiahrt (R-KS)
- The Labor HHS Education Subcommittee accepts requests for the following agencies:
 - Department of Labor
 - Department of Health and Human Services
 - Department of Education
 - Related agencies: Institute of Museums and Library Services
- Health facilities are the only types of construction projects normally eligible for earmarked funding under the Labor-HHS-Education bill

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- Funds cannot be used for construction (or acquisition of property), renovation, or wiring of buildings.

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

- Most of the earmarked funding for elementary and secondary education are earmarked under the Fund for Improvement of Education (FIE), which authorizes most of the activities conducted by school districts.
- Examples of projects funded under FIE: instructional services, after school centers, curricula development, teacher training, acquisition of books and computers, arts education, and early childhood education.
- Focus: provide early childhood or K-12 educational service

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

- Funds for the improvement of Postsecondary Education (**FIPSE**)- A wide variety of higher education projects can be designated under this heading. The project should focus on improving access to, or the quality of, postsecondary education. Construction/renovation/wiring of academic buildings are not authorized.
- Examples of projects under FIPSE: hire and train faculty, establish and improve degree programs, improve teacher preparation programs, develop and improve curricula, upgrade technology and telecommunications, acquire science laboratory equipment, provide student support, implement university partnership with school districts, and establish research and training centers.
- Grantees are usually colleges and universities but can be other public and private nonprofit organizations.

Department of Health and Human Services

- **Health Professions Education and Workforce Development-** grants for projects to improve education and training of healthcare professionals, or to analyze health workforce trend and needs.
- **Rural Health Outreach-** Grants for projects to improve health care in rural areas. Examples: medical, dental , or mental healthcare services, health promotion and education, chronic disease management, improvement to emergency medical services.
- **Rural Health Research-** grants to support research on rural health problems and ways of improving healthcare in rural areas.
- **Telehealth and Health Information Technology-** funding for telemedicine, distance learning, or use of information technology to improve health care.
- **Office of the Secretary – General Departmental Management**
- **Office of Minority Health and Office on Women’s Health-** earmarks are done for projects aimed at reducing health disparities and improving the health status of minorities and women. Examples: health education and outreach; training for health professionals, and health services research.