

AUCD Summary of the Senate Appropriations Committee L-HHS-ED Bill for FY 2018 September 15, 2017

On September 7, the Senate Appropriations Committee completed its mark-up of the FY 2018 Labor-HHS-Education [appropriations bill](#) and voted to report out the bill by a vote of 31-1 with Sen. James Lankford (R-Okla) casting the sole "nay" vote. The House Appropriations Committee completed its work on July 19 (see [links to bill and summary](#)).

In general, the Senate bill provides more money for programs within the Departments of HHS and Education over the previous fiscal year, except for the Department of Labor:

- \$79 billion for HHS, a \$1.7 billion increase over fiscal 2017.
- \$68 billion for Education, a \$29 million increase
- \$12 billion for the Labor Department, a \$61.5 million decrease.

Below is a summary of how the bill impacts the AUCD network and other priorities of the disability community, along with a detailed table comparing the House and Senate bills with the President's budget and FY 2017.

Department Health and Human Services

Administration for Community Living (ACL)

The Senate bill, like the House Committee bill, provides level funding for most DD Act programs: University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, DD Councils, and Protection and Advocacy Systems. Additionally, the Senate bill rejects cuts to the Projects of National Significance that are proposed in the President's Budget and the House Committee proposal.

Like the House bill, the Senate proposal also rejects the President's FY 2018 proposed budget that would have combined DD Council, state Traumatic Brain Injury and Independent Living state grants funding into one block grant and cut it by \$57 million.

Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA)

We are also very pleased to report that the HRSA CARES Act programs are level-funded in both the House and Senate bills at \$47 million (see Autism and other DD line item). While, AUCD had advocated for an increase to \$52 million, level-funding is certainly better than the zero funding that was proposed in the President's FY 2018 budget.

Within the \$47 million for the HRSA CARES Act programs, both House and Senate bills provide specific report language recommending that \$29 million be dedicated to funding the LEND programs. Unfortunately, this amount would not be sufficient to fund all 52 existing LEND programs at their current levels. Last year, the Federal government ultimately provided \$31 million to ensure that no LEND programs were eliminated. AUCD will advocate to ensure that all existing programs continue at current funding levels.

AUCD will also continue to recommend an overall higher funding level for the HRSA CARES Act programs that include the LEND, DBP, and research programs for evidence-based interventions for people with ASD and other developmental disabilities.

FY 2018 Appropriations for the Departments of Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies
(in millions)

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	FY 2017 Final	President's FY18	House Committee FY18	Senate Committee FY18	House vs Senate	Senate vs FY17
Administration for Community Living						
University Centers for Excellence in DD	38.6	38.6	38.6	38.6	0.0	0.0
DD Councils	73.0	0.0	73.0	73.0	0.0	0.0
Protection & Advocacy Systems	38.7	38.7	38.7	38.7	0.0	0.0
Projects of National Significance	10.0	7.6	7.2	10.0	+2.8	0.0
Lifespan Respite Care Act	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	0.0	0.0
NIDILIRR	104.0	95.0	104.0	104.0	0.0	0.0
State Assistive Technology Programs	34.0	32.0	34.0	34.0	0.0	0.0
Family Caregiver Support Services	150.0	150.0	150.0	150.0	0.0	0.0
Voting Access	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	0.0	0.0
Health Resources and Services Administration						
Maternal & Child Health Block Grant	641.7	667.0	641.7	641.7	0.0	0.0
Autism and Other DD	47.0	0.0	47.0	47.0	0.0	0.0
LEND	28.0	28.0	28.0	28.0	0.0	0.0*
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention						
Center on Birth Defects & DD, Disability and Health	137.5	100.0	137.5	139.5	+2.0	+2.0
National Institutes of Health						
Nat Institute of Child Health and Hum. Dev.	1,379.7	1,032.0	1,305.6	1,426.0	+46.0	+46.0
EDUCATION						
Special Education (IDEA)						
Part B State and Local Grants	12,002.8	11,890.0	12,202.8	12,002.8	0.0	0.0
Preschool Grants	368.2	367.2	368.2	368.2	0.0	0.0
Part C Early Intervention	458.5	457.7	458.5	458.5	0.0	0.0
Part D National Programs						
State Personnel Development	38.6	41.5	38.6	38.6	0.0	0.0
Technical Assistance and Dissemination (includes special Olympics project UNIFY)	56.9	44.3	44.3	59.8*	+15.5	+3.0
Personnel Preparation	83.7	83.5	83.7	83.7	0.0	0.0
Parent Information Centers	27.4	27.4	27.4	27.4	0.0	0.0
Technology and Media	28.0	30.0	28.0	28.0	0.0	0.0
Institute for Education Sciences (IES)						
Research in Special Education (IES)	54.0	54.0	54.0	54.0	0.0	0.0
Special Education studies and evaluations (IES)	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.8	0.0	0.0
Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research						
Voc. Rehabilitation State Grant	3,398.5	3,452.9	3,452.9	3,452.9	0.0	+54.4
Supported Employment State Grant	27.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-27.0
Higher Education Act						
Model Transition Program for Students with ID	11.8	11.8	11.8	11.8	0.0	0.0
LABOR						
Office of Disability Employment Policy	38.2	27.2	36.8	38.2	+0.6	0.0

*HRSA used discretionary funds to prevent the loss of three existing LEND programs that amounted to \$31.3 million in FY 2017. This is the amount AUCD requested for FY 2018.

National Institutes of Health

Overall, the NIH receives a \$2 billion increase to \$36 billion in the Senate bill (a 20% increase). President Trump's Budget proposed to cut the NIH budget by about \$7 billion in fiscal 2018. Within the \$2 billion increase proposed by the House, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) would receive a \$46 million increase over the previous fiscal year. This is a significant increase over the House bill and President's Budget request. This agency funds the 14 AUCD Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Centers (IDDRCs). While there is no specific mention of the IDDRCs in the proposal, we are optimistic, given that the bill is a dramatic upward departure from the President's NICHD funding recommendation. (See highlights of the Senate priorities in the [summary](#)).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

The Senate bill, like the House, would provide \$137.56 million for the National Center on Birth Defects (NCBDDD) in FY 2018, level with the FY 2017 enacted amount. This is good news when compared to the President's Budget proposed \$35 million cut to the Center.

Education

The Senate bill includes \$12 billion for IDEA special education grants to states, about the same as the fiscal year 2017 enacted level. All other special education programs are level funded except for the Special Olympics UNIFY program, which receives a \$2.5 million increase and is folded into the technical assistance and dissemination line item. The committee report language encourages the Department of Education to use up to \$2 million to fund a demonstration program to test early screening for dyslexia for students in kindergarten.

School Choice

The President proposed moving more than \$1 billion to school choice initiatives. Democrats are opposed and they have Republican allies, especially those who represent rural areas or states. This proposal was rejected in both House and Senate bills.

Supported Employment

One big disappointment in the Senate bill is that it recommends NO funding for the Supported Employment programs, the same as the House bill. While this funding is small in amount -- \$27 million annually -- it provides the ability of vocational rehabilitation programs to provide at least some supported employment to those who need it. Here is more information about the [Supported Employment State Grants](#) and the [awards](#) listed for every state. The Committee report language provides no justification for this cut. AUCD will advocate for the restoration of this funding as the bill moves forward.

Higher Education

The Senate bill provides \$11.8 million for the Transition to Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) within the Higher Education Act. This is the same amount provided in the previous fiscal year. This allocation includes funding for the National Coordinating Center currently operated by [Think College](#).

Department of Labor (DOL)

The Senate bill provides \$38 million for the DOL Office of Employment Policy, the same as fiscal year 2017. The Office of Disability Employment Policy provides leadership, develop policy and initiatives, and award grants furthering the objective of eliminating physical and programmatic barriers to the training and employment of people with disabilities and to design and implement research and technical assistance grants and contracts to develop policy that reduces barriers to competitive, integrated employment for youth and adults with disabilities.

Next Steps

This bill is just one more step in the annual appropriations process. The next step is for the full House and Senate to pass their separate bills. House and Senate leaders have indicated they intend to package all twelve funding bills into one “omnibus” bill. The House voted 211-198 on Thursday, Sept. 14, to pass a \$1.2 trillion omnibus spending bill. The bill would appropriate \$621.5 billion for defense and \$511 billion for nondefense discretionary spending, including \$1.57 billion for President Donald Trump's border wall.

One of the challenges the bill faces is the discretionary caps imposed by the [2011 Budget Control Act](#). Several of the 12 funding bills exceed the self-imposed discretionary cap for a total of about \$72 billion. If the caps are breached, sequestration cuts will go into effect. The House bill also contains policy riders that a majority in the Senate opposes (such as elimination of funding for Planned Parenthood). For these reasons, the House bill is unlikely to pass in the Senate. If the Senate passes its own bill, differences will have to be worked out in a conference committee.

Meanwhile, the Congress recently passed a continuing resolution (CR) to keep federal government programs operating past the new fiscal year deadline (Oct. 1). The CR has a deadline of December 8. Attached to the CR was a deal to lift the debt ceiling caps to prevent a federal loan default, and a \$15 billion environmental disaster aid package.

AUCD will continue to work with House and Senate appropriations staff to advocate for the highest possible funding for programs that assist people with disabilities. AUCD is also working with the NDD Coalition to advocate for Congress to lift the discretionary caps and provide a sufficient allocation to the bill that funds the Departments of Labor, HHS, and Education.

Watch for more updates in future issues of *In Brief*.