LHHS Appropriations Subcommittees Hold Hearings, Approve Bills

### Pathway for FY2019 Appropriations

Unlike recent past years, there is some semblance of “regular” order in the FY2019 appropriations process. The House Appropriations Committee has reported out all bills except for Homeland Security, while the Senate has reported out all twelve of its bills. At press time, the House has approved six of twelve spending bills, including Defense (with $20 million for the Vision Research Program—see back page), and with no announced plan for floor action on the contentious LHHS bill before the August recess. The Senate has approved three bills, and is preparing a package of four additional bills for floor action. Senate staff have signaled an intent to queue up both the Defense and LHHS bills in late July/early August, possibly as one “minibus” bill.

With the House leaving for its summer recess in late July and the Senate potentially working through mid-August, the window for finalizing all or some portion of spending bills is closing—especially since the House has only 11 legislative days in September and the Senate 16 days until the end of the fiscal year on September 30. Anything can still happen, including a government shutdown. Stay tuned to NAEVR updates for the latest!

### House:

**Hearing:** On April 11, the House held its hearing with NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD and senior staff. Chairman Cole recognized the $3 billion FY2018 NIH increase as the second largest in NIH’s history and expressed concern about the President’s budget. Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) acknowledged that, despite the $7 billion in NIH increases over the past three fiscal years, its funding is still $5 billion below that of FY2003, when adjusted for inflation.

**Markup:** On June 15, the Subcommittee approved its LHHS bill under the flat-funded $177.2 billion spending allocation for all programs—the same as FY2018—increasing NIH funding by $1.25 billion (3.3 percent) to $38.3 billion (inclusive of Cures funding) and NEI by $9.2 million or 1.2 percent to $781.5 million, a less-than-inflationary increase. The House rejected the policy and structural changes proposed in the President’s budget. On July 11 in a marathon 13-hour session with more than 50 amendments offered, the House Appropriations Committee approved the bill. More than 20 of the amendments were related to the Trump Administration’s current Immigrant Detention policy, while several others related to contentious policy riders.

### Senate:

**Hearing:** On May 17, the Senate held its hearing with Dr. Collins and his senior team. Chairman Blunt recognized the $7 billion total in NIH increases, noting his intent of a pattern of continued NIH increases. Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA) criticized the President’s proposed budget that would fund NIH below the FY2018 level and reduce the Extramural Salary Cap for researchers.

**Markup:** On June 26, the Subcommittee approved its LHHS bill under the $179.3 billion allocation for all programs—a $2.2 billion increase over FY2018. Recognized by Chairman Blunt as the third year of a bipartisan bill that avoided policy riders and authorizing provisions, the bill increases NIH funding by $2 billion or 5.4 percent to $39.0 billion (inclusive of Cures funding) and NEI by $24.6 million or 3.2 percent to $796.9 million. “Every Institute and Center receives an increase above FY2018 to continue investments in innovative research,” said Chairman Blunt. The Senate also rejected the policy and structural changes proposed in the President’s budget. On June 28, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved the bill.

Visit the NIH/NEI funding section of NAEVR’s Web site at www.eyeresearch.org for full details.

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### LHHS Appropriations Subcommittees Hold Hearings, Approve Bills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scorecard</th>
<th>Legislative Issues</th>
<th>FY2013</th>
<th>FY2014</th>
<th>FY2015</th>
<th>FY2016</th>
<th>FY2017</th>
<th>FY2018</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NIH</td>
<td>NET of SEQUSTER**</td>
<td>-5.5%</td>
<td>+3.5%</td>
<td>+0.5%</td>
<td>+6.6%</td>
<td>+6.2%</td>
<td>+6.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEI</td>
<td>APPROP: $6815 M</td>
<td>-5.7%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>+0.3%</td>
<td>+4.6%</td>
<td>+5.3%</td>
<td>+6.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salary Cap</td>
<td>EL V ($151,700)</td>
<td>(expressed as 2017 level)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structural Changes</td>
<td>Would move ARHQ, NIOSH and NIDILRR into NIH</td>
<td>No change, but flat-funds all three agencies</td>
<td>No change, flat-funds ARHQ, modest increase for NIOSH, NIDILRR</td>
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**President**

- **NIH (comp to FY 2018)**: $35.5 B (Expressive of Cures Funding) 
- **NEI (comp to FY 2018)**: $711 M
- **Salary Cap**
  - EL V ($151,700) (expressed as 2017 level)
  - EL II ($189,600) (expressed as 2018 level)
- **Structural Changes**
  - Would move ARHQ, NIOSH and NIDILRR into NIH
  - No change, but flat-funds all three agencies
  - No change, flat-funds ARHQ, modest increase for NIOSH, NIDILRR

**House**

- **NIH**: $29.15 B 
- **NEI**: $30.07 B 
- **Salary Cap**
  - EL V ($151,700) (expressed as 2017 level)
- **Structural Changes**
  - Would move ARHQ, NIOSH and NIDILRR into NIH
  - No change, but flat-funds all three agencies

**Senate**

- **NIH**: $32.1 B 
- **NEI**: $30.3 B 
- **Salary Cap**
  - EL II ($189,600) (expressed as 2018 level)
- **Structural Changes**
  - Would move ARHQ, NIOSH and NIDILRR into NIH
  - No change, flat-funds ARHQ, modest increase for NIOSH, NIDILRR

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* NEI appropriated amount is not of $36 M in sequester cut and $3.9 M Secretary transfer.

** NEI Operational Net reflects $7.4 M transferred back to NIH Central of SOCA funding.

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AHRQ = Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
NIOSH = National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
NIDILRR = National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research