SCORCHARD LEGISLATIVE ISSUES—NIH/NEI

FY2018: Two-Year Budget Deal Facilitates FY2018 Spending Increases

On February 9, after both the Senate and House passed the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (H.R. 1892), the President signed the bill into law, ending a brief government shutdown. The agreement extended the previous CR that funded the government in FY2018 from February 8 to March 23, during which time appropriators were to draft an Omnibus spending bill (that includes the twelve annual spending bills) under the revised discretionary spending caps in the two-year budget framework within the legislation that eliminated sequestration, as well as provided emergency supplemental funding for disaster relief and suspended the debt ceiling until March 1, 2019. The deal raises the caps for defense base budget by $80 billion in FY2018 from the previous limit of $549 billion and raises the FY2018 by $68 billion from $562 billion. In comparison, the nondefense funding for FY2018 is raised $63 billion above the $516 billion cap while FY2019 funding included a $68 billion increase above the prior $529 billion cap.

As part of the agreement, Congressional leaders publicly committed to setting aside at least $1 billion of the new funding for an NIH increase in each FY2018 and 2019. NAEVR issued a statement praising the increase in discretionary spending caps, noting that the deal “acknowledges the NIH as a critical national priority as Congress turns to the forthcoming FY2018 Omnibus bill.”

Congress Passes Omnibus with Significant NIH/NEI Funding Increases

On March 22—just one day before the fifth CR that funds the government was set to expire—the House and, early the next morning, Senate approved the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, which was signed by the President later that day. The 2,200 page bill reflecting $1.3 trillion in spending increases. Other provisions similar to that in the FY2018 proposal include:

- Reducing the Extramural Salary Cap from EL II to EL V; and
- Moving the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality into NIH as a new institute called the National Institute for Research on Safety and Quality. For FY2019, the proposal would also two more DHHS agencies and their budgets into NIH—the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR).

The FY2019 Trump budget does not does not propose to reduce reimbursement for Facilities and Administrative (indirect) costs in NIH grants. Since Congress rejected the funding, House Appropriations Committee chair Nita Lowey (D-NY) said a revised budget proposal for the NIH’s Fiscal Year 2019 funding will be released in late March, and highlights areas of concern about NIH funding.

FY2019: Trump Administration Issues FY2019 Budget Proposal

On February 12, the Trump Administration released its FY2019 budget request and a budget addendum to account (in part) for new discretionary spending caps enacted as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 ($9.17 billion added to what was initially a cut). The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) “Budget in Brief” presents proposed NIH funding of $35.52 billion (inclusive of Cures and opioid funding) and NEI funding of $711 million—each well below what Congress finalized in FY2018 appropriations. Other provisions similar to that in the FY2018 proposal include:

- NEI appropriated amount is net of $36 M in sequester cut and $3.9 M Secretary transfer. Operational Net reflects $5.6 M transferred back to NIH Central of the successful completed Studies of Ocular Complications of AIDS (SOCA) funding.
- NEI Operational Net reflects $6.9 M transferred back to NIH Central of SOCA funding and Secretary transfer.
- NEI Operational Net reflects $7.4 M transferred back to NIH Central of SOCA funding.
- NEI Operational Net reflects $7.9 M transferred back to NIH Central of SOCA funding.

House Dear Colleague Letter Requests “Robust” FY2019 NEI Funding

NAEVR wishes to thank Cong. Pete Sessions (R-TX) and Cong. Scott Peters (D-CA) for authoring a bipartisan Dear Colleague letter to House Appropriations leaders calling for “robust” FY2019 NEI funding.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NIH</td>
<td>APPROP: $30.64B +0.81%</td>
<td>APPROP: $29.15B +5.5%</td>
<td>APPROP: $30.07B +3.5%</td>
<td>APPROP: $30.38B +0.5%</td>
<td>APPROP: $32.18B +6.6%</td>
<td>APPROP: $34.08B +6.2%</td>
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<td>OPERATIONAL NET: $702.1M +0.27%</td>
<td>OPERATIONAL NET: $682.1M +3.2%</td>
<td>OPERATIONAL NET: $707.1M +3.8%</td>
<td>OPERATIONAL NET: $716.8M +3%</td>
<td>OPERATIONAL NET: $731.2M +0.6%</td>
<td>OPERATIONAL NET: $37.08B</td>
<td>OPERATIONAL NET: $702.3M</td>
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* NEI appropriated amount is net of $36 M in sequester cut and $3.9 M Secretary transfer. Operational Net reflects $5.6 M transferred back to NIH Central of the successful completed Studies of Ocular Complications of AIDS (SOCA) funding.
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*** NEI Operational Net reflects $7.4 M transferred back to NIH Central of SOCA funding.

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