

FY2016 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food & Drug Administration Appropriations Bill Omnibus Agreement Summary

Highlights of the FY2016 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill:

The agreement contains \$141 billion in discretionary and mandatory funding, \$26 billion below the President's budget request and \$6.4 billion below the FY2015 enacted level. The discretionary funding portion of the bill totals \$21.75 billion, \$1.1 billion above the FY2015 enacted level. There is also an additional \$130 million for USDA projects in Presidentially-declared disaster areas. Required mandatory spending in the bill, which is outside the discretionary funding jurisdiction of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, totals \$119.1 billion.

Agricultural Research – The bill provides a total of \$2.47 billion to support agricultural research conducted by the Agricultural Research Service and land grant and non-land grant universities. This amount includes \$350 million for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, \$244 million for Hatch Act formula funding for research at state agriculture experiment stations, and \$476 million to support overall extension service activities.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) – The legislation includes \$886 million for APHIS, \$30 million above the President's budget request and \$15 million above the FY2015 enacted level. Overall funding will continue programs to control or eradicate plant and animal pests and diseases that threaten U.S. agriculture production. The increase will help support efforts to combat highly pathogenic avian influenza and citrus greening, address wildlife damage management issues, establish prevention and early animal disease response methods, provide equipment upgrades for forest product import verification, and improve pre-departure inspections of agriculture imports.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – The bill provides \$851 million, \$4.8 million above the FY2015 enacted level and \$20 million over the budget request, to help farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners conserve and protect their land. The bill rejects the President's budget proposal to reduce conservation technical assistance to landowners and producers.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) – The bill provides \$1.51 billion for FSA for various farm, conservation, and emergency loan programs that are important to the nation's farmers and ranchers. It prohibits the closure of FSA county offices, and provides resources to continue implementation of the 2014 farm bill.

Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) – The legislation includes \$1.015 billion, approximately \$4 million above the budget request, for food safety and inspection programs that work to ensure safe, healthy food for American families, while promoting the safety and productivity of the nation's \$186 billion meat and poultry industry. The bill will support more than 8,000 frontline inspection personnel for meat, poultry, and egg products at more than 6,400 facilities in the United States.

Rural Development – The bill provides \$682.7 million for salaries and expenses for Rural Development, a \$4.5 million increase above the FY2015 enacted level. USDA rural development programs are designed to help foster economic growth in rural regions by supporting basic rural infrastructure, rural business and industry loans, and rural housing.

- **Business and Industry Loans** – The legislation supports a \$946 million grant and loan level for rural business and industry programs that promote small business growth in rural areas.
- **Rural Infrastructure** – The bill includes \$1.25 billion for rural water and waste program loans, the same as the FY2015 enacted level, and \$517 million for grants and costs, an increase of \$34 million above FY2015 enacted levels. The measure provides \$6.94 billion for rural electric and telephone infrastructure loans.
- **Rural Housing Loans and Rental Assistance** – The bill provides a total of \$24 billion in loan authority for the Single Family Housing guaranteed loan program, which is equal to the FY2015 enacted level and the President’s request. It includes \$900 million, the same as the FY2015 enacted level and the President’s request, for the direct loan program that provides low-income rural families with home loan assistance. In addition, \$1.39 billion, an increase of \$301 million above current levels, is included for the Rental Assistance program, which helps low-income families and the elderly in rural communities obtain affordable rental housing.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) – The bill provides more than \$2.7 billion in discretionary funding for the FDA, \$132 million over the FY2015 enacted level. Total FDA funding, including user fee revenues, is \$4.68 billion, which is \$238 million above FY2015. The bill fully funds the budget request for food safety (\$104.5 million increase) to allow FDA to implement the Food Safety Modernization Act, which is the most sweeping food safety reform in 70 years. In addition, the bill contains provisions dealing with menu labeling and liability concerns for food manufacturers as a result of the FDA’s announcement to phase out the use of partially hydrogenated oils (PHO) in food products.

Food and Nutrition Programs – The bill provides discretionary funding, as well as mandatory funding required by law, for food and nutrition programs within the USDA. This includes funding for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Child Nutrition programs. The bill also ensures that the Dietary Guidelines for Americans are based on significant scientific agreement and are limited in scope to nutritional and dietary information.

- **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)** – The bill provides \$6.35 billion in discretionary funding for WIC, which is \$273 million below the FY2015 enacted level and the President’s request. The reduction is based on USDA estimates of declining WIC enrollments and will not prevent eligible participants from receiving benefits. To continue efforts to identify waste or abuse within the program, the bill includes \$220 million for management information systems and the

transition from paper vouchers to a more efficient electronic benefit transfer (EBT) system.

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** – The bill includes \$80.8 billion in required mandatory spending, which is outside the discretionary funding jurisdiction of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, for SNAP. Due to declining enrollments, this is \$988 million below last year’s level.
- **Child Nutrition Programs** – The bill provides for \$22.149 billion in required mandatory funding, which is outside the discretionary funding jurisdiction of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, for child nutrition programs. This is \$849.5 million above the FY2015 enacted level. This funding will provide free or reduced-price school lunches and snacks for 30.3 million children who qualify for the program.

International Programs – The legislation contains \$1.466 billion for PL 480, Title II Food for Peace grants, which support the delivery of American-grown food to foreign countries experiencing chronic hunger crises. Food for Peace is also provided an additional \$250 million for emergency food needs driven by conflict in the Middle East, as well as other urgent food needs around the world. The McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program is given a \$5 million increase for the Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement at the Foreign Agriculture Service.

Commodity Futures Trading Commission – The bill includes \$250 million for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, which oversees our nation’s futures, options, and swaps markets. This funding is equal to the FY2015 enacted level.

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