



COMMITTEE *on* APPROPRIATIONS

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SUMMARY

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH FISCAL YEAR 2015 APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Full Committee Mark: June 19, 2014

Washington, DC – The Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill provides \$4.3 billion to support oversight and transparency of federal spending and programs and the functioning of the United States Congress (Congress). Total funding is \$42 million above the fiscal year 2014 level and \$165 million below the fiscal year 2015 request. Adjusted for inflation, total funding is the same as the level enacted a decade ago in fiscal year 2005. The bill fully funds the final phase of the Capitol Dome Restoration and provides a \$20.1 million, or four percent, increase for the Government Accountability Office.

Agencies and offices funded in the bill support accountability, transparency and continuity of the legislative process by conducting critical oversight of federal spending and programs, preserving and ensuring public access to government documents and protecting people visiting and working in the Capitol complex.

Oversight & Accountability

Conducting oversight of federal spending and programs is a fundamental responsibility of Congress. The Legislative Branch bill supports the Congressional oversight process by funding nonpartisan, independent agencies that conduct audits, research and analysis of federal spending and programs.

Government Accountability Office (GAO). GAO is an independent, nonpartisan agency that functions as the audit and investigative arm of Congress. The bill provides \$525.5 million for GAO, which is \$20.1 million above the fiscal year 2014 level and \$2.9 million above GAO's fiscal year 2014 request, as adjusted for updated technical assumptions. From fiscal year 2011 to fiscal year 2013, budget pressures resulted in a loss of about 500 positions, or 15 percent, of GAO's staff, hampering the agency's ability to deliver audits and evaluations in a timely manner

to Congress and the American people. The bill enables GAO to restore an additional 50 positions in fiscal year 2015, building on the 100 positions added in fiscal year 2014.

Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS provides timely, objective, authoritative and confidential research and analysis to support Congress in drafting legislation and conducting oversight. The bill provides \$107.8 million for CRS, which is \$2.4 million above the fiscal year 2014 level, fully supporting CRS's research and analysis responsibilities.

Congressional Budget Office (CBO). CBO provides Congress with objective, nonpartisan analyses of budgetary and economic issues. Every year, CBO provides Congress dozens of reports and hundreds of cost estimates. CBO also makes much of that information publicly available to the American people. The bill fully funds CBO at \$46 million, which is \$360,000 above the fiscal year 2014 level.

Preserving and Ensuring Public Access to Government Documents

The Legislative Branch bill provides funding for the preservation of the world's largest collection of recorded works and for the production, distribution and preservation of information products for all three branches of government.

Library of Congress (LOC). LOC is the oldest federal cultural institution and largest repository of the world's recorded knowledge. LOC also houses the Copyright Office, which administers U.S. copyright law to legally document ownership of American works. According to the LOC, the work of the Copyright Office impacts a \$1 trillion segment of the U.S. economy. The LOC's Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped program supports a national reading program for eligible blind and physically handicapped residents of the United States and U.S. citizens living overseas. In addition to funding provided for CRS, which is also housed within LOC, the bill provides \$479.6 million for LOC responsibilities. This amount is \$6 million above the fiscal year 2014 level and \$5 million below the LOC's fiscal year 2015 request.

Government Publishing Office (GPO). GPO promotes transparency of federal government activities by providing open access to all three branches of government. The bill provides \$122.1 million for GPO, which is \$2.8 million above the fiscal year 2014 level and \$6.8 million below GPO's fiscal year 2015 request. Of this funding, \$8 million is provided for the GPO Revolving Fund for digital production and dissemination projects to further enable electronic availability of government documents.

The bill also includes a provision that renames GPO from the Government Printing Office to the Government Publishing Office to reflect its modernized mission, which now focuses mainly on digital composition and maintenance of online databases to support government transparency. Paper printing is now a minor part of GPO's spending and activities.

Safety of the Capitol Complex

Each year, over two million people visit the Capitol through the Capitol Visitors Center and over one million people visit the Library of Congress. The Legislative Branch bill provides funding for the safety of visitors as well for as the health and safety of the workplace for employees.

U.S. Capitol Police. The Capitol Police provide security and law enforcement for the Capitol complex and dignitary protection for Congressional leadership, ensuring the safety of staff and visitors as well as the unobstructed continuity of the legislative process. The bill provides \$344 million for the Capitol Police, which is \$5.6 million above the fiscal year 2014 level and \$11.6 million below the fiscal year 2015 request. This funding level enables the Capitol Police to continue new officer training and maintain the number of sworn officers, both of which were restored with fiscal year 2014 funding. These efforts will reduce the need for overtime pay once new officers are fully trained, saving taxpayer dollars in fiscal year 2015 and future years.

Architect of the Capitol (AOC). The AOC is responsible for the maintenance, operation and preservation of 16.5 million square feet of buildings and more than 450 acres of land throughout the Capitol complex. The bill provides \$600 million for the AOC, including funding for both Senate and House facilities. This amount is \$2 million below the fiscal year 2014 level and \$76.6 million below the fiscal year 2015 request. In addition to supporting the daily upkeep of the Capitol complex, the bill funds major projects that address fire and safety needs and ensure proper preservation and longevity of the historic buildings in the Capitol complex. The bill also fully funds the fourth and final phase of a major project to restore and preserve the Capitol Dome.

Reforms & Savings

Contractor Bonuses. The bill prohibits agencies from awarding bonuses to contractors who are behind schedule or over budget.

Prohibit Federal Spending on Portraits During FY15. The bill prohibits spending on official portraits.

Reform Senate Stationary Procurement. The bill eliminates an outdated requirement that the Secretary of the Senate purchase newspaper advertisements to solicit bids for procuring stationary products and allows the Secretary to utilize the basic procurement process used by executive branch agencies. This provision will decrease federal spending by eliminating purchases of newspaper ads and also potentially by lowering the cost of Senate stationary products due to increased competition.

Allow Office of Compliance to Email Employee Notices. The Office of Compliance (OOC) is currently required to mail notices to employees related to their employment rights. The bill will save \$10,000 in postage costs per year by allowing OOC to email these notices.

Improving Oversight. The bill authorizes GAO to establish a Center for Audit Excellence to provide high-quality training and technical assistance to other audit organizations, domestically and internationally. The Center will operate on a fee basis and not require additional funding.

Member Pay Freeze. The bill prohibits Members of Congress from receiving a cost-of-living increase in FY15.

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