

FFIS WEEKLY UPDATE – DECEMBER 8, 2009

Weekly News:

APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

Remaining Spending Bills Could be Consolidated into Single Package

House and Senate appropriation conferees are expected to meet this week to approve a conference report that includes six of the seven remaining FY 2010 appropriations bills: Commerce/Justice, Financial Services, Labor/Health and Human Services/Education, Military Construction, Foreign Operations, and Transportation/Housing and Urban Development. The defense spending bill would be considered separately and used as a vehicle for other legislative priorities. A continuing resolution is currently funding programs included in these spending bills at last year's levels through December 18, 2009.

EDUCATION

ED Proposes Priorities and Requirements for EMHE Grant Program

On December 4, 2009, the Department of Education (ED) published a notice of proposed priorities and requirements for the Emergency Management for Higher Education (EMHE) grant program. ED will accept comments until January 2, 2010. Click here for the *Federal Register* notice:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-28994.pdf>

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) ACF Releases Guidance on Funding Termination for CSBG Grantees

On December 4, 2009, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) released Information Memorandum No. 116 to provide guidance to states on corrective action, termination or reduction of funding for eligible entities under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). The guidance is available at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/csbg/guidance/im116.html>

2) ACF Conducts LIHEAP Survey

On November 27, 2009, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) released Information Memorandum Transmittal No. LIHEAP-AT-2010-2 regarding a survey on the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). ACF is collecting information from grantees to include in its LIHEAP Report to Congress for FY 2009. States must complete the survey by December 15, 2009.

3) OCSE Releases Letter on International Adoptions

On December 1, 2009, the Office of Child Support Enforcement released a Dear Colleague Letter regarding certified copies of support orders. To view the letter, go to:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pol/DCL/2009/dcl-09-30.htm>

HOUSING

Housing Trust Fund Allocation Formula Proposed

On December 2, 2009, the Department of Housing and Urban Development released a proposed rule in the *Federal Register* outlining the formula for distributing housing trust funds — established in the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 — to states. Public comments are due by February 2, 2010. To view the proposed allocation formula, see: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-28984.pdf>

LABOR

1) YouthBuild Clarification

On December 4, 2009, the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) provided clarifying guidance on the definition of "school dropout" as it pertains to YouthBuild program participants under the Workforce Investment Act. The clarification can be found at:

<http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/TEGL/TEGL11-09.pdf>

2) WIRED Report Released

On December 2, 2009, the Department of Labor released an evaluation of the \$15 million in competitive grants awarded to 13 regions in early 2006. The grantees, referred to as the Generation I WIRED regions, were facing challenges from global competition and changing economic conditions. The grants were intended to bring together regional industry, education, philanthropic, workforce, and economic development organizations in order to work towards economic stability and workforce growth. The evaluation can be found at:

http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_resultDetails&pub_id=2427&mp=y

3) TAA Reports Released

On December 1, 2009, Employment & Training Administration (ETA) announced the release and availability of four reports on the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program: (1) Initial Implementation of the Trade Act of 2002, (2) Assessment, Case Management, and Post-Training Assistance for TAA Participants, (3) Linkages between TAA, One-Stop Career Center Partners, and Economic Development Agencies, and (3) Rapid Response and TAA. The reports may be accessed at: http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=2828

4) DOL Rolls Out Regulatory Agenda

On December 7, 2009, the Department of Labor's (DOL) semi-annual regulatory agenda was made available online at www.dol.gov/asp/regs/agenda.htm and at www.regulations.gov. The regulatory agenda is a listing of all the regulations the DOL expects to have under active consideration for promulgation, proposal, or review during the coming year. A series of interactive webchats with the assistant secretaries of the department's regulatory agencies began on December 7, 2009, with questions from stakeholders and interested parties having been solicited in advance. The Employment & Training Administration, which oversees all Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser and Unemployment Insurance programs, has a webchat scheduled for Tuesday, December 8 from 12:00-1:00 pm. For the full schedule and additional information, go to: <http://www.dol.gov/regulations>

ARRA:

GENERAL

OMB Releases Guidance on Improving Compliance in ARRA Recipient Reporting

On November 30, 2009, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released a memorandum (M-10-05) on improving reporting compliance under ARRA, focusing on those recipients that failed to meet the reporting deadlines. To view the guidance, see: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/assets/memoranda_2010/m10-05.pdf

COMMERCE

NTIA Seeking Public Comment on Information Collection

On December 4, 2009, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) posted a notice in the *Federal Register* seeking public comment on continuing and proposed information collection requirements for the State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program, authorized under ARRA. To view the notice, see:

http://www.ntia.doc.gov/frnotices/2009/FR_MappingProgram_PRANotice_091203.pdf

EDUCATION

Applications Available for \$3.5 Billion in Title I School Improvement Grants

On December 3, 2009, the Department of Education (ED) announced the final requirements for \$3.5 billion in Title I School Improvement grants included under ARRA and the regular FY 2009 appropriations process. Applications are due by Feb. 8, 2010. For additional details, including a link to the application, click here:

<http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2009/12/12032009a.html>

ENERGY

1) DOE and USDA Announce \$600 Million Investment in Advanced Biorefinery Projects

On December 4, 2009, the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that 19 biorefinery projects — in 15 states — will receive up to \$564 million in ARRA funding, while another will receive a loan guarantee for up to \$55 million. Click here for more details, including a complete list of projects:

<http://www.energy.gov/news2009/8352.htm>

2) DOE Announces \$3 Billion Investment for Carbon Capture and Sequestration

On December 4, 2009, DOE announced the selection of three new projects with a value of \$3.2 billion to accelerate the development of advanced coal technologies with carbon capture and storage at commercial-scale. An investment of up to \$979 million, including funds from ARRA, will be leveraged by more than \$2.2 billion in private capital cost share as part of the third round of the department's Clean Coal Power Initiative (CCPI). For more details, click here: <http://www.energy.gov/news2009/8356.htm>

3) DOE Provides Guidance to WAP Grantees for Gaining Access to Remaining Obligated Funds

On December 3, 2009, DOE issued a Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) Notice describing the requirements for grantees to receive the remaining 50% of their obligated recovery WAP funds. DOE will provide this access based on projects demonstrated progress, as defined in this guidance. Click here to access this guidance: http://apps1.eere.energy.gov/weatherization/pdfs/wap_program_notice_10-05.pdf

ENVIRONMENT

EPA Updates SRF ARRA Reporting Summary Project Lists

On December 7, 2009, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released updated ARRA reporting summaries for their Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds.

To access the Clean Water SRF ARRA Reporting Summary Project List, click here:

http://www.epa.gov/owm/cwfinance/cwsrf/cwsrf_arra.pdf

To access the Drinking Water SRF ARRA Reporting Summary Project List, click here:

http://www.epa.gov/owm/cwfinance/cwsrf/dwsrf_arra.pdf

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) Updated Health Center Quarterly Reporting Manual

On December 1, 2009, the Health Resources and Services Administration updated its Health Center Quarterly Reporting Manual. To view the manual, go to: <http://bphc.hrsa.gov/recovery/hcqr/>

2) HHS Announces Plans for Beacon Community Program

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced plans to make available \$235 million from health information technology funds included in ARRA to support an innovative Beacon Community Program. The program will provide grants to build and strengthen health IT infrastructure and health information exchange capabilities within 15 communities. Awards will be made to 15 non-profit or government entities representing geographic health care communities. For more information on the program, including the funding announcement, go to:

http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=1422&parentname=CommunityPage&parentid=102&mode=2&in_hi_userid=11113&cached=true

LABOR

1) Guidance on Amendments Affecting UI Modernization 'Compelling Family Reasons' Provided

On November 30, 2009, the Department of Labor released Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) 14-09, Change 3, advising states on an amendment in the Worker, Homeownership, and Business Assistance Act of 2009 (P.L. 11-92) that allows state flexibility in expanding compelling family reasons for separation from employment to include escape from sexual assault, in qualifying for the two-thirds unemployment insurance modernization incentive payments. To read the UIPL, go to:

http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=2827

2) COBRA Information Updated

The Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration updated its "FAQ" page regarding eligibility for the COBRA premium reduction assistance as approved in ARRA: <http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/faqs/faq-cobra-arra.html>

TRANSPORTATION

FTA Announces ARRA Section 1512 Training Webinars

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will conduct training webinars on December 14, 15, and 18, 2009 to provide guidance and technical assistance to facilitate compliance with ARRA Section 1512 reporting requirements for the quarter ending December 31, 2009. More information on these webinars are available at:

http://www.fta.dot.gov/index_9440_10870.html