

FFIS WEEKLY UPDATE – DECEMBER 15, 2009

Weekly News:

APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

1) House and Senate Pass FY 2010 Omnibus Spending Package

Both the House and Senate have passed the FY 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act (H.R. 3288), which includes funding for 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 president is expected to sign the bill. The defense appropriations bill (H.R. 3326) is not included in the package, as it may be used as the vehicle for other legislative priorities, including raising the debt limit and addressing unemployment aid. The current stop-gap government funding bill will expire on December 18, 2009.

2) Updated FFIS Program Summary Table

FFIS has updated summary table of Major Program Funding (the Jim Martin Table) to reflect passage of the FY 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act. Go to: <http://inside.ffis.org//ff/BA2010December09complete.pdf>

COMMERCE

NTIA Provides Opinion on National Broadband Plan

On December 11, 2009, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) filed a letter addressing the public safety, homeland security, and cybersecurity elements of the National Broadband Plan being drafted by the FCC. NTIA also published a white paper on executive branch views on these issues.

To view the letter, go to: <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/filings/2009/National%20Broadband%20Plan%20Letter.pdf>

To view the white paper, see:

<http://www.ntia.doc.gov/filings/2009/NTIA%20Broadband%20Plan%20on%20Cybersecurity.pdf>

EDUCATION

ED Invites Applications for Indian Education Formula Grants to LEAs

On December 9, 2009, the Department of Education (ED) published a notice in the *Federal Register* inviting applications for the Indian Education Formula Grants to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) program for FY 2010. These grants are intended to support LEAs in their efforts to reform and improve elementary and secondary school programs that serve Indian students. Part I of the application is due January 4, 2010. Click the following link to view to notice: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-29358.pdf>

ENERGY

1) DOE Proposes New Energy Conservation Standards for Residential Water Heaters, Direct Heating Equipment, and Pool Heaters

On December 14, 2009, the Department of Energy (DOE) published a notice of proposed rulemaking and public meeting in the *Federal Register*. DOE is proposing amended energy conservation standards for residential water heaters, direct heating equipment, and pool heaters. DOE will hold a public meeting on January 7, 2010, in Washington, DC, to receive comment on these proposed standards. Click here for more details:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-28774.pdf>

2) Senators Unveil Climate Change Legislative Strategy

On December 11, 2009, three senators sent a letter to President Obama detailing a legislative strategy for addressing climate change. A part of the plan would send money back to states that permit drilling off their shores for the purposes of addressing climate change impacts. The strategy embraces a cap and trade to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and establishes a short-term target of a 17% reduction and a long-term target of an 80% reduction by 2050. The senators' letter is available at: http://kerry.senate.gov/newsroom/pdf/Climate_Framework.pdf

ENVIRONMENT

Legislation Would Authorize Grants to Encourage E-Waste Recycling

On December 10, 2009, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved a bill (S. 1397) to authorize federal grants to programs aimed at improving the collection of electronics waste (like discarded

computers, mobile phones, and televisions) and boosting state and national recycling programs. The legislation would authorize \$18 million for FY 2011, \$20 million for FY 2012, and \$22 million for FY 2013. The House passed its version of the bill (H.R. 1580) in April 2009.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) Medicare Expands List of Covered Preventive Services to Include HIV Screening Tests

On December 8, 2009, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced its final decision to cover Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection screening for Medicare beneficiaries who are at increased risk for the infection, including women who are pregnant and Medicare beneficiaries of any age who voluntarily request the service. The decision is effective immediately. For more information, see:

<http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2009pres/12/20091208a.html>

2) CMS Actuary Releases Cost Estimate of Senate Health Care Reform Bill

On December 10, 2009, the chief actuary for CMS released a report of the estimated financial effects of Senate health care reform proposal, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, introduced on November 18, 2009. According to the analysis, the legislation would increase total national health care expenditures by \$234 billion, or 0.7%, over the 10-year budget window 2010-2019, compared to current law. The net total increase in federal expenditures for the coverage provisions would be \$366 billion and includes a combination of \$930 billion in costs for the coverage expansion, \$493 billion in savings from the Medicare program, \$36 billion in savings from Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (including a number of cost increases and decreases such as prescription drug changes and reductions in Medicaid DSH expenditures but excluding eligibility expansion), \$2 billion in savings from cost containment provisions, \$38 billion in savings from a new voluntary long-term care benefit program, and \$5 billion in costs for health insurance reforms. Of the \$930 billion in federal expenditures for the coverage provisions, the Office of the Actuary attributes \$364 billion to provisions expanding Medicaid to all adults under 133% of the federal poverty level and all uninsured newborns. For the report, go to:

http://inside.ffis.org/ff/CMS_Chief_Actuary_Senate_Health_Care_Reform_1.pdf

Also, on December 10, 2009, the chief actuary released a report on the estimated effects of the Senate health care reform proposal on the date of exhaustion for the Medicare Hospital Insurance (Part A) trust fund, on Part B beneficiary premiums, and on the average level of Part A and Part B beneficiary coinsurance. The report finds that the legislation would postpone the exhaustion of trust fund assets by nine years to 2026. In addition, Part B premiums and average coinsurance payments would be reduced, after an initial increase. For the report, go to:

http://inside.ffis.org/ff/OACT_Memorandum_HR_3590_12-10-09.pdf

HOMELAND SECURITY

DHS Announces Grant Guidance for More Than \$2.7 Billion in FY 2010 Grant Programs

On December 8, 2009, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the release of FY 2010 grant application guidance kits for 13 DHS grant programs totaling more than \$2.7 billion in funds for state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and private sector entities. For more on this announcement:

http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/releases/pr_1260283102665.shtm

HOUSING

1) HUD Seeking Comments on PHA Financing Authority

On December 11, 2009, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced in the *Federal Register* that it is streamlining the process by which public housing agencies (PHAs) may mortgage their public housing real estate assets to secure financing to undertake development and rehabilitation of low-income housing. PHAs are currently allowed to undergo such a process on a case-by-case basis. Public comments are requested by January 31, 2009. To view the notice, go to: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-29532.pdf>

2) HUD Publishing Data on Conditions of Public Housing

On December 9, 2009, HUD announced that it will begin publishing online a full historical view of detailed information on the physical condition of public housing and multifamily units across the U.S. and will offer citizens the opportunity to contribute to HUD's long-term strategic plan through a new interactive suggestion box. For more information, see:

http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2009/HUDNo.09-227

LABOR

Interim Report Available on Community-Based Jobs Training Grants

On December 9, 2009, the Employment and Training Administration at the Department of Labor published Training and Employment Notice 20-09 announcing the release and availability of an interim report on the characteristics of the community-based job training grants. To view the report, go to: <http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm>

NUTRITION

1) FY 2010 Expected Surplus Foods for Donation to States Announced

On December 14, 2009, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) posted a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing the surplus and purchased foods that the department expects to make available for donation to states for use in providing nutrition assistance under The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) in FY 2010. The effective date of the notice is October 1, 2009. For more information, see:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-29687.pdf>

2) Survey Results Available on State Online SNAP Applications

On December 1, 2009, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) published results to its June 2009 survey regarding states online applications for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The survey requested information about the systems functions, state application processing procedures following the online application, and system usage and state agency contacts. Survey results can be viewed at:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/applicant_recipients/state_systems.pdf

TRANSPORTATION

1) FTA Publishes Notice on Discretionary Program Grants (Section 5309) for Urban Circulator Systems

On December 8, 2009, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced the availability of Section 5309 funds for exempt discretionary grants for Urban Circulator Systems, which support the Department of Transportation's Livability Initiative. Grants up to \$25 million will be available for eligible state and local governments for new fixed guideway capital projects for circulator systems. Applications for this grant are due February 8, 2010. For more information, see the *Federal Register* notice: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-29245.pdf>

2) FTA Publishes Notice on Section 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities Livability Program Grant

On December 8, 2009, FTA announced the availability of FTA Bus and Bus Facilities Livability Initiative Program funds. Funds will be available for eligible state and local transit providers to finance capital projects to construct bus facilities and to replace and rehabilitate buses and equipment, with a 20% local matching requirement. Applications for this grant are due February 8, 2010. For more information, see the *Federal Register* notice:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-29242.pdf>

3) Senate Passes Three-Month FAA Extension

On December 10, 2009, the Senate passed a bill (H.R. 4217) to extend the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) authority to collect ticket and fuel taxes to fund the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, and to continue agency programs for three months. The extension also provides contract authority for the Airport Improvement Program for grants to airports for facility improvements. The FAA has been operating on a series of extensions since September 30, 2007, when the last long-term authorization expired. The current extension expires on December 30, 2010. The extension bill now goes to the president for signature.

ARRA:

GENERAL

December 10, 2009: GAO Releases Report on State/Localities Use of ARRA Funds to Ensure Accountability

The General Accounting Office (GAO) has released its fourth report that addresses selected states' and localities' uses of ARRA funds and the approaches taken by the selected states to ensure accountability of ARRA funds. The report updates the status of agencies' efforts to implement prior recommendations but does not include new recommendations. To view the report, see: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10231.pdf>

AGRICULTURE

December 10, 2009: USDA Announces Funds Availability for Technical Assistance and Training Program

The Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Rural Utilities Service published a Notice of Funds Availability under ARRA for the Technical Assistance and Training Grant Program. Applications must be submitted by January 11, 2010. Follow this link for more details: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-29466.pdf>

EDUCATION

December 15, 2009: ED Announces ARRA Reporting Technical Assistance Webinar

On December 16, 2009, from 4:30 to 6:00 pm EST, the Department of Education (ED) will conduct a technical assistance webinar to provide education officials with information regarding ARRA recipient reporting requirements for the next reporting period, which begins on January 1, 2010. To register, click on the following link: <http://www.fsaregistration.ed.gov/profile/form/index.cfm?PKformID=0x4596305d49>

ENERGY

December 10, 2009: DOE Webinar: Introduction to Performance Contracting

The Department of Energy (DOE) Technical Assistance Project (TAP) for state and local officials is offering a web seminar on how state and local governments can use funding from ARRA to establish performance contracts for energy efficiency. The presentation will take place on December 16, 2009, from 3:00 to 4:15 pm EST. Register here for the webinar:

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) December 8, 2009: Federal Register Notice on ARRA FMAPs

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) published a notice in the *Federal Register* that finalizes the methodology for calculating the higher federal matching funds under ARRA and provides the final calculation of the adjusted Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) rates for the third and fourth quarters of FY 2009. The methodology for calculating the FMAPs is the same as the one proposed in the August 4, 2009 notice (see *FFIS Issue Brief 09-28* for more information). To view the *Federal Register* notice, go to:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-29248.pdf>

2) December 9, 2009: Administration Releases Almost \$600 Million in ARRA Funds for Community Health Centers

The administration announced the release of nearly \$600 million in ARRA funding to support capital improvement projects at community health centers (CHC) and to help CHCs adopt health information technology systems. Of the total, \$509 million is for the Facility Investment Program and \$88 million is for Health Center Controlled Networks. For a list of awards, go to:

http://www.hhs.gov/recovery/hrsa/recovery_health_cntr_awards.html

3) December 11, 2009: Updated ARRA Medicaid Funding Table

The Department of Health and Human Services posted updated state-by-state Medicaid grant funding information, as approved in Section 5001 of ARRA:

<http://transparency.cit.nih.gov/RecoveryGrants/grant.cfm?grant=Reinvestment>

HOUSING

December 5, 2009: Detailed Information on TCAP Obligations and Expenditures Available

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provided a spreadsheet with information on Tax Credit Assistance Program (TCAP) allocations, committed, and disbursed funds to date. The spreadsheet can be viewed at at this link, <http://inside.ffis.org/ff/TCAPActivitiesasof120509.pdf>, and can also be downloaded from the left hand column of this HUD webpage: <http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/RECOVERY/programs/TAX>

TRANSPORTATION

1) December 2009: Section 1512 Webinars Rescheduled

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is expected to release new guidance during this week that could change the way that ARRA recipients report jobs during the upcoming reporting period. As a result, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is postponing its 1512 webinars scheduled for early this week. FTA is planning to hold webinars on December 18, 2009, and December 21, 2009. For information on the new dates and times see:

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

2) December 2009: FTA Issues Reminder of March 5, 2010 Obligation Deadline

The March 5, 2010, deadline for obligating 100% of ARRA formula funds is approaching. All new grants and grant amendment applications for ARRA formula funds must be submitted to FTA by December 27, 2009, in order to ensure that FTA will be able to process the applications in time for the deadline. For more information see:

http://www.fta.dot.gov/index_9440_10900.html