



FFIS Weekly Update – March 30, 2010

Weekly News:

Legislative Update

1) March 25, 2010: UI and COBRA Extensions Stalled in Senate

Unemployment Insurance (UI) emergency unemployment compensation (EUC) and fully federally funded Extended Benefits are scheduled to expire on April 5, 2010. COBRA premium reduction subsidies authorized under ARRA are scheduled to expire on March 31, 2010. Temporary extensions of these measures were included in H.R. 4851, the Continuing Extension Act of 2010, which passed the House but did not come up for a full vote in the Senate prior to the Easter recess. The House and Senate will likely consider a retroactive extension of these measures when they return from recess on April 12, 2010.

2) March 24, 2010: House Extends TANF Emergency Funds and Small Business Provisions

The House passed the Small Business and Infrastructure Jobs Tax Act (H.R. 4849). The \$16.8 billion package would extend the Build America Bonds program for three years until June 2013 to fund state and local infrastructure projects and provide tax credits to small businesses. Included in the measure was a one-year extension of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program Emergency Contingency Fund (TANF ECF), currently set to expire on September 30, 2010. The TANF ECF was developed in ARRA and reimburses states 80% of their increased expenditures related to basic cash assistance, short term non-recurring benefits and subsidized employment. The extension would continue the fund for four more fiscal quarters at \$2.5 billion for FY 2011, and cap each state's funding at 30% of their TANF block grant allotment. The bill will now go to the Senate for consideration.

3) March 24, 2010: House Passes Emergency Supplemental, Provides Summer Jobs and SBA Funds

The House passed an emergency supplemental spending package, the Disaster Relief and Summer Jobs Act (H.R. 4899). The bulk of the bill provides \$5.1 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which has approximately \$2 billion in projects on hold due to lack of funds. The funds will also go toward fixing infrastructure damaged by winter storms and devotes funds for storm preparation. The package includes \$600 million for the Department of Labor (DOL) to fund youth summer employment initiatives through FY 2010. The bill now moves to the Senate.

ENVIRONMENT

March 22, 2010: EPA Announces New Strategy on Drinking Water

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a new strategy for clean, safe drinking water. The strategy includes four principals: address contaminants as a group rather than one at a time to promote cost-effective compliance; foster development of new drinking water treatment technologies; use the authority of multiple statutes to help protect drinking water; and partner with states to share more complete data from monitoring at public water systems. For greater detail on the new drinking water strategy, go to:

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/sdwa/dwstrategy.html>

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) March 24, 2010: ACF Revises Child Welfare Policy Manual

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) deleted a question from its Child Welfare Policy Manual related to eligibility for the Guardianship Assistance Program. To view the deletion, see:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/j2ee/programs/cb/laws_policies/laws/cwpm/updates_delete.jsp

2) ACF Releases a Report to Assist Nonprofit Organizations

ACF recently released a report to help non-profit organizations stay afloat during difficult times. To view the report, see: http://ncfy.acf.hhs.gov/publications/pdf/sustainability_toolkit.pdf

3) March 17, 2010: ACF Releases Guidance on LIHEAP Performance Measures

ACF released an action transmittal for Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) state grantees on implementing outcome performance measures. The guidance provides a draft proposal on performance measures and seeks participation from states on the implementation process. To view the action transmittal, see:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/liheap/guidance/action_transmittals/at10-04.html

4) March 25, 2010: ACF Provides Information on LIHEAP Application for FY 2011

ACF published a memorandum that includes information on the application for LIHEAP funding for FY 2011. For more information, see:

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/liheap/guidance/information_memoranda/im10-05.html

HOUSING

March 25, 2010: HUD Releases Three Studies on Costs of Homelessness

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) today released three studies on the cost of first-time homelessness; life after transitional housing for homeless families; and strategies for improving access to mainstream benefits programs. The studies looked at the costs of the services in different states and communities across the country. To access the studies, go to:

http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2010/HUD_No.10-055

LABOR

1) March 29, 2010: Report on Limited English Proficiency Project Grants Released

The Department of Labor (DOL) announced the release of a report evaluating the outcomes of the Limited English Proficiency and Hispanic Worker Initiative project grants launched four years ago. To view the report, go to:

http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_resultDetails&pub_id=2438&mp=y

2) March 24, 2010: Funds Announced for Reintegration of Ex-Offenders

DOL announced the award of \$12 million in additional funding to 24 programs that are currently operating prisoner re-entry programs through the Reintegration of Ex-Offenders initiative. To view the awards, go to:

<http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/eta20100377.htm>

NUTRITION

1) March 25, 2010: USDA Announces Efforts to Increase SNAP Participation

The Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that it will award grants of up to \$5 million to improve access to and increase participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). USDA is interested in funding projects that apply a process improvement process (PIP) to the state agency's application, certification, and recertification procedures to make them more efficient and effective. The deadline to submit grant proposal applications is June 23, 2010. Grant applications can be obtained at www.grants.gov, on the Food and Nutrition Service website at www.fns.usda.gov/snap, or by calling the grant officer, Lisa Johnson, 703-305-2848.

2) March 25, 2010: FNS Releases Memo on SNAP Simplified Reporting Provisions

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) released a memorandum describing the new SNAP simplified reporting provisions in accordance with the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (FSRIA) final rule, which was published in the *Federal Register* on January 29, 2010. To view the memo, go to: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/Memo/2010/032510.pdf>

3) March 24, 2010: Senate Agriculture Committee Approves Child Nutrition Act Reauthorization

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry unanimously approved the "Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010," to reauthorize the Child Nutrition Act and invest \$4.5 billion in new funding over the next 10 years. The committee approved a number of amendments during the mark-up including a manager's amendment that would require USDA to conduct a comprehensive study on the effectiveness of local school wellness policies and report its findings to Congress; require Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to report new information about the school nutrition environment to the secretary and states; modify the farm-to-school program and provide a funding increase; and improve the process USDA and states use to recall commodity foods and other foods served as part of the school meal program. Additionally, the committee adopted an amendment that would authorize such sums for new State Childhood Hunger Challenge Grants to be competitively awarded to governors to carry out comprehensive and innovative strategies to end childhood hunger.

4) March 19, 2010: CACFP Invites States to Apply for Child Care Health and Wellness Grants

FNS has announced that state agencies that administer the child care component of Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are eligible to apply for Child Care Health and Wellness Grants. The purpose of the grants is to support projects that increase the health and nutrition of children in child care settings. State agencies are required to use at least 50% of grant funds to award sub-grants to local institutions. The deadline for state agencies to submit applications is June 18, 2010. Letters of intent to submit applications are due by April 19, 2010. For more information, see: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/Grants.htm>

ARRA:

AGRICULTURE

March 23, 2010: USDA Announces Rural Broadband Projects

USDA announced the selection of broadband infrastructure projects in eight states. Funding for the projects is being provided through ARRA. For a list of the award recipients, click here: http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_1RD?printable=true&contentidonly=true&contentid=2010/03/0143.xml

COMMERCE

March 25, 2010: More BTOP Grants Announced

The Department of Commerce announced more than \$63 million in grants under the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP). The grants will go to more than 12 states for the deployment of broadband infrastructure, public computer centers, and the adoption of broadband service. For a list of awards, see: http://www.commerce.gov/NewsRoom/PressReleases_FactSheets/PROD01_009047

EDUCATION

March 29, 2010: Race to the Top Winners Announced

The Department of Education (ED) announced the winners of phase 1 of Race to the Top, authorized under ARRA. Tennessee and Delaware were named the winners, set to receive \$500 million and \$100 million respectively in order to implement their comprehensive school reform plans. ED still has \$3.4 billion to award in phase 2. For additional details, click here: <http://www2.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2010/03/03292010.html>

ENVIRONMENT

March 2010: EPA Updated their FAQs on ARRA Reporting

EPA recently updated their frequently asked questions document on ARRA recipient reporting. To view the new FAQs document, click here: http://www.epa.gov/recovery/pdfs/recip_faq.pdf

NUTRITION

1) March 26, 2010: FNS Releases Updated Guidance on ARRA Reporting Requirements for TEFAP

FNS released an update and summary of reporting guidance for ARRA recipients of The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), in light of the most recent Office of Budget and Management (OMB) guidance on ARRA reporting requirements released on March 22, 2010. For the TEFAP guidance, go to:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/tefap/TEFAP-ARRA_RevGuidance1512Sub0310.pdf

2) March 24, 2010: Agencies Send Notice to States on Use of TANF Emergency Funds for Summer Food Programs

HHS and USDA notified states that ARRA Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Contingency Funds can be used to assist families through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

For more information and guidance on the TANF Emergency Contingency Fund, visit:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/>

For more information about the SFSP, visit: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/>

TRANSPORTATION

March 26, 2010: FHWA Releases Quick Reference Card for ARRA Reporting

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released a quick reference card that provides ARRA recipients with a clear definition of how to report the OMB defined "Key 1512 Award Information." To view this information, see:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery/1512card.htm>