



FFIS WEEKLY UPDATE – March 9, 2010

GENERAL

Update of Congressional Action on Program Extensions

On March 2, 2010, the president signed into law the Temporary Extension Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-144). The law extends through March 31, 2010, a number of provisions that expired on February 28, 2010, including unemployment insurance benefits, a COBRA subsidy for health insurance for unemployed workers, and an extension of highway and transit programs. On March 4, 2010, the House passed an amended version of the Senate-passed jobs package (H.R. 2847). The House amendments would direct some transportation funding to minority-owned businesses and address deficit concerns. Otherwise, the bill would provide payroll tax relief for businesses that hire new workers, make permanent the Build America Bonds program to fund state and local infrastructure projects, and include an extension of highway programs through December 31, 2010, with an infusion of nearly \$20 billion for the Highway Trust Fund. The bill returns to the Senate for consideration, after the Senate finishes work on the tax extenders bill (H.R. 4213). The tax extenders bill would provide longer-term extensions for unemployment insurance benefits and COBRA subsidies for jobless workers (through December 31, 2010), and a two-quarter extension of increased Medicaid matching rates to states put in place by ARRA. As part of the bill, the Senate will consider an extension of the TANF Emergency Fund.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) ACF Releases Revised Policy on Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP)

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) recently posted to its website revised guidance on GAP as authorized by the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-351). The guidance allows states to move existing state guardianship cases into the new program and claim federal reimbursement. The program instruction (ACF-CB-PI-10-01) is available at: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/laws_policies/policy/pi/2010/pi1001.htm

2) ACF Releases FY 2010 CCDF Allocations; Program Instruction

ACF recently posted to its website the FY 2010 allocations for the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). To view this information, see: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/law/allocations/current/state2010/est_fin_all_2010.htm

ACF also posted a program instruction on instructions for the ACF-800 Annual Aggregate Report: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ccb/law/guidance/current/pi2010-01/pi2010-01.htm>

3) ACF Posts LIHEAP Guidance

Last week, ACF posted two Information Memoranda on the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to its website. The guidance provides information on the three-year LIHEAP compliance review monitoring schedule and the use of tax credits when determining eligibility. To view the guidance, go to: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/liheap/guidance/information_memoranda/indexim.html

4) CMS Releases Guidance on Federal Matching Rates for CHIP

On March 2, 2010, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) released a state health official letter on the matching rate a state may claim for certain Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) expenditures, as included in the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2009 (CHIPRA). The letter can be found at: [http://inside.ffis.org//ff/CHIPRA_SHO_FMAP_3-2-10\(3\).pdf](http://inside.ffis.org//ff/CHIPRA_SHO_FMAP_3-2-10(3).pdf)

LABOR

1) DOL Releases State Allotments for WOTC

On March 5, 2010, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) at the Department of Labor (DOL) posted a Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL 16-09) to state workforce agencies (SWAs) responsible for management of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) Program with funding allotments for the period October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010. To view the state allotments, go to: http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=2867

2) ETA Posts Guidance on Short-Term Unemployment Compensation Extensions

On March 5, 2010, ETA released an Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL 04-10) regarding the temporary extension of Emergency Unemployment Compensation 2008 (EUC 08), Federal Additional Compensation, and Extended Benefits as included in the Temporary Extension Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-144). The guidance can be viewed at: http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?DOCN=2836

3) DOL Launches New Website for Grant Applicants

On March 4, 2010, DOL launched an online suite of resources for grant applicants, which introduces potential grantees to ETA grants and provides examples to guide people through the grant application process. To view the new site, go to: http://www.workforce3one.org/page/grants_toolkit

NUTRITION

Seven States Receive Administrative Review and Training (ART) Grants

On March 2, 2010, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced \$6.5 million in ART grants to seven state agencies for training and technology projects to improve the quality of school meals and the administration of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). To view the awards, go to: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cga/PressReleases/2010/0094.htm>

TRANSPORTATION

FTA Announces Federal Financial Report Webinar

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recently announced two webinars (March 10, 2010 from 3:00 pm-4:30 pm EST and March 16, 2010 from 11:00 am-12:30 pm EST) that aim to help grantees with the implementation of the new Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Federal Financial Report (FFR) for the reporting period ending March 31, 2010. For more information see: http://www.fta.dot.gov/news/calendar/news_events_11308.html

ARRA:

GENERAL

March 2010: GAO Releases ARRA Report on Accountability

The General Accounting Office (GAO) released a report on the use of ARRA funds by states and localities to strengthen accountability. The report is available at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10437.pdf>

AGRICULTURE

March 4, 2010: USDA Announces Rural Broadband Projects in 18 States and Territories

USDA announced the selection of 22 broadband infrastructure projects, funded through ARRA, in

rural areas of 18 states and territories. For additional details, click here:

http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/s.7_0_A/7_0_1RD?printable=true&contentidonly=true&contentid=2010/03/0097.xml

COMMERCE

1) March 2, 2010: NTIA Extends Application Closing Deadline for Comprehensive Community Infrastructure (CCI) Projects

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced that the closing deadline for the submission of applications for CCI projects under the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) is extended until March 26, 2010. There are no changes to the application filing window for Public Computer Center (PCC) and Sustainable Broadband Adoption (SBA) projects. For more information, see:

http://www.ntia.doc.gov/frnotices/2010/FR_BTOP_deadlineextension_03032010.pdf

2) March 2, 2010: 23 States Awarded More than \$160 Million in Broadband Grants

The Department of Commerce announced the award of ARRA BTOP grants for California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, North Carolina, New Mexico, Ohio, Oregon, Puerto Rico, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, and West Virginia. To view the awards, go to: http://www.ntia.doc.gov/press/2010/BTOPgrants_03022010.html

EDUCATION

1) March 8, 2010: ED Releases Application for the \$650 Million Investing in Innovation Fund

The Department of Education (ED) announced the final priorities and the grant application for the \$650 million Investing in Innovation Fund (i3). For more information, visit this link:

<http://www2.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2010/03/03082010.html>

2) March 4, 2010: Finalists Announced in Phase 1 of Race to the Top Competition

ED announced that 15 states and the District of Columbia will advance as finalists for phase 1 of the Race to the Top competition. Phase 1 winners will be announced in April. Applications for phase 2 are due June 1, 2010, with finalists announced in August and winners in September. The only states prohibited from applying in phase 2 are those that receive awards in phase 1. Click here for more details: <http://www2.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2010/03/03042010.html>

ENERGY

1) March 4, 2010: GAO Issues Report on ARRA Program Implementation at DOE

GAO recently released a report on the major factors affecting the Department of Energy's (DOE) implementation of ARRA programs. GAO addresses numerous issues facing both federal and state officials in administering these programs. Click here to read the report:

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d10497t.pdf>

2) March 1, 2010: DOE Moves to Monthly Reporting for Weatherization Assistance Program

Effective March 1, 2010, DOE will require monthly reporting from weatherization grantees receiving funding through ARRA. Click the following link to view guidance for these new reporting requirements: <http://207.188.207.153/doclib/openfile.asp?id=1486>

ENVIRONMENT

March 1, 2010: EPA Updates Project Lists for Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs)

Follow these links for ARRA Reporting Summary Project Lists.

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

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

INTERIOR

1) March 8, 2010: NPS Funds Additional Projects

The National Park Service (NPS) announced that favorable pricing on its ARRA projects has resulted in savings of more 20%, totaling approximately \$129 million. NPS will use these savings to fund an additional 30 projects across the country. For additional information, including a current list of NPS ARRA projects, follow this link: <http://recovery.doi.gov/press/2010/03/129-million-saved-by-national-park-service-will-fund-additional-30-projects-nationwide/>

2) March 1, 2010: Fish and Wildlife Service Updates ARRA Project List

The Fish and Wildlife Service recently updated its list of projects funded under ARRA. To access the full list, click here:

http://recovery.doi.gov/press/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/fws_arra-project-list_march_2010.pdf

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

1) March 5, 2010: Letter to States on TANF Emergency Funds

HHS and USDA issued a letter urging states to consider using Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) ARRA Emergency Contingency Funds for Summer Food Service Programs. The letter describes how these funds might be used to help more venues participate during the summer, when it has historically been difficult to reach those children who get subsidized breakfast and lunch at school during the school year. To see the letter, click here: <http://inside.ffis.org/ff/DHHS-USDA.pdf>

2) March 3, 2010: Revised Form for TANF Emergency Funds Requests Released

ACF released program instructions (TANF-ACF-PI-2010-01) announcing a revised OFA-100 to be used by states in requesting TANF Emergency Funds under ARRA. Effective immediately, a jurisdiction applying for emergency funds must use the revised form OFA-100. Jurisdictions should not resubmit any applications it made prior to the issuance of this guidance, but must use the revised form OFA-100 to update and revise data it has already submitted as part of an earlier application. For more information, see:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/policy/pi-ofa/2010/pi201001/pi201001.htm>

3) March 5, 2010: CMS Issues Guidance on Revised Clawback Calculations

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a letter to state Medicaid directors formally notifying states of a change in policy that relies on the increased Medicaid matching rates under ARRA when calculating the phased down state contribution for the Medicare Part D program—commonly known as the "clawback." The letter provides additional information about the policy, an explanation of how the new calculations will be applied, and how each state will be notified of the adjustments. To see the letter, click here:

<http://inside.ffis.org/ff/3-05-10ARRAClawbackFinal.pdf>

4) ONC Issues Proposed Rule for HIT Certification

On March 2, 2010, the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) for Health Information Technology (HIT) released the last of three rules required by the HITECH Act provisions included in ARRA. The latest rule explains the processes for organizations to apply for temporary or permanent authorization to become certification bodies. The proposed rule is available at:

http://healthit.hhs.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_11673_910783_0_0_18/ONC_NPRM_FINAL.pdf

LABOR

1) COBRA Web Page Updated

DOL's Employee Benefits Security Administration has updated the COBRA web page to reflect the Temporary Extension Act of 2010. The updated information can be found at:

<http://www.dol.gov/ebsa/cobra.html>

2) March 5, 2010: Final Guidance Issued on WOTC Target Group Requirements

ETA issued final guidance, under Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL 3-09, Change 2), to state workforce agencies (SWAs) and employers for the implementation of the ARRA 2009 Work

Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) target groups requirements. To view the guidance, go to:
http://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=2865

TRANSPORTATION

March 8, 2010: FTA Recovery Act Update Webinar

FTA will hold a webinar on March 9, 2010, from 4:00 pm-5:00 pm EST to update ARRA recipients on accomplishments of the past year as well as to discuss new guidance and oversight plans. The webinar will also include a presentation from the Department of Justice on fraud. For more information see: http://www.fta.dot.gov/index_9440_11337.html