Federal Lawmakers Propose Robust Health Spending Plans

That means more money for the CDC and HIV programs. But the future of these funding bills remains unclear.

May 8, 2019 By AIDS United

While there is bipartisan desire to avoid a government shutdown by funding the federal government for fiscal year 2020, beginning October 1st of this year, lawmakers have to agree on the basics of federal yearly spending before doing so – and then will still need to convince President Trump to sign a bill with higher spending plans into law.

In light of sequestration imposed by the Budget Control Act of 2011, total discretionary spending will be slashed by more than 10 percent barring Congressional action to #RaiseTheCaps. Democratic and Republican leaders in both the House and Senate seem to want a budget deal to avoid both sequestration cuts & any prolonged continuing resolutions. However, as seen from the failure of the Investing for the People Act (HR 2021), House Democrats will have to decide internally whether or not they will require parity in the budget caps between defense and all other funding before any deal will be achieved.

While Senate Appropriations Chair Richard Shelby (R-AL) has announced that the committee will not begin bill markups until such a resolution is reached, his House counterparts have already begun theirs under the assumption that the caps will be raised. On Tuesday, the House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (L-HHS) Subcommittee released their markup. Public health spending, including for federal HIV care & prevention programs, received increases across the board over FY19 levels:

- CDC HIV, Hepatitis, STD, TB Program: $1.335b (+203m)
- Ryan White Program: $2.435b (+116m)
- NIH Office of AIDS Research: $3.2b (+155m)
- Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative Fund: $60m (+6.1m)
- Rider prohibiting federal spending on syringes was removed

The full House Appropriations Committee will consider the LHHS spending bill on Wednesday, May

8.

Further, it has been reported that the President will be hesitant to sign any resolution that increases spending (and thus, the national deficit) ahead of 2020 elections. Lawmakers have less than 150 days to set FY 2020 levels before the end of the current fiscal year.

AIDS United supports efforts to #RaiseTheCaps and achieve parity between defense and non-defense federal spending and also applauds the House L-HHS Subcommittee for their commitment to creating a spending plan that strengthens America’s public health systems. The Policy Team will continue to work with partners in Congress to advocate for funding and policies that will bring us closer to ending the HIV epidemic in the United States. Check back to the Policy Update for the latest in federal HIV policy and FY 2020 budget & appropriations negotiations.

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