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BACKGROUND: FISCAL YEAR 2018 FUNDING GUIDANCE

The Senate Committee on Appropriations is providing its 12 subcommittees with funding guidance for the drafting of FY2018 appropriations bills. In the absence of a budget resolution or a “deeming” resolution for FY2018, the Committee has not been assigned a formal top-line spending allocation (often referred to as a “302(a)” allocation). In the absence of such allocation, the Committee has opted to begin its work using FY2017 enacted top-line funding levels.

Congress and the President must reach agreement if FY2018 budget caps currently in law for national defense and non-defense programs are to be changed from “post-sequester” levels. A budget deal remains the most likely path toward enactment of appropriations bills that responsibly meet the nation’s national security commitments and domestic needs.

The subcommittee funding guidance adopted by the Committee totals \$1.07 trillion in base funding (\$551.0 billion for defense and \$518.5 billion for non-defense) and \$103.7 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO), the same levels enacted for FY2017. The estimated statutory caps for FY2018 pursuant to the Balanced Budget Act of 2011 total \$1.065 trillion in base funding.

Several significant shifts in funding are reflected across subcommittees, some of which reflect policy decisions important to this Congress and the administration. For example, the guidance recommends an approximately \$4 billion increase over FY2017 for veterans’ health care and other programs. Other funding changes are the result of updated receipts estimates, shifts in available rescissions of funds, and reductions in changes in mandatory programs in some subcommittees.

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The following is a review of the funding guidance for each Senate Appropriations Committee subcommittee:

Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies

- \$20.525 billion, \$352 million below the FY2017 enacted level.
- These savings are achieved by accounting for completed construction projects, reduced rental assistance needs for rural low income multi-family housing tenants, and costs associated with one-time appropriations.

Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

- \$53.366 billion, \$3.189 billion below the FY2017 enacted level.
- The decrease is made possible by maintaining disbursements of the Crime Victims Fund at the three year average.

Defense

- \$513.1 billion in base funding and \$82.1 billion for OCO.
- This reflects amounts provided for the Defense subcommittee in FY 2017, less FY 2018 increases allocated for defense programs in other subcommittees (military construction and nuclear weapons modernization).

Energy and Water Development

- \$38.4 billion, \$629 million above the FY2017 enacted level.
- This funding will be used to invest in advanced science and research, and the nation's water infrastructure requirements.
- \$605 million of the increase is necessary to continue the modernization of the nation's nuclear weapons stockpile.

Financial Services and General Government

- \$20.876 billion, \$639 million below the FY2017 enacted level.
- Certain amounts for construction provided in FY2017 are not required in FY2018. In addition, funding for alterations and repairs of GSA facilities will be streamlined generating additional savings.

Homeland Security

- \$44.050 billion, \$1.642 billion above the FY2017 enacted level.
- This funding will be used for border security and recapitalization of the U.S. Coast Guard.

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Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

- \$32.030 billion, \$250 million below the FY2017 enacted level.
- Funding required for Indian Health Service Contract Support Costs has decreased from FY2017. Additionally, one-time costs related to Flint, Michigan result in savings.

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

- \$164.066 billion, \$3.04 billion above the FY2017 enacted level.
- This increase is necessary to offset a significant reduction in available savings from mandatory programs.

Legislative Branch

- \$4.490 billion, \$50 million above the FY2017 enacted level.
- Additional resources are necessary to ensure the U.S. Capitol Police have resources to protect the public, Members of Congress, and staff.

Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies

- \$88.211 billion, \$5.835 billion above the FY2017 enacted level.
- A significant portion the increase will be used to cover \$3.114 billion advance appropriations for Veterans health care costs provided in FY2017.
- Additionally, important construction activities at U.S. military facilities at home and abroad accounted for \$1.8 billion of the increase.

State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

- \$30.410 billion, \$6.176 billion below the FY2017 enacted level.
- OCO funding is maintained at the FY2017 level. It will be used appropriately to fund important activities in the Middle East, South Asia, North Africa, and other areas of unrest.

Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies

- \$60.058 billion, \$2.4 billion above the FY2017 enacted level.
- This increase accounts for FY2017 rescissions unavailable in FY2018, and additional funding necessary to renew existing rental assistance contracts at HUD. Without this funding low income families would lose their housing.

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