



# COMMITTEE *on* APPROPRIATIONS

## CHAIRMAN PATRICK LEAHY

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### SUMMARY

#### SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES FISCAL YEAR 2023 APPROPRIATIONS BILL

*Chairman's Mark: July 28, 2022*

**Washington, D.C.** – The fiscal year 2023 appropriations bill for the Department of Agriculture and Food and Drug Administration provides discretionary funding of \$27.072 billion, an increase of \$2.3 billion or 9 percent over fiscal year 2022.

**U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.),** Chair of the Agriculture Subcommittee said:

*“Our bipartisan funding legislation respects the hard work of farmers and ranchers and bolsters economic growth for our Made in America agriculture economy. We worked across party lines to increase our investments in rural development and conservation that support the long-term health of our working lands. This legislation increases funding for child nutrition programs, rural housing, utilities, and businesses. We found common ground on the need to increase investments for the Food Safety Inspection Service and the Food and Drug Administration. I am particularly proud that our work together will make investments that support the Dairy Business Innovation Program, the Institute for Rural Partnership, and research priorities for our dairy, specialty crop, and organic farmers. This bipartisan legislation delivers results that will help our agriculture economy expand markets for high quality American products and fuel the local economies in rural communities across the country.”*

**U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.),** Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said:

*“As a Vermonter, I know that agriculture is at the heart of our communities. This bill supports our farmers, ensures that our food and drugs are safe, and provides billions of dollars to combat an epidemic of food insecurity here and abroad. The bill provides significant new resources to support rural communities by building housing, reducing the cost of rent, helping families buy their first home, and extending high speed internet to small, rural communities across the country.”*

**Key Points & Highlights** – The programs and activities funded in the agriculture bill are important to every American. This bill makes investments in rural communities and provides the

necessary resources so our most vulnerable populations can access safe, affordable, and healthy food options. During these uncertain times, the bill provides a much needed safety net for our nation's farmers and ranchers. The Food and Drug Administration ensures the safety of our food and drug supply, and this bill provides the agency much needed resources to continue to address emerging and known challenges. Finally, the bill provides an historic level of funding for international food aid programs.

**Agriculture Research:** Total funding for agriculture research is \$3.9 billion, or a \$248 million increase over fiscal year 2022.

- Agricultural Research Service (ARS) – The bill provides \$1.9 billion for ARS, a \$161 million increase over fiscal year 2022. The bill provides much needed increases for climate research and research to benefit all sectors of the agriculture economy. The bill also provides much needed funding to upgrade existing ARS facilities, many of which are outdated and hazardous.
- National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) – NIFA is funded at \$1.7 billion, an increase of \$100 million over fiscal year 2022. It also includes a \$10 million increase for the popular Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) and a \$5 million increase for the Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education program. The bill doubles the funding available for women and minorities in STEM fields, and it increases funding for both the Federally Recognized Tribes Extension program and for Children, Youth, and Families at Risk.

#### **Farm Production and Conservation:**

- Farm Service Agency (FSA) – FSA is funded at \$1.221 billion, an increase of \$48.2 million over fiscal year 2022. This includes \$4 million for the Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program for Geographically Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, which reimburses geographically disadvantaged producers with a portion of the transportation cost for agricultural commodities or inputs. The bill also maintains funding of \$7 million for the State Mediation Grant program, and increases Direct Farm Ownership loans by \$300 million to keep pace with increased demand.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – The bill provides \$1.132 billion for NRCS, an increase of \$126.8 million. This includes \$926.6 million for conservation operations, including an increase of \$20 million for increased conservation technical assistance staffing. Watershed Flood and Prevention Operations receives an increase of \$50 million over fiscal year 2022 for a total of \$175 million, while the Watershed Rehabilitation program receives a \$9 million increase for a total of \$10 million.

**Rural Development:** The programs funded within Rural Development serve as a lifeline for many communities in rural America through housing, community facilities, infrastructure and electric programs, and small business programs. Total funding for the Rural Development mission area is \$4.4 billion, or a \$401 million increase over fiscal year 2022.

- Rural Housing Service (RHS) – The Rural Housing Service gives families and individuals the opportunity to purchase their own homes and provides financial assistance to the elderly, disabled, and low income families. Single Family Homeownership Loans are increased by \$250 million, totaling over \$30 billion in loans. These loans will help more than 171,000 rural Americans purchase their own home, many for the first time. Rental Assistance is increased by \$38 million for total funding of \$1.49 billion. This program is as important as ever as affordable housing options continue to shrink, and the increase provided in this bill will ensure 245,000 low-income families are not rent burdened. Additionally, the bill includes a long overdue policy change for the Rental Assistance program by including language that would allow rental assistance contracts to be maintained in properties even if the USDA loan is paid off. This is estimated to preserve 15,000 units of affordable housing in the next two years, and over 130,000 units in the next ten years.
- Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBCS) – The bill provides \$141 million for RBCS, a \$14.6 million increase over fiscal year 2022. This is complemented by a \$250 million increase in lending authority for the Guaranteed Business and Industry Loan program, which has seen a jump in demand in recent years. RBCS programs will support more than 3,500 rural businesses.
- Rural Utilities Service (RUS) – Many communities in rural America lack basic infrastructure such as water and sewer systems and access to clean drinking water. The bill provides \$715 million for water and wastewater disposal grants, an increase of \$62 million as compared to fiscal year 2022. This funding is expected to fund 600 grants to ensure small, rural communities have reliable drinking water systems, and sanitary and solid waste disposal. The bill also provides \$40 million in lending authority for the first time for water and wastewater direct loans with a fixed one percent interest rate to target distressed communities that could not otherwise participate in RUS’ water loan program. The bill also maintains important energy programs to help rural America transition to renewable energy, providing \$6.5 billion to help rural electric cooperatives improve and transition their power plants to a clean energy source and \$15 million to help farmers and small businesses purchase renewable energy systems, such as solar arrays and anaerobic digesters.
- ReConnect –The ReConnect broadband program is funded at \$400 million. The program will expand access to high-speed broadband to remote unserved and under-served rural areas. This is especially important as our country continues to navigate the pandemic and when many families continue to rely on broadband for work and school. To date, RUS has funded more than 50 projects, providing critical internet access to 70,000 rural households.

**Nutrition:** Overall discretionary funding for nutrition programs is \$6.8 billion, an increase of \$56 million over fiscal year 2022 in addition to mandatory funding for nutrition programs. The bill includes funding to meet anticipated participation in the Special Supplemental Nutrition

Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Child Nutrition programs.

- WIC – The bill includes \$6 billion for the WIC program. This level will serve approximately 6 million low income women, infants, and children. The bill continues to include an increase for purchasing more fresh fruits and vegetables. This will allow for children to receive an extra \$24 per month in assistance and women to receive an extra \$45 to \$47 per month.
- SNAP – Total funding for SNAP is \$111.1 billion, a \$29 billion decrease. While a decrease from last year, this level of funding will fully fund anticipated participation of 43.5 million beneficiaries per month.
- Child Nutrition Programs – Child Nutrition Programs are funded at \$28.6 billion. The School Breakfast program is funded at \$6 billion and will provide an increase of 153 million meals per day across the country. The School Lunch Program is funded at \$15 billion and will provide 5.5 million lunches per day. Other funding includes \$35 million for school meal equipment grants; \$50 million for Summer EBT; and \$15 million for the Farm to School program.
- Commodity Assistance Program – The Commodity Supplemental Food program provides additional monthly meals for low-income seniors and is funded at \$338 million. The Emergency Food Assistance Program is funded at \$100 million, the fully authorized level.

**Foreign Food Aid:** The world is seeing record global hunger. In 2021 up to 828 million people went hungry and that number continues to rise. In response, the bill provides \$1.8 billion, a \$60 million increase and a record level of funding, for the Food for Peace program and \$250 million, a \$13 million increase, for the McGovern-Dole program.

**Food and Drug Administration (FDA):** Total discretionary funding for FDA \$3.545 billion, an increase of \$229 million over fiscal year 2022. Included in these increases are \$43.5 million for food safety; \$49.8 million for medical product safety; and \$85 million for cross cutting activities. The bill also includes \$5 million to implement the ALS ACT. In response to the current infant formula crisis, the bill also includes additional resources for maternal and infant formula health.

**Agriculture Quarantine Inspection Program (AQI):** The bill includes \$250 million for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) AQI. This funding supports a joint effort between APHIS and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to prevent the introduction of invasive species and diseases to the country. Because AQI is still experiencing reductions in fees collected due to the pandemic, this additional funding is necessary to ensure all international air and cargo vessels continue to be inspected.

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