

SUMMARY
AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION,
AND RELATED AGENCIES
FISCAL YEAR 2019 APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Washington, D.C. – The fiscal year 2019 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies agreement provides a total discretionary funding level of \$23.042 billion, which is \$32 million more than the fiscal year 2018 level and \$193 million below the Senate enacted bill. The agreement does not contain poison pill riders.

Key Points & Highlights – The agriculture bill funds the activities of the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration. The funding in this agreement impacts the lives of every American, every day. Important resources are included to assist farmers and ranchers, provide food safety nets both at home and abroad, and make rural America more prosperous. The Food and Drug Administration is provided ample resources to ensure the safety of the food and drug supply. The agreement also rejects the draconian cuts proposed in the President’s budget.

Key USDA programs are described below:

Agricultural Research

Total funding for agriculture research is \$3.417 billion, which is \$388 million more than fiscal year 2018.

- **Agricultural Research Service (ARS)**: Total funding for ARS, USDA’s premiere in house research agency, is \$1.684 billion, of which \$1.303 billion is for salaries and expenses and \$381 million is for buildings and facilities. The bill does not allow for the termination of research programs or the closure of laboratories.
- **National Institute of Food and Agriculture**: Total funding for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture is \$1.471 billion, which is \$64 million more than fiscal year 2018. Included in this funding is \$415 million for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, \$315 million for Smith-Lever, \$37 million for the Sustainable Agriculture and Research Education Program, \$8 million for the Food Safety Outreach Program, and \$2 million for a pilot program to address the high suicide rates among farmers.

Agricultural Marketing Service

- The Agricultural Marketing Service includes \$1.5 million for marketing activities relating to the dairy industry and a \$2 million increase for the National Organic Program. At a time when the organics industry is growing at an extremely rapid pace and imports of organic foods are increasing significantly, this funding will assist with oversight and enforcement to ensure the organic seal keeps pace with consumer expectations.

Farm Service Agency

- Farm Operating and Farm Ownership loans are essential for farmers and ranchers to be successful. Total funding for farm loans is sufficient to meet expected demand.
- Within the Farm Service Agency, \$20 million is provided for the hiring of new employees to fill vacancies at county offices as well the hiring of new loan officers.

Rural Development

Funding and program levels for Rural Development are all generally maintained at fiscal year 2018 levels.

- Housing Programs: This agreement rejects the President's proposal to eliminate single family and multi-family housing direct loans. These programs offer homeownership opportunities and affordable rental housing for very low and low income rural households. The agreement provides \$1 billion in single family housing direct loans and \$40 million in multi-family housing direct loans. Rural housing needs, however, continue to significantly outweigh the assistance provided in this bill. Rental Assistance (rent subsidies for low and very low income rural households), is funded at \$1.331 billion. This amount is sufficient to fund all expiring fiscal year 2018 contracts.
- Water and Waste Disposal Programs: The agreement rejects the President's proposal to eliminate grant programs that enable remote rural communities to obtain clean water and sanitary waste disposal systems. Water and Waste Disposal grants are funded at \$400 million.
- Rural Business Programs: The agreement rejects the President's proposal to eliminate loan and grant programs that promote rural business development and income growth. Over \$1 billion in rural business development loans and grants are provided.
- Community Facilities Direct Loans: Community Facilities loans and grants are provided to assist small rural communities with equipment, construction and repair of essential community facilities, such as health and safety services, hospitals, libraries, child and elder care facilities, etc. The direct community facilities loan level remains at \$2.8 billion. These loans are available at very low interest rates to rural communities.
- Broadband Pilot: As a result of the Bipartisan Budget Agreement's infrastructure initiative, \$550 million is provided for the recently announced ReConnect Program. Without access to high-speed internet services, rural producers and businesses are crippled in their ability to compete, and their communities are being left further and further behind. Broadband access is critical to try to level the playing field. This funding will create – and maintain – good jobs in rural America.

Nutrition

The nutrition programs funded in this agreement are an important safety net for some of the most vulnerable Americans.

- Child Nutrition Programs: Total funding for Child Nutrition Programs is \$23.140 billion. Included in this funding is \$30 million for school equipment grants and \$28 million for Summer EBT.
- Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC): The WIC programs plays an important role in ensuring healthy pregnancies and the healthy growth of children. Sufficient funding is provided to meet expected participation. The funding level also provides an increase of \$5 million for grants to help remotely connect breastfeeding mothers with lactation consultants and registered dieticians.
- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): The agreement provides \$79.6 million for TEFAP storage and distribution.

International Food Aid

The agreement rejects the President's budget proposal to eliminate important international food aid programs. America has a long standing tradition of providing urgent food aid to those in need worldwide, which increases security at home. There are many humanitarian crises currently unfolding around the world and these important programs will save lives.

- PL 480 Title II: The agreement provides \$1.716 billion for PL 480 Title II.
- McGovern-Dole International Food for Education Program: The McGovern-Dole program is funded at \$210 million. Included in this funding is \$15 million for local and regional procurement. This program, which provides food to children in school in developing countries, is often the only reason those children, especially girls, keep attending class.

Food and Drug Administration

The agreement includes \$3.068 billion for the Food and Drug Administration. Within this amount is \$210 million for medical product safety and \$13.8 million for food safety activities.

The FDA has a significant responsibility to consider the public health impact of opioid misuse, abuse, diversion and overdose death. Building on funding provided last year, the agreement includes an additional \$47 million for regulatory science, enforcement, and innovation activities to address the ongoing opioid crises.

Poison Pill Riders

Controversial poison pill riders were not included in the agreement. Tobacco riders included in the House bill were not agreed to. Finally, the agreement continues the prohibition on horse slaughter.

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