



COMMITTEE *on* APPROPRIATIONS

CHAIRWOMAN BARBARA A. MIKULSKI

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Contact: Vince Morris w/Appropriations: (202) 224-1010

Pryor Press Office: (202) 224-2353

SUMMARY

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES FISCAL YEAR 2015 APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Washington, DC - The bill provides total funding of \$20.575 billion for Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for fiscal year 2015. The bill also includes \$100 million in disaster relief spending. Discretionary funding is \$90 million below the fiscal year 2014 enacted level but \$228 million above the budget request.

Senator Mark Pryor, Chairman of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, said:

“By making smart investments in agriculture, we’re helping secure America’s economic future. I was proud to work with Ranking Member Blunt as well as other members of the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee to craft this common-sense, bipartisan bill. It includes funding for agricultural research, rural development, and our farmers and producers to help strengthen our agricultural sector, grow the economy, and create jobs here at home.”

Bill Summary

The Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Bill funds critical programs that affect the lives of every American. The bill invests in essential programs that directly impact public health and safety. Through nutrition programs, such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the bill helps assist the young and most vulnerable populations. Increased funding for the Food and Drug Administration will ensure our food and drug supply remains the safest and most reliable in the world.

The bill makes substantial investments in improving job opportunities and the quality of life in rural America. Almost \$25 billion in single family housing loans are made available, providing homeownership opportunities for over 170,000 rural households. Over \$2.2 billion is provided for essential community facilities, including schools, hospitals, health clinics, day and elder care facilities, libraries, etc.

The bill provides level funding for critical programs such as PL 480 Title II, which will help feed millions of people around the world.

Highlights of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Bill

Agriculture Research

- The bill provides \$1.139 billion for the Agricultural Research Service, which is \$17 million above fiscal year 2014 and makes critical investments in agricultural research across the country.
- The bill provides \$1.292 billion for National Institute of Food and Agriculture, which is \$15 million above fiscal year 2014. This amount includes \$325 million for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, \$244 million for Hatch Act and \$300 million for Smith-Lever funding.

Nutrition

- The bill provides \$6.623 billion for WIC, which is \$93 million below fiscal year 2014 and fully funds anticipated participation.
- The bill provides \$25 million for school meal equipment grants. These equipment purchases are long-term investments that help schools serve healthier meals, improve food safety, expand access to nutrition programs and improve energy efficiency.

Rural Development

- The bill provides \$1.094 billion for rental assistance, which is \$16 million below fiscal year 2014 but renews all expiring rental assistance agreements.
- The bill maintains \$1.7 billion in water and waste loans and grants, which restores almost \$150 million in grants from the President's request.

Food and Drug Administration

- The bill provides \$2.588 billion for the Food and Drug Administration, which is \$36 million above fiscal year 2014.
- It includes all of the funding changes requested in the budget, including an increase of \$23 million for implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act.
- FDA regulates products worth 20 cents of every dollar spent by American consumers, and these funds will ensure our drugs and food are safe.

Food Aid

- The bill provides \$1.466 billion for PL 480 Title II, which is the same amount provided in fiscal year 2014.
- The bill provides \$185 million for the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education Grants. This funding will help more than 4 million children and mothers gain access to improved nutrition around the world.

Farm Service Agency

- The bill provides \$1.183 billion for the Farm Service Agency Salaries and Expenses. The bill also provides \$3.5 billion for farm ownership loans and \$2.645 billion for farm operating loans. The levels are expected to fully fund the demand for these programs.

Food Safety and Inspection Service

- The bill provides \$1.023 billion for the Food Safety and Inspection Service, which is \$12 million above fiscal year 2014.
- This includes full funding for federal, state and international inspection services.

Disaster Funding

- The bill provides \$85 million in disaster relief spending for the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. An additional \$25 million is provided out of the subcommittee allocation. These funds will help many states across the country respond to natural disasters.
- The bill also provides \$15 million in disaster relief spending for the Emergency Forestry Restoration Program. These funds will help land owners across the country restore forests and forest resources damaged by natural disasters.
- The bill provides \$11.7 million for the Emergency Conservation Program. These funds are provided out of the subcommittee allocation and will help producers rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters.

Reforms

Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General (OIG)

- The bill includes \$1.5 million for the OIG of HHS to increase oversight of the programs and operations at the FDA.

Rental Assistance

- The bill prohibits renewals in less than 12 months, which saves \$15 million and forces project managers to better administer their resources.

Coordinated Environmental Reviews in Indian Country

- The bill directs the Secretary to work with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), who is leading the initiative, to design a coordinated environmental review process for tribal housing and related infrastructure development.

Agriculture Buildings and Facilities and Rental Payments

- The bill will decentralize the payments from the central rent account thereby holding each agency accountable for their physical space and associated security costs.
- This decentralization will require each agency to improve space utilization, encourage use of modern housing practices and recognize flexibilities provided by the use of the internet, cloud computing, flexi-place and other forms of alternative workplace scheduling.

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