White House Proposes Cuts to Current-Year Spending

SHIPS Targeted this Time

March 28, 2017

As a way to pay for supplemental funding for specific priorities, such as building a border wall and boosting defense spending, President Trump proposes to cut $18 billion from non-defense discretionary (NDD) funding in this current fiscal year, FY 2017. Details about those proposed cuts were made public earlier today.

Several programs that were targeted for deep cuts or total elimination in the President’s FY 2018 budget (the first part of which was released March 16) would also be on the chopping block in this latest proposal from the Administration. The State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPS) are also targeted in this proposal, with a cut that would virtually eliminate the entire program in the current fiscal year.

On the Trump Administration’s chopping block for FY 2017:

State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPS): Eliminate $49 million from this $52 million program.

OAA Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP): Total elimination.

Senior Corps: All three programs (Senior Companion, RSVP and Foster Grandparents) would suffer cuts of 60-80 percent.

Community Services Block Grant: Strike $306 million of $715 million provided in FY 2017.

Community Development Block Grant: Roughly a 50 percent cut.
What Happens Next?

Congress has yet to finalize FY 2017 spending, despite the fact that it is now six months into the fiscal year, which began on October 1, 2016. The current spending measure keeping government funding flowing—the continuing resolution (CR)—expires on April 28. The Trump Administration asked House and Senate appropriators to make these changes to the final spending measure for FY 2017, or a separate bill shortly thereafter.

The short-term good news is that, so far, there appears to be little appetite for these cuts on Capitol Hill for FY 2017: appropriators want to pass their final bills (or a year-long CR) and move on to their budget and appropriations work for FY 2018! Republican Senate appropriations are already signaling that the new supplemental request will have to wait until they finish up FY 2017.

This means that we have some time to educate Congress about the value of these programs and queue up our other appropriations priorities for FY 2018. Because the longer-term threat of these or other proposed cuts—either in the President’s next round of budget proposals expected mid-May or in what Congress begins to craft—remains grave.

To respond to that threat, n4a will launch our annual grassroots appropriations campaign later this week, so stay tuned for helpful resources and ways you can take action to help fight drastic cuts to vital aging services programs!

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This Legislative Update is an n4a membership benefit. For more information about these and other federal aging policy issues, please contact n4a’s policy team: Amy Gotwals (agotwals@n4a.org) and Autumn Campbell (acampbell@n4a.org), 202.872.0888.