



Analysis of the  
**FY 2015 House Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies  
Appropriations Bill**  
and Implications for Social and Behavioral Science

May 8, 2014

On May 8, the full House Appropriations Committee marked up and reported out the fiscal year (FY) 2015 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) Appropriations Bill. The Committee also used the markup to approve the top-line budget allocations for its twelve subcommittees, also known as 302(b) sub-allocations. As previously reported (see [May 5, 2014 Update](#)), the FY 2015 CJS bill was approved by the CJS Subcommittee on April 30 without amendment. The bill keeps within the spending caps set in the bipartisan budget agreement brokered at the end of 2013. The approved 302(b) allocation for discretionary spending for the CJS bill is \$51.2 billion, meaning that the total spending for all federal departments, agencies and programs within the bill's jurisdiction must not exceed that amount. This is a 0.8 percent reduction below the FY 2014 subcommittee allocation. The sub-allocations were approved along party lines, with Committee Democrats strongly opposing the levels.

In advance of the markup, the Committee released its draft report that accompanies the CJS bill and provides additional information about the Committee's intent. While the funding levels for federal agencies important to the COSSA community remain mostly unchanged following the markup, the accompanying report includes language that would impact the social and behavioral science community. See the full analysis below.

No amendments were offered to defund or otherwise alter social and behavioral science programs. Debate throughout the four-hour markup focused heavily on firearm-related policy riders within the bill and the broad debate on gun control. An amendment by Rep. David Price (D-NC) was introduced but then withdrawn, which would have increased NSF funding to the amount authorized in the *America COMPETES Act*. A couple of amendments were accepted that shift funding from the National Science Foundation and the Census Bureau to fund activities in other agencies. The budget numbers on the following pages do not reflect changes made as a result of these amendments as amounts are currently unavailable.

The CJS bill represents the third of twelve appropriations bills to advance to the full House of Representatives for a vote, the first two bills—Legislative Branch and Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies—passed the full House in recent weeks. The House could vote on the CJS bill later this month.

The following pages provide details of the House CJS bill for the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the Census Bureau.

## National Science Foundation

The bill would provide the National Science Foundation (NSF) with a total of \$7.4 billion, which is an increase of 3.31 percent over the FY 2014 enacted level and 2.13 percent above the President's budget request. It would restore funding to the Research and Related Activities (R&RA) account—the budget line that funds NSF's science directorates—that was slated for a 0.03 percent cut under President Obama's budget request.

Despite the “record high” mark for NSF, the report accompanying the CJS bill includes potentially harmful language for the social, behavioral and economic sciences. The report reads:

*“Any increases provided above the [President’s budget] request and not otherwise specified below shall be applied to math and physical sciences; computer and information science and engineering; engineering; and biological sciences.”*

In other words, if enacted, this language would prohibit NSF from allocating additional funding for the Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE), as well as the Directorate for Geosciences (GEO) beyond what the President specified in his budget request. This can be interpreted as yet another move to single-out the social and behavioral sciences, as well as the geosciences, which includes climate change research.

The House report continues:

*“Social, Behavioral and Economic (SBE) Sciences.—Longstanding congressional concerns persist about the merit of activities funded through NSF’s SBE Directorate. In order to address these concerns, NSF must ensure that SBE awards are consistent with NSF’s scientific quality standards and aligned to national interests. The Committee recognizes the intrinsic value in SBE sciences and the direct responsiveness of SBE activities to Committee priorities, including studies on the effects of youth exposure to media violence and the collection of data for STEM education indicators.”*

Regarding STEM education, the report notes the Committee’s expectation that NSF’s National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) will “fully support NSF’s efforts to collect, analyze and disseminate data for the 14 indicators identified in the [National Research Council’s] *Monitoring Progress Toward Successful K-12 STEM Education* report.”

The bill would provide the Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR) with \$876 million, an increase of 12.4 percent over the FY 2014 level and about 1 percent below the President’s request.

The bill does not provide appropriations for NSF’s individual science directorates; that will be decided by the agency via its spending plan once the FY 2015 appropriations process has been completed.

<i>(in millions)</i>	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	FY 2015 House	House vs. FY 2014	House vs. Request
Research and Related Activities (R&RA)	5808.9	5807.5	5978.6	2.92%	2.95%
Education and Human Resources (EHR)	846.5	889.8	876.0	3.48%	-1.55%
<b>NSF Total</b>	<b>7171.9</b>	<b>7255.0</b>	<b>7409.6</b>	<b>3.31%</b>	<b>2.13%</b>



## Department of Justice

The bill includes \$27.8 billion for the Department of Justice (DOJ), \$383 million more than FY 2014. Within the Office of Justice Programs, which includes the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the Committee recommends \$42 million and \$47.3 million respectively. This would represent an increase of 5 percent for NIJ, though 11.5 percent below the President’s request, and an increase of 5.1 percent for BJS, 14.6 percent below the request.

The Committee report includes language stating its concern with the growing threat of “domestic radicalization” and thus provides an additional \$4 million to NIJ to research domestic terrorism. The report also encourages NIJ to continue to support the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Centers, “a network of facilities and capabilities that converts technology to law enforcement use.”

Notably, the Committee does not include any funding for the forensic sciences initiative, which received \$4 million in funding in FY 2014. The Committee is “concerned that the Administration’s forensic sciences initiative lacks the involvement of the State and local practitioner community, making the community an observer—not a participant—in addressing forensic science reform,” language that also appeared in the FY 2014 omnibus appropriations act.

Additionally, the Committee recommends \$75 million for the comprehensive school safety initiative, “a research-focused initiative led by the NIJ to improve the safety of schools nationwide.” The report also states that the Committee is particularly interested in research relating to violence in the media and its impact on school safety, and the funds will include pilot grants to evaluate “innovative approaches” in schools across the country. Funding for school safety research was originally appropriated in FY 2014 at the same level.

Finally, the report includes similar language to the FY 2014 omnibus appropriations act on the need for additional statistics on “honor violence” and violence against women. The Committee directs BJS to provide a status report within 90 days of enactment of the bill.

<i>(in millions)</i>	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	FY 2015 House	House vs. FY 2014	House vs. Request
Bureau of Justice Statistics	45.0	55.4	47.3	5.11%	-14.62%
National Institute of Justice	40.0	47.5	42.0	5.00%	-11.58%

## Bureau of Economic Analysis and Census Bureau

The CJS bill would provide \$99 million for Economic and Statistical Analysis within the Department of Commerce, which includes the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). This is equal to the FY 2014 level but \$12 billion below the President’s request. The bill would not provide the additional funding requested by the agency for relocation of the BEA offices, which represented the bulk of the proposed increase in the President’s budget. Within the flat funding, the Committee encourages BEA to develop small business indicators to track the health of the small business section. An additional \$1.9 million was requested for this purpose in the President’s request.



The CJS bill would provide the Census Bureau with \$1.12 billion, an increase of 18.3 percent over FY 2014, but 7.8 percent below the amount requested for the ramp up to the 2020 Decennial Census. The Periodic Censuses and Programs line would see an increase of 25.5 percent above FY 2014, but almost 10 percent below the President's request. Within this amount, the Economic Censuses would receive \$115 million (slightly more than FY 2014 but 3.6 percent below the request); the 2020 Decennial Census would receive \$625 million, which includes funds for the American Community Survey (ACS) (an increase of nearly 35 percent above FY 2014, but not quite the amount requested by the President); and the Census of Governments would receive \$9 million (slightly below the President's request). With respect to the ACS, the report notes the Bureau's activity around reviewing the survey's questions and states that "no question can be removed from the ACS without an open public comment process."

In addition, as previously reported, the bill includes a language that would block the Bureau from further implementing changes to the Current Population Survey, which were announced in February. The survey's question changes are meant to collect data on current health insurance coverage in addition to coverage for the entire year. Republicans in Congress believe the change to be political and suggest it is meant to inflate numbers of those newly enrolled in insurance programs as a result of the *Affordable Care Act*; they contend that the new questions would make it difficult to measure the real effect of the health care law. The Administration [asserts](#) that the change has been in the making for a number of years and is based on more than a decade of research.

<i>(in millions)</i>	FY 2014 Enacted	FY 2015 Request	FY 2015 House	House vs. FY 2014	House vs. Request
<b>Bureau of the Census</b>					
Salaries and Expenses	252.0	248.0	248.0	-1.59%	0.00%
Periodic Censuses and Programs	693.0	963.4	869.5	25.47%	-9.75%
Economic Census	114.3	119.3	115.0	0.61%	-3.62%
Census of Governments	9.6	9.1	9.0	-6.02%	-1.02%
2020 Decennial Census	463.3	689.0	625.0	34.90%	-9.29%
Census Total	945.0	1211.4	1117.5	18.25%	-7.75%
<b>Bureau of Economic Analysis</b>	95.8	107.2	99.0	3.34%	-7.69%

