



CONSORTIUM *of* SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

Analysis of the Senate FY 2024 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill | July 19, 2023

On July 13, the Senate Appropriations Committee [marked up and reported out](#) its version of the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations Bill. The Senate CJS appropriations bill contains annual funding proposals for the National Science Foundation, Department of Justice, and Census Bureau, among other federal departments and agencies.

The bill is written in-line with the [FY 2024 budget caps](#) that were agreed to earlier in the summer. As part of that agreement, total discretionary spending is capped at \$1.59 trillion in FY 2024, a cut of about 9 percent below FY 2023. The share allocated to the CJS bill is \$71.7 billion, which is 14.4 percent below the total CJS bill in FY 2023.

As a result—and as expected—this cap has resulted in near-flat funding and even cuts to science agencies across the Senate bill:

(in millions)	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024 Budget Request	FY 2024 Senate	Senate vs. FY 2023
National Science Foundation	9539.0	11354.7	9500.0	(0.4%)
Bureau of the Census	1485.0	1606.0	1501.0	1.1%
Bureau of Economic Analysis	130.0	154.0	130.0	--
Bureau of Justice Statistics	42.0	78.0	42.5	1.2%
National Institute of Justice	35.0	63.0	35.5	1.4%

While disappointing, especially when compared to the amounts [requested by the Biden Administration](#) earlier this year (see the “FY 2024 Budget Request” column above), the Senate CJS marks are likely the “best case scenario” when it comes to science funding in FY 2024. The House Appropriations Committee is expected to release full details of their FY 2024 CJS bill next week with additional—and sizable—cuts proposed to science agencies. As COSSA has been reporting, FY 2024 promises to be a challenging year for nearly all discretionary accounts.

Congress will head out soon for its month-long August recess. Upon their return after Labor Day, lawmakers will be faced with the challenge of finding common ground between the two very different funding proposals. The slim Republican–Democrat margins in both chambers has set the stage for a tough, likely protracted funding battle. With the new fiscal year beginning on October 1, it is likely that a stop-gap funding measure—known as a continuing resolution (CR)—will be needed to allow additional time for negotiation or else risk a government shutdown.

The following pages provide details on the Senate’s CJS appropriations bill for FY 2024 for federal agencies and programs important to the social and behavioral science research community.

The bill text and accompanying report are available on the Senate Appropriations Committee [website](#).

Stay tuned to [COSSA’s coverage](#) for the latest developments.

National Science Foundation

The Senate CJS bill includes \$9.5 billion for NSF in FY 2024, which if appropriated would represent cut of \$39 million or 0.4 percent. As [previously reported](#), NSF received about \$1.8 billion in emergency supplemental funding as part of its FY 2023 appropriation. The President’s FY 2024 request for the agency sought to incorporate that funding into NSF’s base, thereby proposing a total of \$11.3 billion for NSF in FY 2024. The Senate mark would strip out that additional \$1.8 billion and some to stay within the budget caps set earlier in the summer.

Within the overall NSF number, the Senate bill includes \$7.6 billion for NSF’s Research and Related Agencies (R&RA) account, which funds the agency’s science directorates, including the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE) and the Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships Directorate (TIP). The proposal is \$6 million or 0.1 percent below the FY 2023 level.

The Senate’s proposal for NSF is an obvious disappointment, especially following the historic passage of the [CHIPS and Science Act](#) in 2023, a bipartisan bill that sought major investments in NSF and other agencies over the next decade.

Notable Report Language

While annual appropriations bills traditionally do not set funding levels for NSF’s individual directorates (with the exception of the STEM Education Directorate), appropriators often provide guidance to the agency with respect to the activities of the directorates, as noted below:

Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences

The Senate report includes language similar to previous years in support of the SBE directorate:

“Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences [SBE]. —The Committee supports the SBE Directorate and recognizes the fundamental importance of the research it supports in advancing scientific understanding of public health, defense and security, education and learning, and the interface between humans and technology. The SBE directorate funds more than half of our Nation’s university-based behavioral science research but remains the smallest of NSF directorates. The Committee believes that behavioral science provides evidence-based understanding of human behavior and recognizes the SBE Directorate’s unique role in funding this research and encourages NSF to continue its support of these programs.”

Technology, Innovation and Partnerships Directorate

The report accompanying the Senate bill expresses the Senate’s support for the new Technology, Innovation and Partnerships (TIP) Directorate, created in FY 2022. However, the report notes (as it did last year):

“As NSF works to incorporate the goals of TIP into its research portfolio, NSF is reminded that the success of TIP will be enhanced through investing in the necessary foundational basic research provided by scientific disciplines across the research spectrum.”

This sentiment underscores the need to preserve NSF’s basic science mission alongside efforts to broaden the agency’s purview to more translational activities.

Even though a top-line funding amount for TIP is not stipulated in the Senate bill, the Committee included \$200 million for the [Regional Innovation Engines](#), one of TIP’s primary signature programs.

Artificial Intelligence

The Senate report supports NSF’s investments in artificial intelligence (AI) and directs the agency to spend no less than the FY 2023 amount for AI research. It calls on NSF to continue supporting workforce development for AI and other emerging technologies, with focused attention on community colleges, HBCUs, and other minority-serving institutions.

The Senate further encourages NSF to support research to “improve the transparency, interpretability, and explainability of AI to better understand why and how models arrive at their decisions, recommendations, and other outputs.”

Research Security

The Senate report includes repeat language noting the importance of NSF’s activities around research security, including efforts to “create clear guidelines that inform researchers and universities on disclosure requirements pertaining to research security.” NSF is encouraged to continue engagement with the research community as the research security landscape evolves and “explore ways to assist less-resourced institutions on disclosure requirements and international talent retention.”

Graduate Research Fellowship Program

The Senate bill would allow for up to \$325 million for the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) in FY 2024, a cut of \$30 million or 8.5 percent from last year. However, the Committee expresses its support for increasing the amount of the fellowship stipend and “encourages NSF to consider such a proposal as part of the fiscal year 2025 budget request.”

(in millions)	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024			
		President’s Request	Senate Bill	Senate vs. FY 2023	Senate vs. Request
National Science Foundation	9539.0	11354.7	9500.0	-0.4%	-16.3%
Research and Related Activities	7629.3	9017.3	7608.3	-0.3%	-15.6%
STEM Education	1246.0	1496.2	1228.0	-1.4%	-17.9%
Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction	187.2	304.7	187.2	--	-38.5%

Agency Operations and Award Management	448.0	503.9	448.0	--	-11.1%
National Science Board	5.1	5.3	5.1	--	-3.0%
Office of the Inspector General	23.4	26.8	23.4	--	-12.7%

Bureau of Justice Statistics and National Institute of Justice

The Department of Justice (DOJ) funds the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) within the Office of Justice Programs’ (OJP) **Research, Evaluation and Statistics** program line. The Senate CJS bill includes a total of \$78 million for Research, Evaluation and Statistics for FY 2024, an increase of 1.3 percent over the FY 2023 enacted level. The Senate mark is a far cry from the amount requested by the President, which totaled \$141 million for research, evaluation, and statistics activities.

Within the total, the Senate bill would provide the **Bureau of Justice Statistics** with \$42.5 million in FY 2024, an increase of \$2.5 million (1.2 percent) above the FY 2023 enacted amount. The President was seeking \$78 million for BJS in FY 2024. For the **National Institute of Justice**, the Senate bill includes \$35.5 million, an increase of \$500,000 (1.4 percent) above FY 2023. The President had requested \$63 million for NIJ.

Notable Report Language

Assessment of NIJ and BJS

Similar to last year, the Senate report acknowledges the growing demands placed on NIJ and BJS in recent years. It calls for the Office of Justice Programs to assess the agencies’ abilities to respond to these demands:

“Directives under the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–435) (Evidence Act) and other congressionally-requested initiatives have given NIJ and BJS additional responsibilities and obligations. The Committee directs OJP to conduct a full assessment of the impact of these dynamics on NIJ and BJS’s ability to keep pace with cutting-edge scientific practices and emerging policy needs. OJP is further directed to develop a forward-looking vision for strengthening these agencies’ ability to respond nimbly to and anticipate future needs and scientific developments over the next decade and identify the resources needed to achieve this vision. These activities should be integrated, where possible, into OJP’s implementation of the Evidence Act. OJP shall provide an update to the Committee on its progress within 180 days from the enactment of this act.”

Data on Police Suicide

The report calls on BJS to “start the process of maintaining a data set on police suicide for Federal, State, and local law enforcement in fiscal year 2020.” The bill would set aside \$3 million within the BJS budget for this activity.

National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)

As part of the NCVS, the Senate bill would direct BJS to collect data on “offenders under the influence at the time of the offense.”

Correctional Education Evaluation

Similar to last year, the Senate bill would direct NIJ to establish a public-private partnership between research and correctional institutions “to collect and evaluate data, and continue to advance the research on the impact of correctional education on recidivism.”

Study on Multidisciplinary Teams

The Senate report includes \$1.5 million for an NIJ grant program to study “the current landscape of multidisciplinary teams working on sexual exploitation crimes against children, including structure, participants, and outcomes, in addition to best practices for multidisciplinary teams to improve effectiveness, outcomes, and victim well-being.”

(in millions)	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024			
		President’s Request	Senate Bill	Senate vs. FY 2023	Senate vs. Request
Bureau of Justice Statistics	42.0	78.0	42.5	1.2%	-45.5%
National Institute of Justice	35.0	63.0	35.5	1.4%	-43.7%

Census Bureau and Bureau of Economic Analysis

The Senate bill includes \$130 million for the **Bureau of Economic Analysis** (BEA), a decrease of \$11 million from the FY 2023 enacted level and \$24 million below the Administration’s request.

The Senate report recognizes the importance of the tracking of global supply and distribution as well as the importance of the outdoor recreation industry. The Senate report would direct no less than the fiscal year 2023 level to implement the *Outdoor Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact Act of 2016*.

The Senate’s proposal would provide the **Census Bureau** with a total of \$1.501 billion for FY 2024, a 1.1 percent increase above the FY 2023 enacted level but 6.5 percent below the Administration’s request.

The report directs no less than the fiscal year 2023 level for the **High Frequency Data Program** to focus on collecting frequent and timely data on measures related to poverty and material hardship, including measures related to child poverty.

Finally, regarding the American Community Survey, the Senate report maintains previous language:

“The Committee notes that the ACS [American Community Survey] is often the primary or only source of data available to State, local, and Federal agencies that need adequate information on a wide range of topics. These data are especially important to small towns and rural areas across the country, and the Bureau should ensure that rural areas are covered with the same accuracy as urban areas to the maximum extent practicable. To the greatest extent practicable, the ACS should reduce the number of questions included in the survey and ensure steps are being taken to conduct the ACS as efficiently and unobtrusively as possible.”

(in millions)	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024			
		President's Request	Senate Bill	Senate vs. FY 2023	Senate vs. Request
Bureau of Economic Analysis	130.0	154.0	130.0	0.0%	-15.6%
Bureau of the Census	1485.0	1606.0	1501.0	1.1%	-6.5%
Current Surveys and Programs	330.0	375.7	346.0	4.8%	-7.9%
Periodic Censuses and Programs	1155.0	1230.3	1155.0	0.0%	6.1%