

Analysis of Final FY 2024 Appropriations for Federal Science Agencies— PART I | March 9, 2024

In recent weeks, Congressional appropriators released text of six of the twelve annual appropriations bills for fiscal year (FY) 2024. The package, which passed the House and Senate this week, comes more than five months into the fiscal year and with just hours to spare before a partial government shutdown.

The “minibus” combines the following bills into a single spending measure: Agriculture; Commerce, Justice and Science; Energy and Water; Interior and Environment; Military Construction and Veterans Affairs; and Transportation and Housing and Urban Development.

Of particular interest to the COSSA community is the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill, which funds the National Science Foundation, Census Bureau, National Institute of Justice, and Bureau of Justice Statistics, among others. The following pages detail the final appropriations levels for these agencies included in the FY 2024 CJS bill.

The outstanding six bills, which currently have a deadline of March 22, tend to be more divisive and historically difficult to negotiate. They include the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) appropriations bill, which funds the National Institutes of Health and other agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education, and several federal statistical agencies. Details could be released in the coming weeks as the March 22 deadline approaches. The other bills still left to be completed before the March 22 deadline include: Defense, Financial Services, Legislative Branch, Homeland Security, and State and Foreign Operations.

As [previously reported](#), the FY 2024 appropriations bills are bound by the strict [budget caps](#) agreed to last year. Complicating things further was the plethora of policy riders sought by Republicans, which held up the bills’ progress for several months. In the end funding concessions needed to be made in order to beat back some of the most damaging riders. The result, unfortunately, includes sizable funding cuts to federal science agencies, returning some agency budgets back to below their FY 2023 levels.

(in millions)	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024 Budget Request	FY 2024 Senate	FY 2024 House	FY 2024 Enacted	FY 2024 vs. FY 2023
National Science Foundation	9874.0	11354.7	9500.0	9630.1	9060.0	-8.2%
Bureau of Economic Analysis	140.9	154.0	130.0	116.0	125.0	-3.8%
Census Bureau	1505.5	1606.0	1501.0	1354.0	1382.0	-6.9%
Bureau of Justice Statistics	42.0	78.0	35.0	42.5	35.0	-16.7%
National Institute of Justice	35.0	63.0	25.0	35.5	30.0	-14.3%

With President Biden expected to release his budget request for FY 2025 on March 11, Congress will find itself with a busy agenda, especially since the remaining six bills for FY 2024 will not be completed by the time the FY 2025 request is delivered to Congress.

Read on for details of the FY 2024 final appropriations for the National Science Foundation, Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis, National Institute of Justice, and Bureau of Justice Statistics.

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

Stay tuned to [COSSA’s coverage](#) for the latest developments, including updates on the remaining FY 2024 appropriations bills and our analysis of the President’s FY 2025 budget request.

National Science Foundation

The final agreement includes a total of \$9.06 billion for NSF in FY 2024, a cut of \$814 million or 8.2 percent below the FY 2023 level, bringing the agency’s budget closer to its FY 2022 appropriation. Within the appropriation, the **Research and Related Agencies (R&RA)**, which funds the agency’s science directorates, including the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE) and the new Technology, Innovation and Partnerships Directorate (TIP), is cut by \$662 million or 8.2 percent below FY 2023. The **STEM Education Directorate**, which receives its own appropriation from Congress, is slated for a \$199 million cut or 14.5 percent below FY 2023.

A major challenge this year will be in how the agency plans absorb a cut of this size while continuing to support the new TIP Directorate that was established in 2022 and has been a top priority of the NSF Director. The report accompanying the final appropriations bill states, “In developing the spending plan, the agreement encourages NSF to equitably distribute funding to support all basic research directorates within R&RA [the Research & Related Activities account], as well as the Technology, Innovation and Partnerships Directorate.” This language appears to acknowledge this challenge and seeks to prevent the TIP Directorate from diverting extra resources from other directorates.

Notable Report Language

Artificial Intelligence

The report accompanying the final bill adopts language from the [Senate report](#) encouraging 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.”

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)

The final bill endorses language from the [House report](#) calling on NCSES to “identify, compile, and analyze existing nationwide data and conduct survey research to better understand the national cyber workforce and to support additional NCSES personnel to ensure adequate staffing for this research.”

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		President’s Request	Senate Bill	House Bill	Final FY 2024 Enacted	
National Science Foundation	9874.0	11354.7	9500.0	9630.1	9060.0	-8.2%
Research and Related Activities	7839.3	9017.3	7608.3	7866.6	7176.5	-8.5%
STEM Education	1371.0	1496.2	1228.0	1006.0	1172.0	-14.5%
Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction	187.2	304.7	187.2	254.0	234.0	25%

Agency Operations and Award Management	448.0	503.9	448.0	472.0	448.0	--
National Science Board	5.1	5.3	5.1	4.6	5.1	--
Office of the Inspector General	23.4	26.8	23.4	26.8	24.4	4.3%

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 omnibus bill includes a total of \$65 million for Research, Evaluation and Statistics for FY 2024, a sharp decrease of 16 percent below FY 2023. As [previously reported](#), the budgets of the National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Statistics increased slightly in the final FY 2023 appropriations bill, making this year’s cuts even more disappointing.

The omnibus bill provides the **Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)** with \$35 million in FY 2024, a decrease of \$7 million (17 percent) below the FY 2023 enacted amount and \$43 million below the Biden Administration’s request. In addition, the bill includes \$30 million for the **National Institute of Justice (NIJ)**, a decrease of \$5 million (14 percent) below FY 2023, bringing the agency back down to its FY 2022 level.

Notable Report Language

Research at National Institute of Justice

Despite reductions in overall appropriations, one silver-lining in the bill is the reduction in Congressional mandates that often plague the NIJ budget. In FY 2023, about \$14 million was carved out of the NIJ appropriation to fund projects of interest to Congress. For FY 2024, the bill includes only \$3 million in mandates: \$1.5 million to “study on the current landscape of multidisciplinary teams working on sexual exploitation crimes against children,” and \$1.5 million for forensic science research. The reduction in Congressional mandates will free up resources to allow NIJ to fund priority research.

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Bureau of Justice Statistics	42.0	78.0	35.0	42.5	35.0	-16.7%
National Institute of Justice	35.0	63.0	25.0	35.5	30.0	-14.3%

Bureau of Economic Analysis & Census Bureau

The agreement provides **\$125 million to the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)**, a decrease of **\$5 million or 3.8 percent below FY 2023** and the amount included in the Senate bill. The appropriation is also \$29 million below the President’s request but \$9 million above the House mark.

The agreement includes a total of **\$1.382 billion to the Census Bureau**, a **\$103 million or 6.9 percent decrease below its FY 2023 appropriation**. This amount is \$224 million below the President’s request, \$119 million below the Senate mark, but \$28 million above the House number. Within the total, \$328.5 million is slated for the Bureau’s Current Surveys and Programs account and \$1.054 billion to Periodic Censuses and Programs.

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		President's Request	Senate Bill	House Bill			
Bureau of Economic Analysis	140.9	154.0	130.0	116.0	125.0	-3.8%	
Census Bureau	1505.5	1606.0	1501.0	1354.0	1382.0	-6.9%	
Current Surveys and Programs	330.0	375.7	346.0	300.0	328.5	-0.5%	
Periodic Censuses and Programs	1155.0	1230.3	1155.0	1054.0	1054.0	-8.7%	

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