CONSORTIUM of SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

Analysis of the Final FY 2026 LHHS Appropriations Bill for Federal Science Agencies | February 4, 2026

Following a brief partial government shutdown, the House of Representatives passed the latest fiscal year (FY) 2026 funding package containing the final budgets for dozens of federal agencies and departments. The package, which comes on the heels of enactment of an earlier omnibus in January (see COSSA's coverage), includes the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education (LHHS) appropriations bill, funding the National Institutes of Health, Department of Education, and other agencies, and four other appropriations bills: the Department of Defense appropriations bill, Financial Services appropriations bill, National Security and Department of State appropriations bill, and the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill.

As has been widely reported, the delay in final passage of this package was the result of Congressional Democrats' concern over recent events unfolding in Minneapolis and calls for reforms to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS); the DHS appropriations bill was included in the original version of the spending package, which held up consideration. Congressional leaders and President Trump agreed to remove the DHS bill from the omnibus to pass the other appropriations bills. The DHS bill is now the only FY 2026 appropriations bill left to be completed.

With the passage of the latest funding package, the FY 2026 appropriations process is nearly complete (aside from DHS funding). Federal science agencies now have their budgets for the fiscal year that began on October 1, 2025.

Like we saw with the passage of the earlier omnibus bill that funded the National Science Foundation (NSF), Census Bureau, Department of Justice, and other agencies, the final outcome for federal science agencies under the LHHS bill is a largely positive story. While some agencies will see their budget decrease this year, when compared to the levels proposed by the Trump Administration last year the final numbers represent a significant win. For example, the National Institutes of Health receives a small, 0.9 percent increase in the final FY 2026 bill even though the President originally proposed a 40 percent cut to the agency.

Snapshot of the Final LHHS Appropriations Bill, FY 2026

(in millions)	FY 2025 Enacted	FY 2026 President's Request	FY 2026 Final	FY 2026 vs. FY 2025
National Institutes of Health	46801.0	28350.0	47216.0	0.9%
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	9222.1	4321.0	9203.0	-0.2%
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality	369.0	240.0	345.4	-6.4%
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	7376.0	6200.0	7439.6	0.9%

Institute of Education Sciences	793.1	261.3	789.6	-0.4%
International Education and Foreign Language Studies	85.6	0	80.7	-5.8%
Bureau of Labor Statistics	704.0	648.0	708.5	0.6%

The report accompanying the final bill explains that any directives to federal agencies included in the earlier House (H. Rept. 119-271) and Senate (S. Rept. 119-55) reports apply to the final agreement unless noted otherwise. You can see these past directives in COSSA's analyses of the earlier House and Senate LHHS bills.

Now that the FY 2026 appropriations process is in the books, attention will soon turn to the FY 2027 budget. The Trump Administration is expected to release its budget request sometime this spring and Congress will start holding hearings to discuss funding for next year.

Read on for details of the FY 2026 final appropriations for the National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Institute of Education Sciences, International Education and Foreign Language Studies programs, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The bill text and accompanying reports are available on the Senate Appropriations Committee website.

Stay tuned to COSSA's coverage for the latest developments.

National Institutes of Health

The final FY 2026 agreement for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) includes $47.2 billion, an increase of about 1 percent. While a smaller increase than NIH has enjoyed in recent years, the final appropriation is a wholesale rejection of the President's proposed cut of nearly 40 percent and the Administration's proposal to reorganize the agency. The bill maintains NIH's current structure.

The bill provides flat funding or marginal increases to NIH's institutes and centers (ICs) (see the table below), with the exception of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), which receives a $90 million increase for research on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias and increases for ALS research and NIH's BRAIN Initiative.

Notable Report Language

Indirect Cost Rates

Similar to report language included in the final spending bill for the National Science Foundation (see COSSA's analysis), the NIH section of the final FY 2026 LHHS bill contains significant language addressing NIH's attempts to impose a flat 15 percent facilities and administration (F&A), or indirect cost, rate to NIH grantees. Similar to the language included for NSF, the NIH section discusses the importance of indirect cost recovery in supporting research at U.S. institutions but acknowledges room for improvement to the system. The language notes the work of the Joint Associations Group on Indirect Costs (JAG), a non-governmental group of higher education and research organizations, in developing the Financial Accountability in Research (FAIR) model and directs federal agencies funded in this bill to engage in

discussions with Congress on potential improvements to the current system, including consideration of the FAIR model (see COSSA's reporting).

The LHHS language goes a step further than the NSF language by explicitly stating that "neither NIH, nor any other department or agency, may develop or implement any policy, guidance, or rule, including publication of a notice of proposed rulemaking, that would alter the manner in which negotiated indirect cost rates have been implemented and applied under NIH regulations, as those regulations were in effect during the third quarter of fiscal year 2017." This directive effectively freezes the Administration's current efforts to impose a flat 15 percent cap but does not settle the issue entirely.

Multi-Year Funding

In 2025, NIH started the practice of funding some multi-year awards, which fully fund a grant for all years of the project, in year one. In the President's FY 2026 budget request, NIH proposed reserving half of its budget for multi-year awards. The rationale was that the new policy would "increase NIH budget flexibility by no longer encumbering large portions of each year's appropriation for the continuation of research programs that were initiated in previous years." The final LHHS bill includes language similar to earlier Senate language expressing concern that the practice will make application success rates plummet and significantly reduce the number of awards NIH can fund. The language does not prohibit NIH from making multi-year awards in FY 2026; however, it seeks to limit the amount of funds obligated to the amount spend in FY 2025. The report also directs NIH to brief Congress monthly on the status of grant announcements, applications, awards, etc.

Institute and Center Directors

The final bill includes language related to the ongoing search to fill a dozen vacant institute and center (IC) director positions across NIH, including at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). The language calls on NIH to continue the practice of "including external scientists and stakeholders with appropriate subject matter expertise and familiarity with the relevant ICs, as part of the agency's search to fill the current IC Director vacancies." This language is likely a nod to concerns that the Trump Administration will depart from regular practice when considering how to fill these leadership positions, which could result in appointments that lack the necessary expertise or experience. The language further asserts Congress' oversight authority by calling on NIH to report to Congress regularly on their search processes and providing a report on the approval process for IC director hires.

Firearm Injury and Mortality Prevention

The final bill includes report language continuing the funding for research into firearm injury and mortality prevention. The language maintains funding at the FY 2024 level of $12.5 million for this activity. Similar funding is included for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (see section below).

To review previous directives that should be considered part of the final agreement, check out COSSA's analyses of the earlier House and Senate LHHS bills.

(in millions)	FY 2025 Enacted	FY 2026 President's Request*	FY 2026 House Bill	FY 2026 Senate Bill	FY 2026 Final Agreement	FY 2026 vs. FY 2025
National Institutes of Health, program level	**46801.0**	**28350.0**	**46900.0**	**47201.0**	**47216.0**	**0.9%**
National Cancer Institute	7224.2	n/a	7272.2	7374.2	7352.2	1.8%
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute	3982.3	n/a	3990.3	3982.3	3990.3	0.2%
National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research	520.2	n/a	525.2	520.2	525.2	1.0%
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases	2310.7	n/a	2330.7	2320.7	2326.7	0.7%
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke	2603.9	n/a	2633.9	2773.9	2804.9	7.7%
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases	6562.3	n/a	6582.3	6592.3	6585.3	0.4%
National Institute of General Medical Sciences	3244.7	n/a	3265.7	3244.7	3269.7	0.8%
Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development	1759.1	n/a	1759.1	1779.1	1769.1	0.6%
National Eye Institute	896.5	n/a	896.5	896.5	896.5	0.0%
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences	914.0	n/a	914.0	914.0	914.0	0.0%
National Institute on Aging	4507.6	n/a	4507.6	4557.6	4517.6	0.2%
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases	685.5	n/a	685.5	685.5	685.5	0.0%
National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders	534.3	n/a	534.3	534.3	534.3	0.0%
National Institute of Nursing Research	197.7	n/a	197.7	197.7	197.7	0.0%
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism	595.3	n/a	595.3	595.3	595.3	0.0%
National Institute on Drug Abuse	1662.7	n/a	1662.7	1662.7	1662.7	0.0%
National Institute of Mental Health	2187.8	n/a	2187.8	2193.8	2189.8	0.1%
National Human Genome Research Institute	663.2	n/a	663.2	663.2	663.2	0.0%
National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering	440.6	n/a	440.6	440.6	440.6	0.0%
National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities	534.4	n/a	544.4	534.4	538.4	0.7%
National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health	170.4	n/a	170.4	170.4	170.4	0.0%
National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences	928.3	n/a	928.3	938.3	942.3	1.5%
John E. Fogarty International Center for Advanced Study in the Health Sciences	95.2	n/a	95.2	95.2	95.2	0.0%
National Library of Medicine	497.5	n/a	497.5	497.5	497.5	0.0%
Office of the Director	2605.5	n/a	2441.5	2460.5	2462.9	-5.5%
Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H)	1500.0	n/a	945.0	1500.0	1500.0	0.0%

**The President's budget request proposed a major restructuring of NIH, including elimination of four institutes and centers. Therefore, the table does not include comparisons to President's budget request for individual institutes and centers.*

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The final agreement includes $9.2 billion for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a 0.2 percent decrease below the FY 2025 enacted level.

The final bill includes $187.4 million for the **National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)**, the same amount as the House and Senate bills as well as the FY 2025 level, but 7.1 percent above the President's request.

Also included is $185 million to the CDC's **Public Health Data Modernization Initiative** (DMI), an increase of $10 million over the FY 2025 appropriation, but $25 million below the Senate's bill and level with the House's bill. This initiative was created to ensure that the U.S. public health data system is adequately prepared for public health crises.

Notably, the final agreement rejects the President's proposal to eliminate the **Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion** and includes $69 million for Racial and Ethnic Approaches to the Community Health (REACH) account and $113.5 million for the Safe Motherhood and Infant Health account.

The **Environmental Health** account would receive flat funding of $191.9 million, including $10 million for the **Climate and Health** program which helps States and territories examine potential health effects associated with climate change.

The final bill would provide $761.4 million for the **Injury Prevention and Control** portfolio, flat with the FY 2025 level and the Senate bill. Within this amount, the final agreement provides flat funding of $12.5 million to the **Firearm Injury and Mortality Prevention Research** program, which was zeroed out in both the House bill and the President's request. Notably in the Senate report, the Committee directed the program to pursue a comprehensive approach that would "ensure that such awards support ideologically and politically unbiased research projects."

Notable Report Language

To review previous directives that should be considered part of the final agreement, including language pertaining to vaccination and the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices, check out COSSA's analyses of the earlier House and Senate LHHS bills.

		FY 2026				
(in millions)	FY 2025 Enacted	President's Request	House Bill	Senate Bill	Final Agreement	FY 2026 vs. FY 2025
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	**9222.1**	**4321.0**	**7591.6**	**9132.9**	**9203.0**	**-0.2%**
HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STI, and TB Prevention	1391.1	963.0	1171.1	1381.1	1384.1	-0.5%
Chronic Disease Prevention, Health Promotion	1192.6	0.0	1127.6	1428.9	983.8	-17.5%
National Center for Health Statistics	187.4	175.0	187.4	187.4	187.4	0.0%
Environmental Health	191.9	--	181.9	242.9	191.9	0.0%
Injury Prevention and Control	761.4	550.0	730.8	761.4	761.4	0.0%

Occupational Safety and Health	362.8	73.0	247.7	363.8	366.8	1.1%
Global Health	692.8	0.0	370.7	692.8	692.8	0.0%

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

The **final agreement includes $345.4 million for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ),** a 6.4 percent decrease from the FY 2025 funding level. It ultimately rejects the 35 percent cut requested by the Administration and the House's proposal to eliminate the agency, a repeated request that was previously included in their 2016, 2024, and 2025 funding bills.

To review previous directives that should be considered part of the final agreement, check out COSSA's analyses of the earlier House and Senate LHHS bills.

		FY 2026				
(in millions)	FY 2025 Enacted	President's Request	House Bill	Senate Bill	Final Agreement	FY 2026 vs. FY 2025
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality	**369.0**	**240.0**	**0.0**	**345.5**	**345.4**	**-6.4%**
Research on Health Costs, Quality, and Outcomes	224.1	239.5	0.0	214.1	214.1	-4.5%
Patient Safety	89.6	90.6	0.0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Health Services Research, Data, and Dissemination	101.1	170.0	0.0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Digital Healthcare Research	16.3	18.3	0.0	n/a	n/a	n/a
U.S. Preventative Task Force	11.5	18.0	0.0	11.5	n/a	n/a
Medical Expenditure Panel Surveys	71.8	71.8	0.0	71.7	72.8	1.4%
Research Management and Support	73.1	78.8	0.0	58.5	58.5	-20.0%

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

The **final agreement includes $7.4 billion for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**, a 63.6 million increase above the FY 2025 enacted level. SAMHSA is a mission agency dedicated to reducing the impact of substance abuse and mental illness, mainly through providing grants to support behavioral health services for mental health and substance use disorders.

While much of SAMHSA's budget is dedicated to health services funding rather than research funding, SAMHSA supports behavioral health research and data through its **Health Surveillance and Program Support** (HSPS) account, which supports the work of the **Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality** (CBHSQ), the lead government agency for behavioral health data, evaluation, and research.

		FY 2026				
(in millions)	FY 2025 Enacted	President's Request	House Bill	Senate Bill	Final Agreement	FY 2026 vs. FY 2025
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration	**7376.0**	**6200.0**	**7075.9**	**7428.9**	**7439.6**	**0.9%**

Program Support	84.5	--	84.5	67.6	63.6	-24.7%
Health Surveillance (non-add)	50.6	50.6	50.6	50.6	50.6	0.0%
Public Awareness and Support	13.3	5.0	5.0	13.3	13.3	0.0%
Performance and Quality Information Systems	10.2	10.2	10.2	10.2	10.2	0.0%
Drug Abuse Warning Network	10.0	0.0	10.0	13.0	10.0	0.0%

Institute of Education Sciences

Within the Department of Education, **the final bill would provide $789.6 million for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES)**, the flagship research, evaluation, and statistical agency of the department. This amount represents a 0.4 percent decrease from the FY 2025 enacted level as well as the House and Senate's bills and rejects the Administration's proposal to slash funding to the agency. Notably, in the Administration's attempts to shutter the Department of Education, IES has been targeted with several grant terminations and significant reductions in force (RIF), harming the agency's ability to complete critical work.

The final bill would provide $245 million for **Research, Development, and Dissemination**, maintaining the same level as FY 2025. This funding supports research, development, and national dissemination activities aimed at expanding fundamental knowledge of education and promoting the use of research and development findings to enhance educational initiatives.

The bill includes flat funding of $121.5 million for the activities of the **National Center for Education Statistics** (NCES), in line with the FY 2025 level as well as the President's Budget Request and the Senate bill. Not included in the final amount is the House's proposed $1 million increase to support a directive for the agency to study cell phone use in schools and its effect on academic achievement, as requested in previous years. While the final agreement does not provide the additional funding for these efforts, it notes that the bill "supports efforts to collect data" on this issue.

Also included in the bill is $53.7 million to **Regional Education Laboratories**, $64.3 million to **Research in Special Education**, $13.3 million to **Special Education Studies and Evaluations**, and $28.5 million to the **Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems** account, all relatively flat with appropriated FY 2025 levels. Notably, the President's Budget Request did not provide specific funding allocations for these programs, as shown in the table below.

The **Assessment (NAEP)** account would receive $193.3 million under the final agreement, which represents flat funding with the FY 2025 level as well as the House and Senate bills, but a $56 million, or 29 percent, increase over the President's Budget Request.

Notable Report Language

Interagency Agreements

The explanatory statement of the final bill includes new language recognizing the Department of Education's "unprecedented use of Interagency Agreements to transfer significant programmatic responsibilities, procure services, and detail staff to other Federal agencies" (see previous coverage). The bill requests the Department and signatory agencies to "provide biweekly briefings to the Committees on implementation of any such interagency agreements" that "include information on staffing transfers,

implementation costs, metrics on the delivery of services, availability of technical support for programs to grantees, the issuance of Notices Inviting Applications or other funding opportunities, plans for maintaining high standards of quality and objectivity in grant competitions through multireviewer peer panels, rates of accessing funds by grantees and any resulting delays through the draw down of funds, updates on monitoring for grantees' compliance with all federal requirements, implementation of reporting requirements by grantees and Federal agencies and communications with eligible grantees, States, and other stakeholders."

Public Comment
Included in the final bill's explanatory statement is new language supporting the Department's implementation of public comments, stating, "the agreement supports robust public participation in rulemaking, including support for the issuance of proposed priorities for public comment, unless such requirements are otherwise specifically exempted under a program's statutory authority."

To review previous directives that should be considered part of the final agreement, check out COSSA's analyses of the earlier House and Senate LHHS bills.

International Education and Foreign Language Studies

The **final bill includes $80.7 million for the International Education and Foreign Language Studies programs**, with $70.4 million to Domestic Programs (Title VI) and $10.3 million to Overseas Programs (Fulbright-Hays). Notably, the President's budget request and the House bill zeroed out both programs.

		FY 2026				
(in millions)	FY 2025 Enacted	President's Request	House Bill	Senate Bill	Final Agreement	FY 2026 vs. FY 2025
Institute of Education Sciences	**793.1**	**261.3**	**793.1**	**793.1**	**789.6**	**-0.4%**
Research, Development, and Dissemination	245.0	--	245.0	245.0	245.0	0.0%
Statistics	121.5	--	122.5	121.5	121.5	0.0%
Regional Educational Laboratories	53.7	--	--	53.7	53.7	0.1%
Research in Special Education	64.2	--	64.3	64.3	64.3	0.1%
Special Education Studies and Evaluations	13.3	--	13.3	13.3	13.3	0.1%
Assessment (NAEP)	193.3	137.3	193.3	193.3	193.3	0.0%
Statewide Data Systems	28.8	--	28.5	28.5	28.5	-1.0%
International Education and Foreign Language Studies	**85.6**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**80.7**	**80.7**	**-5.8%**
Domestic Programs (Title VI)	75.5	0.0	0.0	70.4	70.4	-6.8%
Overseas Programs (Fulbright-Hays)	10.3	0.0	0.0	10.3	10.3	0.0%

Bureau of Labor Statistics

The **final agreement includes $708.5 million for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)**, a 0.6 percent increase above FY 2025. This amount represents a $60.5 million increase over the President's request, which included an 8.6 percent cut to the agency, and a $4 million increase over the Senate's amount. Notably, the $10 million increase included in the House bill did not make it into the final agreement.

To review previous directives that should be considered part of the final agreement, check out COSSA's analyses of the earlier House and Senate LHHS bills.

		FY 2026				
(in millions)	FY 2025 Enacted	President's Request	House Bill	Senate Bill	Final Agreement	FY 2026 vs. FY 2025
Bureau of Labor Statistics	**704.0**	**648.0**	**714.0**	**704.0**	**708.5**	**0.6%**
Labor Force Statistics	312.0	293.4	322.2	318.0	320.0	2.6%
Prices and Cost of Living	244.4	225.2	249.4	246.0	248.0	1.5%
Compensation and Working Conditions	92.4	83.2	92.4	91.0	91.5	-0.9%
Productivity and Technology	12.4	11.3	12.4	12.0	12.0	-2.9%
Executive Direction and Staff Services	37.0	34.8	37.7	37.0	37.0	-1.7%

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