

On March 23rd, 2018, President Trump signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018, an omnibus spending bill that funds the government for the final six months of Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. The \$1.3 Trillion spending package includes increased investments in several programs serving children and families, though some fared better than others. This fact sheet analyzes increased investments in programs serving children, as well as funding decisions that raise concern.

Non-Defense Discretionary Funding Increased by \$63 Billion Dollars

Of the 172 programs that First Focus tracks in *Children's Budget 2017*, 137—or nearly 80 percent—rely on non-defense discretionary spending to operate. Yet non-defense discretionary spending has grown just 2 percent in real terms from FY 2014 to FY 17, due to restrictions imposed via the Budget Control Act of 2011, which mandates yearly caps on discretionary spending through Fiscal Year 2021 and triggers automatic sequestration cuts when those caps are exceeded. In fact, from 2014-2017, the real share of discretionary spending on children decreased by 1 percent.

With its 302(a) allocations of \$579 billion for non-defense discretionary spending and \$629 billion for defense discretionary spending, the omnibus spending bill takes an important step toward reversing this trend. It upholds February's Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-123) which lifts the Budget Control Act caps by \$63 Billion for FY 18 and \$68 billion for FY 2019.

Subcommittee Bills

The omnibus spending bill also provides robust 302(b) allocations to the four appropriations subcommittees with jurisdiction over the most children's programs

	Agriculture	Commerce, Justice and Science	Labor, Health and Human Services and Education	Transportation and Housing and Urban Development
<i>302(b) Allocation</i>	\$23.259 Billion	\$59.6 Billion	\$177.1 Billion	\$70.3 Billion
<i>Increase from FY 17</i>	\$2.382 Billion	\$3.05 Billion	\$16.1 Billion	\$12.6 Billion
<i>Percent Increase from FY 17</i>	+11.4%	+5.4%	+10.0%	+21.8%

Programs

Thanks to these new funds, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 provides increased—and in some cases, historic—levels of investments in programs serving children across various categories of wellbeing:

Across the Board: Census Bureau

- **Bureau of the Census:** The Act appropriates \$2.814 billion for the Census Bureau (which is approximately \$1.13 billion more than the Administration's adjusted FY 2018 budget request) and includes \$270 million for the Current Surveys and Programs Account. In addition, the bill includes \$50 million in contingency funding to execute the 2020 decennial census and communications and partnerships program. However, the report language accompanying the bill allows the use of half of the appropriated fiscal year 2018 dollars in future fiscal years 2019 and 2020. Adequate census funding is critical to ensure that young children are not undercounted, as this impacts funding distribution for a variety of programs serving children.

Education

- **Title I Grants:** a \$300 million increase for Title I Grants to school districts, which use federal funds to compensate for inequities in high-poverty areas that have lower levels of local revenue to fund public education.
- **Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) grants to states:** a \$299 million increase for IDEA grants to states which supplement the excess cost of educating students with disabilities
- **Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants:** a \$700 million increase for Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants, which increase state and local capacity to provide students with a well-rounded education through rigorous coursework, technology and better school environment. This increase brings the program's funding to \$1.1 Billion for FY 18, the closest it has come to its authorized level of \$1.65 Billion.
- **21st Century Community Learning Centers:** a \$20 million increase for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, which funds afterschool programming for disadvantaged and low-income children.
- **McKinney Vento Homeless Children and Youth program:** a \$15 million increase for the McKinney Vento Homeless Children and Youth program, which supports state coordinators and homeless assistance liaisons in school districts to help mitigate some of the negative consequences of homelessness on children.

Early Childhood

- **Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG):** A historic 84 percent increase—\$2.37 billion—for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), which assists low-income families in securing adequate child care so that parents can participate in work, classes, or training.
- **Head Start:** A \$610 million increase to Head Start and \$115 million increase for Early Head Start, which provide comprehensive child development services for economically disadvantaged three- and four-year-old children and infants to toddlers, respectively, to prepare them to succeed in school.

Housing

- The Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) bill continues to clarify that youth 24 and under shall not be required to provide third party documentation to establish eligibility for HUD programs, and that unaccompanied youth aged 24 and under or families headed by them that are living in unsafe situations may be served by youth serving providers funded through HUD.
- **HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program:** an 86% increase to \$80 million for a third round of the HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program for up to 25 communities, including 8 rural, as well as up to \$5 million for technical assistance.
- **HUD Homeless Assistance Grants:** a \$130 million, or 5.5 percent, increase for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) homeless assistance grants (from \$2.383 billion in FY 17 to \$2.513 billion in FY 18.) While this is positive, the program still leaves out many homeless children and families who don't meet HUD's definition of homelessness.
- **Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs:** an \$8.3 million, or 7 percent, increase to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs, which help local facilities meet the needs of runaway and

homeless youth through temporary residential care and counseling and maintain a national toll-free hotline.

- **Legal Services Corporation:** a \$25 million, or 6 percent, increase for the Legal Services Corporation, which provides civil legal services for low income families, including representation for families facing eviction.
- **HUD Rental Assistance Programs:** a \$950 million increase in Project-Based Rental Assistance (which provides funding to landlords who rent a specified number of affordable apartments to low-income families or individuals) and a \$1.7 billion increase in Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (which funds vouchers that help low-income families subsidize housing costs.) While these increases will allow families with children to maintain current levels of housing assistance, any new vouchers available due to these increased funds appear to only prioritize veterans and disabled individuals.

Child Welfare

- **Adoption Incentives:** a \$37 million increase for the Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentives program, which assist in the adoption of children from foster care.
- **National Electronic Interstate Compact Enterprise (NEICE):** A technical fix ensuring that funds for NEICE, a national electronic system for quickly and securely exchanging the data and documents required to place children across state lines, are properly reserved and available
- **Opioid Crisis Response:** of the Consolidated Appropriation Act of 2018's \$3.6 billion in new funding to combat the opioid crisis, \$100 million specifically target child welfare, including:
 - **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Grants:** A \$60 million—241 percent—increase in CAPTA grants, specifically targeted at plans of safe care and coordinated services for newborn children exposed to substances,
 - **Kinship Navigator Programs:** \$20 million to newly fund Kinship Navigator Programs for families in the child abuse and neglect system, connecting grandparents and other relatives to available services and assist states in complying with the Family First Prevention Services Act (included as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018.), and
 - **Regional Partnership Grants:** \$20 million for Regional Partnership Grants to fund community collaborations among substance abuse treatment, courts, and child welfare agencies to improve the lives of children and families affected by opioids and other substance use disorders.

Income Support

- **Child Support Enforcement:** An \$84 million increase for Child Support Enforcement programs, which helps families secure child support obligations from non-custodial parents. Although the FY 18 Consolidated Appropriations Act increases the budget authority of this program, it also codifies an increase in the annual child support fee from \$25 to \$35 for child support program participants who have never received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits. The payment threshold triggering this fee was also increased from the current \$500 in collections to \$550.
- **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP):** A \$250 million increase for LIHEAP, from \$3.390 billion in FY 17 to \$3.640 billion in FY 18

Nutrition

- **Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) for Children:** A \$5 million increase for the Summer EBT for Children Demonstration Project. This project provides summertime Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits to low-income children who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals and studies the efficacy of this assistance in reducing child food insecurity during the summer months.
- **School Meal Equipment Grants:** a \$5 million increase for School Breakfast Equipment Grants, which help schools purchase the equipment needed to serve healthier meals, improve food safety,

expand access and/or improve energy efficiency.

- **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC):** A \$165 million **decrease** for WIC, which helps meet the nutrition needs of low-income pregnant women, infants and young children. WIC is funded at \$6.175 billion for FY 18. This funding does include \$25 million in additional funds for the WIC contingency fund, bringing the available contingency funds to \$150 million. While advocates believe that the WIC appropriation will be adequate to meet caseload needs for the remaining six months of the fiscal year, these funding reductions come at a time when agencies and clinics across the country continue to feel downward pressure on Nutrition Services and Administration funding.

Health

- **Community Health Centers (CHC):** CHCs receive a \$1.63 billion in discretionary federal grant funding adding to the extension of the mandatory Community Health Center Fund included in the Bipartisan Budget Agreement, bringing the total funding for CHCs in FY 18 to \$5.4 billion, an increase of more than \$300 million.
- **Maternal and Child Health Bureau:** A \$23.2 million increase for the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, bringing total funding to \$886.8 million in FY 18.
- **Pediatric Mental Health Care Access:** \$10 million for Pediatric Mental Health Care Access to expand access to behavioral health services in pediatric primary care by supporting the development of pediatric mental health care telehealth access programs.
- **Emergency Medical Services for Children:** A \$2 million increase from FY 17 to \$22M total for Emergency Medical Services for Children.
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):** A \$1.2 billion increase for the CDC, totaling funding at \$8.3 billion. Even with the sizable increase, there is a mixed result for funding of some programs benefitting children:
 - **Immunization and Respiratory Diseases:** receives an increase of \$19.1 million to \$474.1 million in discretionary spending in FY 18 from \$455 million in FY 17.
 - **Environmental Health:** receives a \$10 million decrease from \$215.7 million to \$205.7 million. The Environmental Health research under the CDC includes the Newborn Screening Quality Assurance Program, funded at \$13.4 million for FY 18, and Asthma, which is funded at \$29 million for FY 18.

Training

- **Youth Training Programs:** A \$30 million increase from FY 17 for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) youth training programs.
- **YouthBuild:** A \$5 million increase from FY 17 for YouthBuild, which provides grants for low-income youth to learn construction skills to help build affordable housing and other community assets.
- **JobCorps:** A \$14 million increase from FY 17 for JobCorps, which provides education and job training programs for young adults ages 16–24.

Safety

- **Juvenile Justice Programs:** Juvenile Justice programs receive a \$35 million increase.
- **Missing and Exploited Children:** A \$9 million increase for the Missing and Exploited Children program.
- **Comprehensive School Safety Initiative:** A \$25 million increase for the Comprehensive School Safety Initiative
- **Youth Impacted by Opioids:** Of the \$3.6 Billion in increased funds to combat the opioid crisis, \$22.5 million goes towards an increase for the Department of Justice's Reaching Youth Impacted by Opioids program.

- **Unaccompanied Children:** A \$355 million increase for programs providing for the care and placement of unaccompanied minors who are in federal custody. However, the Act also includes a rescission of the \$300 million contingency fund for this program. The Consolidated Appropriations Act also directs HHS to provide a joint briefing with the Departments of Homeland Security and State, to the Appropriations Committees that outlines the Administration's current and planned policies that impact the resources needed for this program.