

Overview of Fiscal Year 2012 Appropriations

Choose an agency below to view AGI's analysis of the President's request for key geoscience-related agencies as well as detailed program and account information. Each of the appropriations pages provides a summary table, an overview of the budget request, and congressional action on the agency or department.

- Commerce (NOAA, NIST)
- Energy & Water (DOE)
- Interior (USGS)
- NASA
- National Science Foundation (NSF)

You can stay up-to-date on the budget process and appropriations by fiscal year with the Library of Congress Appropriations and Budget page. The AAAS R&D Budget and Policy Program provides information on trends in federal research and development funding, including information on the president's budget request and appropriations bills.

Appropriations Update

Congress Finishes Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2012 (12/11)

Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2012 (H.R. 2055) on December 17 and President Obama signed the measure into law (Public Law 112-74) on December 23, long after the start of fiscal year (FY) 2012 on October 1, 2011. The omnibus measure provides appropriations for the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy (DOE) and the Department of Education. Other science agencies were funded in an earlier measure.

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) will receive \$1,069.7 million for fiscal year (FY) 2012 (about \$14 million less than FY2011 enacted and about \$48 million less than the President's request). The largest cuts compared to FY2011 would be for funding for facilities and administration. Congress did not agree with the creation of a Land Imaging program and did not agree to transfer budgetary authority for Landsat 9 and 10 from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to the USGS. Only \$2 million of the \$48 million requested for Landsat 9 and 10 will be provided by Congress to study future options for the satellite program. New satellites are needed to ensure data continuity, but the high costs cannot be absorbed by the USGS without significant budget increases in the future. NASA has the appropriate expertise to build and launch the satellites but needs to include these costs in future budget planning.

DOE will receive about \$25.748 billion for FY 2012 (about \$1.26 billion less than FY2011 enacted and about \$3.8 billion below the President's request). The Office of Science and The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy will see modest increases while the Office of Fossil Energy and most nuclear waste management programs will see modest decreases. Congress agreed with the Obama Administration to terminate funding for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste geologic repository and requests DOE to fund research on nuclear waste storage, transport and other potential geologic repositories.

The Department of Education will receive about \$25 million less in FY2012 than enacted in FY2011 for the Math and Science Partnership (MSP) program. The FY2012 appropriation of \$150 million provides support for implementing math and science education programs in grades K through 12. It remains the only program dedicated to science education as other presidential proposals received no appropriations from Congress.

Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2012 Advance While Deficit Committee Does Not (11/11)

Congress passed the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2012 (H.R. 2112, Public Law 112-55) to provide appropriations for fiscal year (FY) 2012 for Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, Science, Transportation, Housing and Urban

Development. For FY2012, the National Science Foundation would receive \$7.033 billion (+\$165 million versus enacted FY2011), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration would receive \$4.975 billion (+\$387 million versus enacted FY2011) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration would receive \$18.7 billion (-\$1 billion versus enacted FY2011). The law extends continuing appropriations at FY2011 levels for other agencies until December 16, 2011. Among the appropriation bills that have not been completed and are of particular interest to the geosciences, are the Department of Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of the Interior and the Department of Education. These departments and agencies will continue to be funded at FY2011 levels until Congress acts on these budgets.

The Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction was unable to complete a bipartisan agreement on a plan to reduce the nation's deficit and announced their stalemate in a brief statement on November 21, 2011. The committee was unable to come to any compromises on the federal budget, federal revenues or entitlements. Congress and the Obama Administration will continue to grapple with the deficit through December and likely into 2012.

MIT Graduate Student Group Organizes Letter to Supercommittee (11/11)

In an effort to convince the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (the "supercommittee") of the value of science funding, a group of graduate students from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) organized a campaign to attract graduate student signatures to support federal funding for science. The campaign, titled "Stand with Science: A Call to Action to America's Science and Engineering Graduates," produced a YouTube video and collected over 8,000 signatures to its letter that outlines the value of federal support for science to the economy.

Update on Appropriations for FY 2012 (10/11)

On November 1, the full Senate passed the Commerce, Justice Science Appropriations (S.1572), Agriculture Appropriations (H.R. 2112) and Transportation Appropriations (S.1596) for fiscal year (FY) 2012 in a mini-bus. The full Senate is expected to consider the Energy and Water Appropriations (H.R. 2354) soon, while Labor, Health and Education Appropriations (S.1599) is ready for full consideration but does not have a suggested timeline for action. This leaves the contentious Interior and Environment Appropriations (draft bill) as the only Senate appropriations bill that has not been acted upon in committee and is thus not close to a vote by the full Senate. The contention over the draft bill and between the House and the Senate is centered on funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and whether riders defining EPA regulatory authorities will be allowed. The House Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee Chair Mike Simpson (R-ID) has stated that no bill will pass in the House without riders, while many in the Senate are opposed to riders on the bill.

None of the funding levels are final as Congress has much work to do to approve of a budget for FY2012. Congress and the rest of the country are awaiting the proposal of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (i.e. the supercommittee) on a plan to reduce the deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion before completing FY2012 appropriations. The supercommittee held a public hearing on October 26 and has requested input from the public. To offer input or read the latest news from the committee please visit their website. The supercommittee's plan is due November 23.

Congress Avoids Government Shutdown with Last Minute Deal (09/11)

Congress has not passed any appropriations bills for fiscal year 2012 and with the fiscal year starting on October 1, 2011 there was pressure to pass a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the government running over the next few months. Efforts to pass a CR ran into problems in late September over providing disaster relief funds through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for citizens affected by recent flooding, hurricane, tornadoes and other hazards. The problem arose over the amount of disaster relief and how to offset these costs. The Senate initially passed a CR measure providing \$7 billion in disaster relief for FEMA. The House countered with a measure providing FEMA with \$3.65 billion over two years with part of the costs offset by cutting \$1.5 billion from a Department of Energy's (DOE) Advanced Technology Vehicles Manufacturing loan program. The House measure was unable to pass the full House and was not favored by the Senate, creating a last minute congressional crisis. Congress passed a very short term CR (H.R. 2017; P.L. 112-33) to keep the government running until October 4 as the two chambers worked on a compromise. A new CR (H.R. 2608) passed on October 4 and was signed by President Obama on October 5. The CR provides funding at FY 2011 levels for government agencies until November 18, 2011. The measure provides \$2.65 billion in FY 2012 disaster relief and does not cut the DOE's vehicle program. Congress also extended the Flood Insurance Program until November 18.

Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (08/11)

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH), House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) each selected three lawmakers for the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction. Created by Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25) the joint committee is tasked with finding \$1.5 trillion in deficit reductions. There is no upper limit to how much the committee produces in savings and no restrictions as to how they find the savings. At least seven of the 12 committee members must approve of a plan before it can be presented to Congress. Like the

committee, Congress can then vote for the plan and a simple majority is enough for passage. No Senate filibuster will be allowed because there is limited time to pass any legislation and no one wants to allow one person to potentially halt the proceedings. The committee must present its plan by November 23 and Congress will vote on this plan by December 23, 2011. It remains unclear whether or how the committee might consider taxes in their planning. If the committee does not come up with an agreeable plan, then automatic cuts would be divided over security, non-security and Medicare spending. Social Security and Medicaid would not be considered in this measure. The committee is co-chaired by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Representative Jeb Hensarling (R-TX). Senators John Kerry (D-MA), Max Baucus (D-MT), John Kyl (R-AZ), Pat Toomey (R-PA), and Rob Portman (R-OH) are the other members from the Senate. Representatives Dave Camp (R-MI), Fred Upton (R-MI), James Clyburn (D-SC), Xavier Becerra (D-CA), and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) are the other members from the House.

OMB Releases FY 2013 Budget Guidance (08/11)

On August 17, Office of Management and Budget Director Jack Lew released the fiscal year (FY) 2013 Budget Guidance to the heads of departments and agencies. The guidance calls for FY 2013 budget submissions to be at least five percent less than the FY 2011 enacted levels. Lew clarified that the cuts “should not be achieved by proposing across-the-board reductions or reductions to mandatory spending in appropriations bills, reclassifications of existing discretionary spending to mandatory, or enactment of new user fees to offset existing spending.” As part of budget submissions, agencies should offer reductions that would bring the requests down to at least 10 percent below FY 2011 enacted levels. Agencies should identify programs that could enhance economic growth.

The request comes soon after President Obama signed the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25) on August 2. The law calls for \$2 trillion in deficit reduction over the next decade and the administration is beginning the process of finding savings in discretionary spending by the federal government. The law creates a joint select committee (the “supercommittee”) to identify \$1.5 trillion in savings over the next decade by late November.

Update on Appropriations for FY 2012 (07/11)

After an intense month of debate, Congress has passed a debt limit measure, the Budget Control Act of 2011, within hours of a Treasury Department deadline of August 2 and President Obama has signed the legislation into law. The measure would raise the debt ceiling of \$14.3 trillion by as much as \$2.4 trillion in two steps over a two year period. In the first step, the Treasury would have \$400 billion as soon as President Obama certifies the government is within \$100 billion of the limit, with \$500 billion later unless two thirds of Congress objects. The second step would raise the ceiling by \$1.2 trillion subject to congressional approval. If approval is not granted then President Obama can raise the ceiling by a veto of the congressional disapproval.

The agreement calls for \$900 billion in cuts to security (\$350 billion from Defense) and non-security discretionary spending over a decade plus savings of \$1.5 trillion determined by a special committee of six Republicans and six Democrats from the House and Senate. The committee must present its plan by November 23 and Congress will vote on this plan by December 23, 2011. It remains unclear whether or how the committee might consider taxes in their planning. If the committee does not come up with an agreeable plan, then automatic cuts would be divided over security, non-security and Medicare spending. Social Security and Medicaid would not be considered in this measure. The current compromise includes miscellaneous language about higher education supplements: Pell grants would receive \$20 billion over two years while incentives for graduate students loans would be eliminated.

The debate about the debt ceiling stalled consideration of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations for fiscal year (FY) 2012 (H.R. 2584) and Commerce, Justice and Science (CJS) Appropriations for FY 2012 (H.R. 2596) on the House floor. Floor debate of many amendments to the Interior appropriations began on July 21 and continued until July 28, while floor debate on CJS appropriations has not begun. There are intense disagreements over policy riders and funding levels for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as well as environmental and climate change related programs in other agencies. Those disagreements and an interest to adjourn the House for the August recess led House leadership to table further discussion of the Interior appropriations and other measures.

Interior Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Mike Simpson (R-ID) calls EPA the “scariest agency in the federal government,” while Ranking Member Jim Moran (D-VA) predicts the debt ceiling agreement will empower Republicans to make more cuts. Simpson and other policymakers expect a continuing resolution in September to keep the federal government running at FY 2011 levels until Congress can work out an omnibus bill for most discretionary spending over October and November. Simpson predicts Interior and EPA will have leaner budgets in FY 2012, but the allocation for his subcommittee may not see large cuts because Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (R-KY) supports current allocations for this subcommittee.

Update on Appropriations for FY 2012 (06/11)

The House Appropriations Committee completed work on the Agriculture and Energy and Water appropriations bills in June. The \$125.5 billion spending bill (H.R. 2112) for Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and the Food and Drug

Administration was approved by the full committee on June 3 and approved by the House on June 16. The measure now goes to the Senate. The bill reduces spending by about 13 percent and it is likely that other appropriations bills will be reduced by similar percentages in House deliberations in July and August. The Agricultural Research Services would receive \$986 million (-\$146 million compared by FY 2011).

The \$30.6 billion spending bill (H.R. 2354) for the Department of Energy (DOE), Army Corps of Engineers, and Bureau of Reclamation was approved by the full Appropriations Committee on June 15. DOE would receive \$24.7 billion. Office of Science would receive \$4.8 billion (-\$43 million compared to FY 2011), Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy would receive \$1.3 billion (-\$491 million compared to FY 2011) and Office of Fossil Energy would receive \$477 million (+\$32 million compared to FY 2011, including +\$15 million for Natural Gas Technologies research and development). The committee provides \$25 million to continue the license application process for the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository, a project that the Obama administration would like to terminate. The committee provides no funds to restart production of plutonium-238 within DOE for propellant for future NASA space missions, even though the Bush and Obama administrations have requested the funds for the past three years.

The House Appropriations Committee will consider spending for science agencies in July and while the House advances on work on the 12 appropriation bills, Congress and the Obama administration remain at odds regarding the U.S. debt ceiling in relation to government revenues and spending. Talks between Vice President Biden and members of Congress broke down in June as House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) and Senate Minority Whip John Kyl (R-AZ) left the negotiations because the Republicans do not want to consider taxes in any compromise. President Obama is now talking with Senate and House Leadership about the debt ceiling and future government budgets.

CBO Releases 2011 Long-Term Budget Outlook (06/11)

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO), a non-partisan agency tasked with providing analyses on congressional budgetary decisions, has released its 2011 Long-Term Budget Outlook. With an aging population and rising healthcare costs over the next decade, the report calls the difference between federal revenue and federal spending “daunting.” Though the CBO does not provide specific recommendations, the report does say the status quo is unsustainable and increasing revenue, decreasing spending, or a combination of both is the only way to stabilize federal debt.

Update on Appropriations for FY 2012 (05/11)

The House Committee on Appropriations released budget allocations and a schedule for subcommittee appropriations markups in May. The budget allocations are based on the House Budget Committee resolution from April and would cut about \$46 billion from the non-security discretionary funding compared to fiscal year (FY) 2011. The Commerce, Justice, Science suballocation would be \$50.2 billion (-\$3 billion compared to FY2011 and -\$7.4 billion compared to the President’s request), the Energy and Water suballocation would be \$30.6 billion (-\$1 billion compared to FY2011 and -\$5.9 billion compared to the President’s request), the Interior, Environment suballocation would be \$27.5 billion (-\$2 billion compared to FY2011 and -\$3.8 billion compared to the President’s request) and the Labor, Health, Education suballocation would be \$139.2 billion (-\$18.2 billion compared to FY2011 and -\$41.6 billion compared to the President’s request).

Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers (R-KY) hopes to complete 9 of 12 subcommittee appropriation bills by August 5 with the consideration of remaining bills in September after the August recess. The schedule may make it difficult to complete FY 2012 appropriations in time because the House bills will need to be reconciled with the Senate bills and the schedule does not seem to provide much time for such considerations.

The Senate Budget Committee Chairman Kent Conrad (D-ND) issued a statement on May 19 indicating that the committee would defer a budget mark-up on their resolution until high-level bipartisan negotiations are completed. There was a “gang of six” senators working on a bipartisan compromise on appropriations. The gang included Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Kent Conrad (D-ND), Mark Warner (D-VA), Saxby Chambliss (R-SC), Mike Crapo (R-ID) and Tom Coburn (R-OK). In May, Senator Coburn announced that he was leaving the gang of six for the moment and it is unclear whether the remaining gang of five will be able to develop a compromise. Vice President Joe Biden has been working with a bicameral and bipartisan group to reach a compromise on budgetary negotiations in relation to the debt ceiling vote coming up in August. The Biden group includes House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA), Senate Minority Whip Jon Kyl (R-AZ), Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Daniel Inouye (D-HI), Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT), Assistant House Minority Leader Jim Clyburn (D-SC) and Ranking Member on the House Budget Committee Chris Van Hollen (D-MD).

While it looks like appropriations for FY 2012 will be delayed until December of 2011, there should be some compromise on

some major budgetary negotiations in August because Congress will need to consider legislation on raising the national debt ceiling. One should expect fireworks to continue long after the Fourth of July on Capitol Hill.

Congress Passes Budget for Fiscal Year 2011 (04/11)

After many months of contentious debates and seven continuing resolutions, Congress passed a budget for fiscal year 2011 with about six months left in the year (H.R. 1473). The President signed the legislation into law (Public Law 112-10). The budget will cut about \$61 billion from the overall federal budget. Among the science agencies, there are significant cuts to their overall budgets and targeted cuts for work related to climate change. The overall cuts include National Science Foundation (-\$66 million), U.S. Geological Survey (-\$26 million), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (-\$224 million), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (-\$253 million), Energy Department's Office of Science (-\$20 million) and the Environmental Protection Agency (-\$1.5 billion). The agencies are still working out specific cuts to specific programs, so some details are not known.

Some of the known impacts include a reduction in research grants from the NSF, delays or terminations of satellite missions with concomitant data loss or data gaps at NASA and NOAA, and reductions in research programs within the Department of Energy and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Consideration of Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Begins (04/11)

Vice President Joseph Biden began meeting with key members of Congress on May 5 to try to work out some compromises on the fiscal year (FY) 2012 budget. Besides significant disagreements between the Democrats and Republicans on budget priorities, Biden is also working to avoid acrimony over the necessity to raise the U.S. debt limit in August. Raising the debt limit is a difficult vote for all members and it will be more difficult with the ongoing budget battles.

The FY2012 budget discussions start with President Obama's budget request from February, 2011. The President's budget overview includes \$1 trillion in deficit reductions in the FY 2012 budget request and a five-year freeze on non-security discretionary spending to reduce the deficit by \$400 billion over ten years. The overview lists five keys - Innovate, Educate, Build, Responsibility and Reform – of the request.

The House Budget Committee Majority, led by Chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI), released a Path to Prosperity document about the FY 2012 budget and beyond. The document offers direction on taxes and large mandatory spending items such as Medicaid and Medicare in order to reduce the deficit over time. The plan is similar in scope to the President's National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility that released a report in December 2010 called The Moment of Truth that offers direction on taxes, mandatory spending and discretionary spending to reduce the deficit over time. The documents have significant differences and both have been criticized, nonetheless they represent a starting point for discussion and compromise for FY2012 and the future.

Both plans call for a freeze on discretionary spending and then reducing discretionary spending to pre-2008 levels. Such a path would lead to a cut of more than \$2 billion for the National Science Foundation and devastating cuts to other science agencies. Not only would such plans curtail research and education, but large projects such as monitoring networks, research vessels and satellites would be cut, terminated or not initiated to save costs.

Among other deficit-reducing strategies, the president's commission calls for a disaster fund to "budget honestly for catastrophes" and a 15-cent gas tax to support a transportation fund to pay for transportation infrastructure needs. The geosciences would be involved in prescriptions for such funds.

On April 15, the House passed a budget resolution (H. Con. Res. 34) that establishes a budget blueprint for FY2012 and budgetary levels for 2013-2021. The House will follow these guidelines in its budget deliberations. The Senate has not considered the House resolution and has not brought forth their own resolution, so there is no publicly available guidance on Senate budget deliberations. Look for Vice President Biden to work with a small group of legislators behind the scenes to work out some compromises before Congress has to vote on raising the debt ceiling in August.

House Science Committee Releases FY 2012 Budget Views (03/11)

The House Science, Space, and Technology Committee has released its Views and Estimates for Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, which outlines the Committee's stance on budgetary issues concerning research and development at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other federal agencies. It includes majority and minority party opinions and additional individual views from members of the committee.

Highlights from the Republican views include opposition to the increased funding for the Earth Science programs within NASA; concern over funding new science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education programs at NSF at the expense of others; support for considering cuts to DOE's Atmospheric System Research and the Climate and Earth Systems Modeling

programs, disapproval of reduced funding for DOE's Office of Fossil Energy; and disapproval of the proposed Climate Service at NOAA. The majority states support for funding for the Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS) at NOAA.

The Democrats of the committee in general support the President's budget request for federal science agencies, though they did express "disappointment" with the NASA budget request, saying the goals outlined by Congress for NASA are not reflected in the request. The minority supports increased funding for Earth Science at NASA and calls for funding NSF and NOAA at the requested levels.

Update on FY 2011 Budget (03/11)

The sixth continuing resolution (CR) expires on April 8, yet Congress does not seem to be close to resolving their differences regarding the fiscal year (FY) 2011 budget. Vice President Joe Biden has been trying to facilitate a compromise without much success. In general the Republicans, especially in the House, would like to have significant cuts to discretionary spending in the range of \$60 billion plus restrictions placed on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Democrats have suggested cuts in the range of \$30 billion and would like the EPA restrictions removed.

Congress has been chipping away at the discretionary spending budget in the two continuing resolutions passed in March. The fifth CR (H.J. Res. 44; Public Law 112-4) cut about \$4 billion from discretionary spending. The sixth CR (H.J. Res. 48; Public Law 112-6) cut about \$6 billion from discretionary spending, targeting climate change programs within the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Congress Debates FY2011 Budget and Passes CR (02/11)

The House began the first session of the 112th Congress with the unfinished budget for fiscal year (FY) 2011. The 111th Congress passed a continuing resolution [Continuing Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (H.R. 3082)] in December 2010, keeping the government operating on the FY 2010 budget until March 4, 2011. The House introduced a budget bill, Full Year Continuing Appropriations Act of 2011 (H.R. 1), on February 11 and held a week of debate followed by passage of the bill by the House by a vote of 235-189 on February 19. The bill cuts discretionary spending by about \$60 billion and restrains the Environmental Protection Agency from implementing many rules related to greenhouse gas emissions.

The Senate has not acted on H.R. 1 and many senators have indicated opposition to the measure because of the significant spending cuts and the language restricting EPA. In some cases, legislators in both chambers have expressed opposition to other components of the measure that they view as ideologically based and not related to appropriations.

On February 25, the House Appropriations Committee introduced a short term continuing resolution that would cut \$4 billion in discretionary spending and extend government funding at FY 2010 levels for an additional two weeks (ending on March 18, 2011). The full text of the legislation is available from the Rules Committee and the text shows the specific cuts. The measure passed the House on March 1. The Senate approved the short term CR and this will leave Congress with an additional two weeks to try to work out a compromise on the FY 2011 budget without shutting down the government.

Congress and the Obama Administration are trying to reduce the federal budget deficit. According to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimates, the federal budget deficit for FY 2010 was \$1.17 trillion, down from the deficit of \$1.7 trillion for FY 2009. The deficit in FY 2009 was much larger because of the \$700 billion government bailout of financial institutions (\$110 billion was repaid by institutions in FY 2010), the \$878 billion for the economic stimulus package, the costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the bailout of General Motors and affiliated stakeholders plus tax cuts and a patch to the alternative minimum tax. OMB predicts the deficit will grow in FY 2011 to about \$1.3 trillion as the economy continues to experience a sluggish recovery and consensus on budget solutions remain elusive.

Congress and the Administration are trying to reduce the deficit by cutting discretionary spending. Discretionary spending for FY 2010 was \$1.3 trillion with the largest amounts going to security (Defense, Homeland Security and overseas operations; \$815 billion), Health and Human Services (\$84 billion), Education (\$64.3 billion), Housing and Urban Development (\$42.8 billion), Justice (\$27.6 billion), and Agriculture (\$25 billion). The rest of the federal government accounts for the remaining \$241 billion in discretionary spending. Non-discretionary spending for FY 2010 of \$1.95 trillion included \$701 billion for Social Security, \$446 billion for Medicare, \$276 for Medicaid, \$230 billion for other mandatory programs and \$414 billion for interest on the debt. U.S. debt is over \$14 trillion or about 95 percent of gross domestic product (\$14.7 trillion) for FY 2010. It remains unclear whether any of the proposed cuts by the Administration or Congress will help to significantly reduce the federal budget imbalance or whether the cuts are cost effective in terms of overall government efficiency and their impact on economic growth.

President Obama Released His Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Request (02/11)

John Holdren, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, and the Associate Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) held a briefing on President Obama's fiscal year 2012 budget request. The budget "contains more for science and technology innovation and education than many would have thought possible" considering the

nation's dire fiscal situation, said Holdren. However, "we all would've liked to have been able to do more," he conceded. While the budget overall increases funding for science agencies throughout the federal government, he admitted this required "finding cuts in lower priority programs to offset proposed increases in others." This included lowering funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Veterans Affairs.

Carl Wieman, Associate Director for Science at OSTP, went over the increases for science, technology, mathematics and engineering (STEM) education. The National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Department of Education will receive funding to prepare 100,000 effective STEM teachers over the next decade. The budget proposes creating an Advanced Research Projects Agency - Education (ARPA-ED) along the lines of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and the Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy (ARPA-E) to transform education technology. In addition, funding at the Office of Science within the Department of Energy (DOE) is set to increase, and there are proposed investments to increase the number of graduate fellowships from the NSF.

America has now entered a global race for clean energy development against other countries to meet the challenges of climate change, according to Shere Abbot, Associate Director for Environment at OSTP. Considering this, the budget request includes administering \$550 million to ARPA-E for support of "transformational clean energy research" and increasing investment in renewable energy research, such as solar, geothermal and biofuels development. The U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP), which includes the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the NSF, will focus on researching and modeling the climate system through Earth observations by investigating greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sources sinks.

Phillip Coyle, Associate Director for National Security and International Affairs at OSTP, mentioned investments to improve cybersecurity and information assurance, as well as defense nuclear nonproliferation across several departments. Associate Director for Technology Aneesh Chopra described the ways the budget encourages research and development. It proposes re-authorizing the Clean Energy Manufacturing Tax Credit to stimulate clean energy innovation in the private sector and create jobs. Facing the possibility of \$2.5 billion cuts to research that have been proposed by the House for fiscal year 2011, Holdren said that "They would cripple our ability to advance innovation and STEM education."

Outlook for President's Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Request (01/11)

After the State of the Union speech, the White House released a fact sheet that provided some additional guidance relevant to the February 14 President's budget request to Congress. In particular, the fact sheet states: "The President's Budget will help increase the nation's R&D investments, as a share of GDP, to its highest levels since President Kennedy."

The budget will request increases for clean energy research. The fact sheet calls for: "A new commitment to supporting clean energy technology, paid for by ending taxpayer subsidies for fossil fuels: The President's Budget will propose increasing clean energy technology funding by a third compared to 2010, including an expansion of the successful ARPA-E research program and a doubling of the number of Energy Innovation Hubs operating around the country ... The President's Budget will also focus on high-value research on clean energy deployment, including more than doubling investments in energy efficiency and a more than 85 percent increase in renewable energy investment."

Leaders of the new Republican-led House have indicated that they would like to cut discretionary spending in upcoming budget deliberations. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-OH) has been leading the charge to reduce spending since the waning days of the 111th Congress when he set-up a website where citizens could propose cuts in domestic programs, particularly to research grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Appropriations for FY2011 Update (01/11)

In January, Cantor announced that the House would begin floor debate of a budget for the fiscal year (FY) 2011 on February 14, 2011. This is the same day that the President will send his FY 2012 budget request to Congress and three weeks before the continuing resolution (CR) expires. It is an unusually early date to bring a budget plan to the floor of the House, but Cantor indicated he wanted plenty of time for debate and discussion.

The new chairman of the House Appropriations Committee Harold "Hal" Rogers (R-KY) stated on the House floor that the plan is to "make the largest series of spending cuts in history". Indeed the House passed a resolution (H. Res. 38) to reduce FY2011 spending to FY2008 levels. If the schedule moves forward as proposed, then the floor debates could be used to sway congressional and public opinion.

In late breaking news, the House Budget Committee announced spending allocations for the remainder of the fiscal year to save \$74 billion. On February 3, the committee released a fact sheet describing the budget plan.

Over in the Senate, the Appropriations Committee announced on February 1 that they would implement a moratorium on earmarks for the session, following a similar pledge already implemented in the House. The moratorium will apply to the FY2011 and FY2012 budget considerations. In related news, there was an interesting measure introduced on January 27. Senators Jeanne

Shaheen (D-NH) and Johnny Isakson (R-GA) propose moving the annual federal budget process to a two-year cycle in their Biennial Budget Appropriations Act of 2011 (S.211). Representatives David Drier (R-CA) and Ed Whitfield (R-KY) introduced a similar bill (H.R. 114) in the House on January 5.

Congress will try to complete the FY2011 budget in February or March and additional continuing resolutions are likely. Congress will need to consider raising the federal debt ceiling in May or June and then turn to completing the FY2012 budget. All three of these processes will be acrimonious and difficult as there are significant differences in priorities between the major parties, the House and the Senate and Congress and the Administration.

Sources: Congressional Budget Office, House Budget Committee, THOMAS (Library of Congress)

The Budget Process

Below is a diagram of the congressional budget process that first appeared in *Following the Budget Process* that was published in the March 1996 issue of *Geotimes*. It is adapted from a diagram developed by the House Budget Committee. Click on the image to open a PDF version.

Sources: American Association for the Advancement of Science, E&ENews Publications, House Committee on Appropriations, Library of Congress, Senate Committee on Appropriations, and the White House Office of Management and Budget.

Please send any comments or requests for information to the AGI Government Affairs Program at govt@agiweb.org.

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