The House moved forward on multiple pieces of legislation this week, with the House Armed Services Subcommittees releasing their versions of the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and the full House Appropriations Committee considering its versions of the Agriculture-Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Military Construction-Veterans Affairs fiscal year (FY) 2024 federal funding bills. Both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees are expected to further consider their versions of the NDAA next week. Additional House Appropriations Subcommittees are also expected to release and consider their own funding bills in the coming weeks, which will include funding totals for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation (NSF), and Department of Defense (DOD).

The University of Minnesota Washington Update provides intelligence and analysis on recent federal activities. Contact Jackson Clark, Lewis-Burke Associates LLC, at jackson@lewis-burke.com with any questions or comments related to the Update’s content.

Appropriations, Agency Updates and Funding, Engagement Opportunities

Appropriations Update: House Appropriations Committee Advances FY 2024 Agriculture & FDA Bill
After eight hours of intense debate on a variety of highly political amendments, on June 14, the House Appropriations Committee approved its version of the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies appropriations bill with a party-line vote of 34-27.

The bill’s topline allocation is $17.2 billion for discretionary funding, an $8 billion reduction. Subcommittee Chair Andy Harris (R-MD) noted the bill would redirect nearly $8 billion from various rescissions, including funding from the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the American Rescue Plan, bringing the total discretionary amount to $25.3 billion. This is $532 million below the FY 2023 enacted level and roughly flat with the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) FY 2022 funding level. Prior to the Committee’s markups this week, Chairwoman Kay Granger (R-TX) announced that appropriations bills would adhere to FY 2022 levels, limiting spending beyond what was agreed to in the debt deal.
Some rescissions were altered during the markup, with the most significant rescissions coming from IRA rural energy programs, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and programs serving distressed and underserved farmers. The legislation would also block executive orders on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and it eliminates funding for USDA’s diversity and inclusion office.

A full analysis of the bill can be found here.

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**Agency Update: FDA Releases Draft Guidance Aiming to Modernize Clinical Trials**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released new draft guidance under the Good Clinical Practice (GCP) standard to modernize clinical trials for medical products, with an emphasis on a risk-based approach to balance trial quality, patient safety, and efficiency. GCP is an “international, ethical, scientific and quality standard for the conduct of trials that involve human participants.” The guidance calls for sponsors to utilize this approach across the entirety of a trial to protect the rights, safety and well-being of participants, assure the reliability of results, and avoid delays as products are submitted for approval to make trials more efficient and potentially accelerate evidence generation for medical products. The draft guidance emphasizes the following aspects of GCP when conducting clinical trials:

- Informed Consent
- Independent Review by an Institutional Review Board/Independent Ethics Committee
- High Quality Nonclinical and Clinical Information on an Investigational Product, Individuals Conducting the Trial, and Scientific and Operational Design and Conduct
- Risk-Proportionate Implementation
- Reliable Results
- Clear Roles and Responsibilities

As a part of the guidance’s emphasis on patient safety and trial quality, it also calls for individuals who monitor these aspects of clinical trials to use digital technologies, such as wearable devices, to monitor patient activity and collect data, even if the data is monitored in a centralized manner. FDA Commissioner Robert Califf lauded the draft guidance, stating that “building quality into the design and conduct of trials and encouraging the use of innovative trial designs and health technologies are essential to truly advance clinical trials and generate meaningful results.”

The draft guidance will be open for public comment until September 5, 2023.

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**Funding Opportunity: HHS Announces $15 Million for New Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program**

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently established a new $15 million Pediatric Specialty Loan Program, housed at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which aims to expand pediatric and behavioral health care services across medically underserved areas. The Pediatric Specialty Loan Program provides up to $100,000 to clinicians providing pediatric subspecialty care, including school-based child and adolescent behavioral health care, in exchange for three years of work in areas across the nation experiencing significant health professional shortages.
The program is one of many existing loan repayment and scholarship programs at HRSA and intends to promote recruitment and retention efforts and support the broader healthcare workforce. Applications are due by July 20, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. ET.

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**Funding Opportunity: HRSA Releases Solicitation for Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training- Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults (BHWET-CAY) Program for Professionals**

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) soliciting applications to its Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training- Children, Adolescents, and Young Adults (BHWET-CAY) Program for Professionals. The main objective is to increase the availability and outreach of behavioral health professionals for children, adolescents, and young adults (ages 16-25) in rural and underserved communities. The BHWET-CAY program aims to “address specific bottlenecks in recruiting and training behavioral health professionals including by providing stipends to support trainees during their clinical/experiential training and by increasing the supply of and training for clinical supervisors overseeing trainees.” The BHWET-CAY program goals include:

- Establishing training opportunities in community-based settings serving children, adolescents, and young adults, prioritizing settings in underserved and rural communities;
- Increasing the number of clinical supervisors for behavioral health trainees and enhancing training opportunities for new and existing faculty and clinical supervisors focused on the behavioral health needs of children, adolescents, and young adults; and
- Providing assistance and support to connect graduates with employment opportunities.

**Award Information:** HRSA anticipates funding 18 grant awards for up to $530,000 per award. The period of performance for each award is two years.

**Eligibility:** Institutions of higher education or accredited professional training programs with a focus in behavioral health sciences are eligible to apply.

Applications must be submitted by July 14, 2023. Additional information, including submission instructions, can be found in the full NOFO here or at www.grants.gov under the Funding Opportunity Number “HRSA-23-123.”

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**Funding Opportunity: NIWC Pacific Releases BAA for C4ISR Research**

The Naval Information Warfare Center, Pacific (NIWC Pacific) released a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) seeking white papers and proposals that enhance and enable Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) activities, Information Operations, Information Technology and Cyberspace technologies through innovative research approaches. Below is a list of the research topics of specific interest to NIWC Pacific, however other naval research components may express interest in the white papers submitted in response to this solicitation and may request proposals and issue awards based on the information provided.

Technical topics of interest include:
1. General C4ISR
2. Command and Control
3. Communications
4. Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance
5. Unmanned Vehicles
6. Information Operations/Cyberspace Operations
7. Ubiquitous Communications and Computing Environment
8. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Research
9. Advanced Power and Energy Production and Efficient Use
10. Cryogenics & Quantum

Additionally, the Navy may issue a BAA Call Opportunity related to one of the research topics above during the open period of this solicitation. Eligibility and instructions to respond to those calls will be provided by the Navy separately.

Eligibility: All responsible sources are eligible to apply. While there is no set-aside, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Serving Institutions are encouraged to apply or partner with others in submitting an application.

Due Date & Time: The submission of a 5-page white paper is required before a proposal; white papers and proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis until 4:00pm Pacific Time on June 7, 2024. Please note - white paper submissions for contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements will only be accepted via NAVWAR e-Commerce Central at: https://e-commerce.sscno.nmci.navy.mil. Submissions sent via email will not be considered. In addition to the white papers, applicants are required to provide a PDF with a short executive summary of the effort.

Awards: NIWC Pacific anticipates making multiple awards in the form of contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and/or other transactions; funding floor/ceiling not specified.

For the full announcement, to include more information regarding white paper and proposal submission instructions, please visit: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=348612, or search “N66001-23-S-4702 “ on the www.grants.gov website.

Engagement Opportunity: DOD Hosts 2023 Climate Resilience Workshop

The Department of Defense (DOD) has announced its 2023 Climate Resilience Workshop to convene defense stakeholders and facilitate discussion around climate change and its impact on the warfighter. The workshop will center around efforts towards DOD’s Climate Adaptation Plan and hosted by DOD’s Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment (ASD (EI&E)). Attendees will be able to participate in over 30 sessions, including a plenary panel on “Enhancing Climate Resilience Across the Federal Government” where attendees will hear from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for EI&E Brendan Owens, as well as climate and environment leaders from each of the services. Sessions will cover DOD partnerships, strategic plans, installations, and resilience projects related to climate change. Owens expressed that the workshop will serve as an “opportunity to bring together an interdisciplinary group of professionals from local,
state, federal, and non-governmental organizations to discuss data, tools, and resources for enhancing the Department's climate resilience at our installations."

The workshop will be held from July 10 – 13 in St. Louis, Missouri. You can register here. The full press release can be found here.

Engagement Opportunity: DARPA Hosts 2023 Electronic Resurgence Initiative Summit

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has announced that registration for the 2023 Electronics Resurgence Initiative (ERI) 2.0 Summit, to be hosted in Seattle, Washington from August 22-24, is now open. ERI 2.0 Summit participants will have the opportunity to hear from and connect with “leaders from our government agencies, the Defense Industrial Base, and prestigious universities that bring unique and indispensable perspectives on our domestic semiconductor industry, national and economic security, and future research directions.” Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering Heidi Shyu (USD R&E), DARPA Director Dr. Stefanie Tompkins, and other notable leaders are scheduled to participate. Those interested in attending can register here before the deadline of July 31, 2023. More information on the ERI 2.0 Summit can be found by following the website here.

Engagement Opportunity: Department of Transportation Releases RFI on ARPA-I

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) released a Request for Information (RFI) on potential areas of focus for future Advanced Research Projects Agency – Infrastructure (ARPA-I) programs. ARPA-I was authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and received initial funding from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023. The purpose of ARPA-I is to provide external funding for advanced innovative research projects to improve the United States’ transportation infrastructure through the development of new transportation systems, capabilities, and technologies that have a clear pathway to cross-modal deployment and commercialization within five to ten years. Additionally, ARPA-I programs are expected to augment existing research activities within the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology and will be in support of the Department’s strategic goals of Climate and Sustainability; Safety; Economic Strength and Global Competitiveness; Equity; and Transformation. ARPA-I’s goals include lowering the long-term costs of transportation infrastructure development, reducing the environmental impact of transportation infrastructure, increasing resiliency of transportation infrastructure, ensuring U.S. leadership in advanced transportation infrastructure technologies, and improving the safety and efficiency of the movement of goods and people in the United States.

The RFI includes five topic areas: safety; advanced construction materials; digital infrastructure; freight logistics optimization; and climate resiliency. For each topic, DOT is interested in information on high-risk, high-reward emerging areas of innovation, which will inform DOT on potential opportunities for ARPA-I programs. Respondents do not need to provide answers for all the topics and all stakeholders are invited to provide input. There is also a question that allows respondents to recommend areas of research outside of the five provided categories.

Responses to the RFI should be submitted to docket number “DOT–OST–2023–0092” electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal by Friday, July 28, 2023. Respondents with questions about the RFI should correspond with the DOT point of contact Timothy Klein at timothy.klein@dot.gov.
Sources and Additional Information:

- The federal eRulemaking Portal is accessible at [https://www.regulations.gov/](https://www.regulations.gov/).

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