



Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies: FY2008 Appropriations

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Summary

The President submitted his FY2008 appropriations request to Congress on February 5, 2007, including \$105.2 billion for programs covered in this appropriations bill: \$21.2 billion for Title I (military construction and family housing); \$83.9 billion for Title II (veterans affairs); and \$163 million for Title III (related agencies). With no regular appropriation passed or enacted for FY2007, this must be compared with the combined totals of the subsequent continuing resolutions and emergency supplemental appropriations: \$17.9 billion for Title I; \$79.6 billion for Title II; and \$149 million for Title III. The request represented an increase of \$3.2 billion (18.0%) in Title I, \$4.4 billion (5.5%) in Title II, and \$14 thousand (9.2%) in Title III above the FY2007 enacted appropriations. The overall FY2008 request exceeded the FY2007 appropriations by \$7.6 billion, an increase of 7.8%.

The House passed its version of the FY2008 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, H.R. 2642, on June 15, 2007. The Senate passed an amended version on September 6. H.R. 2764, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008, enacted on December 27, 2007 as P.L. 110–161, included FY2008 funding for Military Construction and Veterans Affairs as Division I. The bill’s legislative path is laid out in detail in the “Enactment of the Regular FY2008 Appropriations” section of this report.

While appropriations for Title I activities has increased above FY2007, this is not true across all appropriations accounts. Funds for military family housing in FY2008 are less than those for FY2007, while construction for the active and reserve military components and appropriations for Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) actions exceed 2007-enacted amounts. Much of this addition can be attributed to the recently authorized increase in end-strength of military ground forces and the onset of construction required by the 2005 BRAC round.

In veterans’ non-medical benefits, mandatory spending for disability compensation, pension, and readjustment benefits is increasing due to the aging of the veterans population and the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a result of the increase in the number of claims, the average processing time for a disability claim in FY2006 was 177 days. To reduce the pending claims workload and improve the claims processing time, funds were provided in the FY2007 supplemental and in the FY2008 appropriation for hiring and training additional claims processing staff. While mandatory spending has increased by 19.6% between FY2006 and FY2008 (from \$37.2 billion to \$44.5 billion), mandatory spending has declined as a share of the total VA appropriation (from 52.1% in FY2006 to 50.7% in FY2008).

In terms of medical care afforded to veterans, similar to the past five years, the Administration has included several cost sharing proposals including increase in pharmacy copayments and enrollment fees for lower priority veterans. The House Appropriations Committee draft bill provides \$37.1 billion for VHA for FY2008, a 9.1% increase over the FY2007 enacted amount of \$34.0 billion, and 7.3% above the President’s request of \$34.6 billion. The draft bill does not include any provisions that would give VA the authority to implement fee increases. This report will be updated as events warrant.

Contents

Most Recent Developments.....	1
Status of Legislation.....	1
Summary and Key Issues	2
Appropriations Subcommittee Jurisdiction Realignment, 110 th Congress	2
Executive Order 13457	2
Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2007	4
Continuing Resolutions	4
FY2007 Emergency Supplemental Request for the Global War on Terror	4
U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (H.R. 1591 and H.R. 2206).....	5
Fiscal Year 2008 Appropriations	6
FY2008 Emergency Supplemental Request for the Global War on Terror	6
Enactment of the Regular FY2008 Appropriations.....	7
Title I: Department of Defense	10
Military Construction	10
Key Budget Issues	10
Base Realignment and Closure/Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (Global Defense Posture Realignment).....	10
“Growing the Force”	13
Overseas Initiatives	13
Title II: Department of Veterans Affairs	14
Agency Overview	15
Key Budget Issues	17
Medical Care	19
Title III: Related Agencies.....	21
American Battle Monuments Commission.....	21
U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims	21
Department of Defense - Civil (Army Cemeterial Expenses)	22
Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH)	22

Figures

Figure 1. New Budget Authority Estimates, BRAC 2005 Implementation.....	11
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Tables

Table 1. Status of FY2008 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations (H.R. 2642, S. 1645, H.R. 3043, H.R. 2764).....	1
Table 2. Status of FY2008 National Defense Authorization (H.R. 1585, S. 1547, H.R. 4986)	2
Table 3. IGPBS/GDPR One-Time Implementation Costs.....	12

Table 4. Department of Veterans Affairs Appropriations, FY2001-FY2007	14
Table 5. Appropriations: Department of Veterans Affairs, FY2006-FY2008	15
Table 6. Appropriations: Related Agencies, FY2006-FY2008	23
Table A-1. DOD Military Construction.....	24

Appendixes

Appendix A. Consolidated Non-VA Funding Tables	24
Appendix B. Additional Resources	28

Contacts

Author Contact Information	29
Key Policy Staff for Military Construction, Military Quality of Life, and Veterans Affairs Appropriations	29

Most Recent Developments

Representative Chet Edwards, chair of the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies, introduced the appropriations bill on June 11, 2007. The House passed the bill on June 15 and sent it to the Senate. Senator Jack Reed proposed amendment of the bill when it was brought to the floor on September 4. After debate and additional amendment, the Senate adopted the measure on September 6. Conference on the bill was held on November 5, when was incorporated into Division B of the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill (H.R. 3043). The House agreed to the revised bill on November 6. Nevertheless, during subsequent Senate debate, Division B was stripped after a point of order was raised.

The appropriations bill was combined with others and added to the State Foreign Operations and Related Activities Appropriations bill (H.R. 2764) on December 17, 2007, to form Division I of the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008. The Senate concurred with the House amendments and both chambers cleared the bill for the White House on December 19. The President enacted the measure on December 26, 2007 (P.L. 110-161).

A detailed description of the legislative path for the appropriations bill, the accompanying national defense authorization bills, and several interim continuing resolutions can be found in section of this report entitled “Enactment of the Regular FY2008 Appropriations.”

Status of Legislation

Table 1. Status of FY2008 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations (H.R. 2642, S. 1645, H.R. 3043, H.R. 2764)¹

Committee Markup		House Report	House Passage (H.R. 2642)	Senate Report	Senate Passage (H.R. 2642)	Conf. Report (H.R. 3043)	Conference Report Approval		Public Law (H.R. 2764)
House	Senate						House	Senate	
6/6/07	6/13/07	H.Rept. 110-186	6/15/07	S.Rept. 110-85	9/6/07	H.Rept. 110-424	12/17/07	12/18/07	P.L. 110-161

¹ Joined with Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill (H.R. 3043) on November 5, 2007. That bill was vetoed by the President on November 13, whereupon the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act was incorporated into the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY2008 (H.R.2764) as Division I. The bill’s joint explanatory statement is published in the *Congressional Record* of December 17, 2007, on pages H15741-16644.

Table 2. Status of FY2008 National Defense Authorization (H.R. 1585, S. 1547, H.R. 4986)

Committee Markup		House Report	House Passage (H.R. 1585)	Senate Report	Senate Passage (H.R. 1585)	Conf. Report (H.R. 1585)	Conference Report Approval		Public Law
House	Senate						House	Senate	
5/9/07	5/24/07	H.Rept. 110-146	5/17/07	S.Rept. 110-77	10/11/07	H.Rept. 110-477	12/12/07	12/14/07	P.L. 110-181

Summary and Key Issues

Appropriations Subcommittee Jurisdiction Realignment, 110th Congress

With the opening of the 110th Congress, the House and Senate brought the responsibilities of their appropriations subcommittees more closely into alignment. On the House side, this resulted in a new alignment of jurisdictions and the renaming of several subcommittees.

Non-construction quality-of-life defense appropriations that had been considered in the House version of this appropriations bill during the 109th Congress, including Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization, Basic Allowance for Housing, Environmental Restoration, and the Defense Health Program, were transferred to the jurisdiction of the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense. The former Subcommittee on Military Quality of Life, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies became the Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies, mirroring its counterpart in the Senate.

Executive Order 13457

Congress typically funds this act by appropriating directly to broadly defined appropriations accounts, such as *Military Construction – Army* or *Family Housing – Air Force*. These appropriations are stated within the statutory language of the act itself. Nevertheless, within the budget documentation that the President submits to Congress each year are hundreds of detailed justifications for individual construction projects at specified locations for stated purposes in established funding amounts. The appropriations and authorization committees consider each of these as individual requests and indicate their approval, disapproval, or additions to the project lists in the explanatory statements reported to their respective chambers. While it is generally recognized by legal experts that statutory language, those provisions stated in the body of legislation passed by Congress and enacted by the President, carries the full weight of law, the legal standing of statements contained within what is generally considered supporting language, such as explanatory statements written into reports to the chambers by members of committees, is less clear.

On January 29, 2008, President George W. Bush issued Executive Order (E.O.) 13457, titled “Protecting American Taxpayers From Government Spending on Wasteful Earmarks.” In that E.O., the President stated, in part, that:

For appropriations laws and other legislation enacted after the date of this order, executive agencies should not commit, obligate, or expend funds on the basis of earmarks included in any non-statutory source, including requests in reports of committees of the Congress or other congressional documents, or communications from or on behalf of Members of Congress, or any other non-statutory source, except when required by law or when an agency has itself determined a project, program, activity, grant, or other transaction to have merit under statutory criteria or other merit-based decisionmaking.²

The impact of E.O. 13457 on the current appropriation or implementation practices of either the executive or the legislative branches is unclear. For example, the order states that “executive agencies *should* [emphasis added] not commit, obligate, or expend funds ...” under certain circumstances. In law, “should” is interpreted as non-binding guidance to those to whom it is addressed. However, in a subsequent section of the E.O., the President directs that “the head of each agency *shall* [emphasis added] take all necessary steps ...” to implement the policy according to certain criteria that he then lays out. It should be noted that “shall” is a much stronger, directive term. The E.O. applies only to appropriations enacted after January 29, 2008, and will therefore not affect any existing or prior-year appropriation.

The E.O. does not appear to bar the implementation of congressionally directed funding in cases where spending is “required by law or when an agency has itself determined a project, program, activity, grant, or other transaction to have merit under statutory criteria or other merit-based decisionmaking.” Examples of such a situation have existed where particular construction projects have been directed in the text of previously enacted authorization acts. The President’s order also allows agency heads to “consider the views of a House, committee, Member, officer, or staff of the Congress with respect to commitments, obligations, or expenditures to carry out any earmark” when “such views are in writing”

In addition, the definition of an “earmark” written into the E.O. may reduce somewhat the clarity of exactly what spending is to be avoided. That definition states that earmarks are “purported congressional direction (*whether in statutory text, report language, or other communication*) [that] circumvents otherwise applicable merit-based or competitive allocation processes, or specifies the location or recipient” (emphasis added).³ While much of the E.O. stresses the necessity of adhering to the letter of the law, this definition could be interpreted as preventing an agency from observing some statutory text.

More generally, the E.O. may raise a number of other questions regarding future expenditure of appropriated funds. Two examples are suggested below.

1. There are instances where a construction project is not stated within the statutory text of the law in question, but rather is referenced in the text of another. An example might be a statutory requirement for the Department of Veterans Affairs to construct a number of cemeteries for the use of veterans at specified locations for which appropriations are not provided until a number of

² The President defines “earmark” as “funds provided by the Congress for projects, programs, or grants where the purported congressional direction (whether in statutory text, report language, or other communication) circumvents otherwise applicable merit-based or competitive allocation processes, or specifies the location or recipient, or otherwise curtails the ability of the executive branch to manage its statutory and constitutional responsibilities pertaining to the funds allocation process.” The full text of E.O. 13457 can be found online at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/01/20080129-5.html>.

³ Legal interpretation in this section has been assisted by CRS Legislative Attorney (name redacted).

years later.⁴ Would the E.O. bar the initiation of construction until such a statutory link is found and proven to unambiguously cover each project?

2. The E.O. grants agency heads the authority to accept congressionally directed funding when a project has “merit under statutory criteria or other merit-based decisionmaking,” or when considering “the views of a House, committee, Member, officer, or staff of the Congress ... when such views are in writing” Do these provisions constitute a broad discretion on the part of agency heads to accept congressional guidance on spending?

Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2007

Continuing Resolutions

The 109th Congress was unable to pass H.R. 5385, the Military Construction, Military Quality of Life, and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2007. In the absence of an annual appropriation, Fiscal Year 2007 funding for all of the accounts included in that bill was sustained by a series of continuing resolutions that spanned the final weeks of the 109th Congress and the initial weeks of the first session of the 110th Congress. Div. B of H.R. 5631 (P.L. 109-289), the Department of Defense Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2007, continued appropriations for a variety of activities, including those covered by H.R. 5385, from the beginning of Fiscal Year 2007 through November 16, 2006, using various formulas.⁵ In general, these equated to the lowest of the House-passed, Senate-passed, or last-enacted funding levels.

H.J.Res. 100 (P.L. 109-369) continued appropriations through December 18, 2006.

H.J.Res. 102 (P.L. 109-383) continued appropriations through February 15, 2007.

H.J.Res. 20 (P.L. 110-5) was passed by the 110th Congress and enacted on February 15, 2007. It incorporated the previous continuing resolutions and extended them, with some modification to military construction and veterans benefits, through the end of Fiscal Year 2007 (September 30, 2007).

Additional information regarding the recent history of and practices regarding continuing resolutions can be found in CRS Report RL30343, *Continuing Resolutions: Latest Action and Brief Overview of Recent Practices*, by (name redacted), and CRS Report RL32614, *Duration of Continuing Resolutions in Recent Years*, by (name redacted).

FY2007 Emergency Supplemental Request for the Global War on Terror

As part of his Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Request, President George W. Bush included a recommendation for an additional \$93.4 billion emergency supplemental appropriation to support what the Administration terms the Global War on Terror (GWOT). As stated in the *Fiscal Year 2008 Budget Appendix (Additional FY2007 and FY2008 Proposals)*, the included military construction funds would be “used to build urgent facilities needed for the Global War on Terror,

⁴ Other instances where text outside of an appropriations act may be considered as legally binding can occur when Congress incorporates language such as “shall be effective as if enacted by law,” or “in accordance with” into statute.

⁵ See Div. B, Sec. 101(b)—(e) of the act.

including buildings, perimeter fences and barriers, secure fuel facilities, and roads to improve the force protection and safety of U.S. military forces. The funds would also be used to construct theater-located operations facilities needed to improve the capabilities of combat forces. In addition, the funds would cover the cost of housing, maintenance, and training infrastructure needed to support an expansion of Army and Marine Corps ground combat forces.”⁶

This supplemental request asked to add \$1.38 billion to the FY2007 Army military construction account, \$412.5 million to the FY2007 Navy and Marine Corps military construction account, and \$60.2 million to the FY2007 Air Force military construction account.

Supplementary budget documentation forwarded by DOD distributed the funding along three main functions: “Continuing the Fight,” “Reconstituting the Force,” and “Enhancing Ground Forces.” Military construction was included in the first and the last of these.

Under “Continuing the Fight,” DOD indicated that approximately \$980.0 million would be devoted to the construction and improvement of facilities in Iraq and Afghanistan in direct support of ground force military operations. The Navy would spend \$85.1 million for facilities in Djibouti and at Naval Station Guantanamo, Cuba, and the Air Force would use \$60.2 million to improve airfield facilities in Afghanistan.

Approximately \$100 million of military construction under “Enhancing Ground Forces” was intended to accelerate the transition of existing Army and Marine units into two Brigade Combat Teams (Army) and a single Regimental Combat Team (Marine). The remaining construction funding, approximately \$729 million, would build housing and maintenance and training facilities for 92,000 new troops to be added to Army and Marine end strength by the end of 2012 (See “Growing the Force” under “Military Construction,” “Key Budget Issues” below).⁷

U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (H.R. 1591 and H.R. 2206)

Representative David R. Obey, chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, introduced an emergency supplemental bill (H.Rept. 110-60) on March 20, 2007. The bill passed the House on Friday, March 23, and was received in the Senate on the same day. It was laid before the Senate on the following Monday, March 26, whereupon Senator Robert C. Byrd, chair of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, offered the text of a similar bill, S. 965 (S.Rept. 110-37), as an amendment in the nature of a substitute. Senate debate continued through March 29, 2007, when the chamber passed the bill with amendment and requested a conference. The Conference Committee filed its report on April 24, 2007 (H.Rept. 110-107). The amended H.R. 1591 passed both houses by April 26, and was presented to the President on May 1, 2007. The President vetoed the bill.

Mr. Obey introduced a new bill (H.R. 2206) on May 8, 2007, that was passed on May 10. The Senate passed an amended bill on May 17. A newly conferenced bill was passed by both houses

⁶ The quotation is taken from pg. 1161. The appendix is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/fy2008/>.

⁷ For a comprehensive discussion of the FY2007 GWOT Emergency Supplemental Appropriations request, see CRS Report RL33900, *FY2007 Supplemental Appropriations for Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Other Purposes*, coordinated by (name redacted).

on May 24 and presented to the President the next day. He signed it on May 25, 2007 (P.L. 110-28). Funding provided by the emergency appropriation is noted in the tables located in **Appendix A** to this report.

One significant effect of this supplemental appropriation was its impact on funding to implement the 2005 BRAC round. DOD had requested approximately \$5.6 billion in FY2007 to begin a number of construction projects in anticipation of facility and troop movements. When the new fiscal year began on October 1, 2006, these projects could not be initiated. The continuing resolution (H.J.Res. 20) provided partial funding by appropriating \$2.5 billion for BRAC 2005 activities. P.L. 110-28 appropriated the remaining \$3.1 billion to fund BRAC to the originally requested level.

Fiscal Year 2008 Appropriations

Representative David R. Obey, chair of the House Committee on Appropriations, introduced on September 25, 2007, a joint resolution (H.J.Res. 52) making continuing appropriations for Fiscal Year 2008. The resolution would provide funds needed to continue federal operations through November 16 at the rates provided in the applicable appropriations acts for Fiscal Year 2007. The House agreed by the Yeas and Nays (404 - 14) to an amended resolution on September 26 (Roll No. 911, *CR* H10913-20). The Senate passed the measure without amendment by a Yea-Nay vote (94 - 1) on the following day (Record Vote No. 355, *CR* S12255-58), and the President signed it on November 13 (P.L. 110-92).

Division B of the FY2008 DOD Appropriations Act (H.R. 3222, P.L. 110-116, enacted November 13, 2007) continued government funding through December 14, 2007. This cycle repeated during December. Representative Obey introduced H.J.Res. 69, which would continue P.L. 110-92 through December 21. This measure passed both chambers on the following day, by the Yeas and Nays in the House (385-27, Roll no. 1162, *CR* H15438) and by Unanimous Consent in the Senate. The President signed the resolution into law on December 14.

FY2008 Emergency Supplemental Request for the Global War on Terror

In February 2007, coincident with its annual request for FY2008 appropriations, the Department of Defense submitted an supplemental request for \$141.7 billion in funding dedicated primarily, but not exclusively, to support ongoing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. This request was enhanced in July 2007 by an additional \$5.3 billion for the procurement of additional Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles, increasing the total FY2008 supplemental request to \$147.0 billion.⁸ In October 2007, the Administration again amended the supplemental request with an additional \$42.3 billion, bringing the FY2008 supplemental total to \$189.3 billion.

Construction funding was requested in the amended supplemental request, spread across several disparate initiatives both directly and indirectly associated with ongoing military operations.

Those new or upgraded operational facilities for which funds were requested included airfield and maintenance enhancements in Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, and Iraq. New or replacement

⁸ See CRS Report RS22707, *Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected (MRAP) Vehicles: Background and Issues for Congress*, by (name redacted) for an examination of the issues surrounding MRAP procurement.

communications and operations centers were designated for Kuwait and Qatar. There was a request for a new headquarters and associated facilities for a Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) at Camp Lemonier in Djibouti and a special operations logistics warehouse in Qatar. Construction associated directly with ongoing military operations included enhanced overhead cover for several existing facilities at various sites in Iraq and road construction and paving in Afghanistan intended to deter the use of Improvised Explosive Devices or to route military road traffic around congested areas.

Other construction was intended to support the expansion of U.S. ground forces by accelerating the creation of facilities to house two new Army Brigade Combat Teams and one new Marine Corps Regimental Combat Team. These new units are expected to require facilities at Ft. Riley, KS, Ft. Knox, KY, and Marine Corps Bases Camp Pendleton, CA, and Lejeune, NC, and Twentynine Palms, CA.

Further funding was requested to accelerate the replacement of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in the District of Columbia with a new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) at the site of the current National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, and a new community hospital at Ft. Belvoir, VA. This is part of one of the recommendations made by the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (commonly referred to as the 2005 BRAC Commission) and approved by the President. The new facilities are scheduled to open during May 2011. The emergency appropriation request added \$416 million to the project in order to complete the Ft. Belvoir hospital in August 2010 and the WRNMMC in May 2010.

Additional medical-related projects for which funding was requested in the supplemental included a \$21 million addition to and renovation of the Burn Rehabilitation Unit at the Brooke Army Medical Center, Ft. Sam Houston, TX, and \$138.1 million for the construction of various Barracks and Transitioning Warrior Support Complexes for the use of injured service members and their families.⁹

Enactment of the Regular FY2008 Appropriations

The House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies marked its draft of the appropriations bill on May 22, 2007, recommending a total Fiscal Year 2008 appropriation of \$109.2 billion. The full Committee marked the bill on June 6. Representative Chet Edwards, chair of the subcommittee, introduced the bill on June 11 (H.R. 2642, H.Rept. 110-186). After agreeing to floor amendment, the House passed the bill by the Yeas and Nays (409 - 2, Roll no. 498, *CR* H6565) on June 15 and sent it to the Senate, where it was received on June 18. Senate appropriations subcommittee markup of its own original bill occurred on June 13, with full committee markup on June 14. Senator Jack Reed introduced that bill (S. 1645, S.Rept. 110-85, Calendar No. 205) on June 18, 2007. H.R. 2642 was laid before the Senate on September 4, when Senator Reed proposed its amendment by substituting the text of S. 1645. A number of additional amendments were proposed during the ensuing floor debate prior to its adoption by Yea-Nay vote on September 6 (92 - 1, Record Vote No. 316, *CR* 9/7/2007 S11271-11278). Conference on the bill was held in early November, when the conferees folded the bill into Division B of the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill

⁹ This construction is in addition to that required by a BRAC Commission recommendation consolidating the medical operations of Wilford Hall Medical Center at Lackland Air Force Base and Brooke into the San Antonio Military Medical Center.

(H.R. 3043, H.Rept. 110-424). The joint bill would have appropriated \$715 billion, of which \$606.4 billion was devoted to Labor-HHS-Education and \$109.2 billion was designated for Military Construction/VA and Related Agencies.¹⁰ The House agreed to the conference report on H.R. 3043 late on November 6 by the Yeas and Nays (269-142, Roll no. 1050, *CR* H13198). During Senate debate on November 7, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison raised a point of order against the inclusion of Division B under Senate Rule XXVIII, para. 3.¹¹ A motion to waive the rule was rejected by the Yeas and Nays (47-46, Record Vote No. 404, *CR* S14028-14044), and the Division B was stricken from the bill.¹²

On November 7, Representative Roger F. Wicker, ranking member on the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies subcommittee of the House Committee on Appropriations, introduced H.R. 4104, a stand-alone version of the bill.¹³ The bill was referred to the Committees on Appropriations and the Budget. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, ranking member of the equivalent subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, introduced a similar bill, S. 2363, on November 15, which was placed on the Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. These followed the October 31 introduction of H.Res. 786 by Representative Phil Gingrey, which would amend House rules to require that general appropriations for military construction and veterans' affairs be considered as stand-alone measures.¹⁴

On September 25, 2007, Representative David R. Obey introduced H.J.Res. 52 (P.L. 110-92), a joint resolution making continuing appropriations for FY2008 through November 16, 2007. The House passed the measure on September 27, the Senate did the same the following day.¹⁵ The resolution was enacted by presidential signature on September 29. Division B of the FY2008 DOD Appropriations Act (H.R. 3222, P.L. 110-116, enacted November 13, 2007) continued government funding through December 14, 2007. This cycle repeated during December. Representative Obey introduced H.J.Res. 69, which continued P.L. 110-92 through December 21. This measure passed both chambers, by the Yeas and Nays in the House (385-27, Roll no. 1162, *CR* H15438-15440) and by Unanimous Consent in the Senate on December 13 (*CR* S15432). The President signed the bill the following day (P.L. 110-137).

¹⁰ For a discussion of the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, see CRS Report RL34076, *Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education: FY2008 Appropriations*, by (name redacted), (name redacted), and (name redacted).

¹¹ Rule XXVIII addresses conference committees, their reports, and meetings. Para. 3 requires that in any case in which a disagreement to an amendment in the nature of a substitute has been referred to conferees: (1) it shall be in order for the conferees to report a substitute on the same subject matter; (2) the conferees may not include in the report matter not committed to them by either House; and (3) the conferees may include in their report in any such case matter which is a germane modification of subjects in disagreement. A violation of the rule permits a point of order to be raised. For a detailed discussion of changes in Senate rules for the 110th Congress, which includes Rule XXVII, see CRS Report RS22733, *Senate Rules Restricting the Content of Conference Reports*, by (name redacted).

¹² The amended H.R.3043 was then passed by the Senate by the Yeas and Nays (56-37, Record Vote No. 405) and sent to the House, where the Senate amendment was agreed on November 8 by the Yeas and Nays (274-141, Roll no. 1075) and sent to the President.

¹³ Mr. Wicker's introductory remarks on November 8, 2007, are found in the Congressional Record on pages *CR* H13301-13302.

¹⁴ H.R.4104 was referred to the Committees on Appropriations and Budget, while H.Res. 786 was referred to the House Committee on Rules, where they remained throughout the session. S. 2363 was placed on the Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders (Calendar No. 511) on November 16, 2007.

¹⁵ The resolution passed in the House on the Yeas and Nays (404 - 14 (Roll no. 911, *CR* H10918-10919) and in the Senate on a Yea-Nay Vote (94 - 1. Record Vote No. 355, *CR* S12255-12258).

The appropriations bill was combined with others and added to the State Foreign Operations and Related Activities Appropriations bill (H.R. 2764) on December 17, 2007, to form Division I of the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2008. H.R. 2764 was originally reported to the House by the Committee on Appropriations on June 18 and passed on June 22, 2007. The Senate Committee on Appropriations substituted its own language and reported the amended bill on July 20. Senate floor debate and further amendment of the bill took place on September 6, when the measure passed and conference was requested. The House agreed to the Senate amendment, added the consolidated appropriations language, and renamed the bill on December 17 (1st House Amendment, Roll no. 1171, *CR* H15725; 2nd House Amendment, Roll no. 1172, *CR* H15715-15716;). The Senate concurred with the House amendments on December 18 (Record Votes No. 439, *CR* S15861-15863, and 441, *CR* S15888). The House agreed to the Senate amendment to the House amendment to the Senate amendment on December 19, clearing the bill for the White House. The President enacted the measure on December 26, 2007 (P.L. 110-161).¹⁶

Military construction appropriation authorization is effected in the annual National Defense Authorization Act. The House passed its version of the bill (H.R. 1585, H.Rept. 110-146 and 110-146, Part II) on May 17, 2007.¹⁷ It was received in the Senate on June 5. The Senate Committee on Armed Services introduced its bill (S. 1547, S.Rept. 110-77) on June 5.¹⁸ The Senate took up H.R. 1585 on September 17, substituted its own language as an amendment, passing it on October 1 and appointing conferees.¹⁹ The conferees filed their conference report (H.Rept. 110-477) on December 6. The House agreed the report by the Yeas and Nays (370-49, Roll no. 1151, *CR* H15368) on December 12. The Senate did the same by Yea-Nay Vote (90-3, Record Vote No. 433, *CR* S15598-15619) on December 14. The cleared bill was presented to the President on December 19, who vetoed it on December 28.

The chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services, Representative Ike Skelton, introduced a new measure (H.R. 4986) on January 16, 2008, on which the House voted to suspend the rules and pass the measure by the Yeas and Nays (369-46, Roll no. 11, *CR* H76-257). The Senate received the bill on January 22, passing it by Yea-Nay Vote (91-3, Record Vote No. 1, *CR* S54-57). The new bill was presented to the President on January 24, 2008, and enacted on January 28 (P.L. 110-181).

¹⁶ The House agreed by the Yeas and Nays (272 - 142, Roll No. 1186, *CR* H16901-16913).

¹⁷ House passage was by the Yeas and Nays (397 - 27 Roll No. 373, *CR* H5353).

¹⁸ The Senate committee usually introduces several related defense authorization bills, a general authorization and one each to authorized military activities, military construction, and defense activities of the Department of Energy. S. 1549, the Military Construction Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, was introduced on June 5, 2007. An umbrella bill, S. 1547, the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2008, includes military construction as its Division B (Military Construction Authorizations) and was introduced the same day, and it is this bill that will be tracked in this report.

¹⁹ Senate passage used a Yea-Nay Vote (92 - 3, Record Vote No. 359, *CR* 10/3/2007 S12562-12691). For details on the FY2008 defense authorization, see CRS Report RL33999, *Defense: FY2008 Authorization and Appropriations*, by (name redacted), (name redacted), and (name redacted).

Title I: Department of Defense

Military Construction

Military construction accounts provide funds for new construction, construction improvements, planning and design, and host nation support of active and reserve military forces and Department of Defense agencies. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization Security Investment Program (NSIP) is the U.S. contribution to defray the costs of construction (airfields, fuel pipelines, military headquarters, etc.) needed to support major NATO commands. Family housing accounts fund new construction, construction improvements, federal government costs for family housing privatization, maintenance and repair, furnishings, management, services, utilities, and other expenses incurred in providing suitable accommodation for military personnel and their families where needed. The Chemical Demilitarization Construction, Defense-Wide, account provides for the design and construction of disposal facilities required for the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles. The Base Realignment and Closure Account 1990 funds the remaining environmental remediation requirements (including the disposal of unexploded ordnance) arising from the first four base realignment and closure (BRAC) rounds (1988, 1991, 1993, and 1995). The Base Realignment and Closure Account 2005 provides funding for the military construction, relocation, and environmental requirements of the implementation of both the 2005 BRAC round and the DOD Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (military construction only).

Key Budget Issues

Several issues regarding military construction funding may be of interest to some Members in their consideration of the Fiscal Year 2008 appropriation request. Funding of the various accounts included under Title I (Department of Defense) is listed in **Table A-1** of **Appendix A** to this report.

Base Realignment and Closure/Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (Global Defense Posture Realignment)

Cost of Implementation

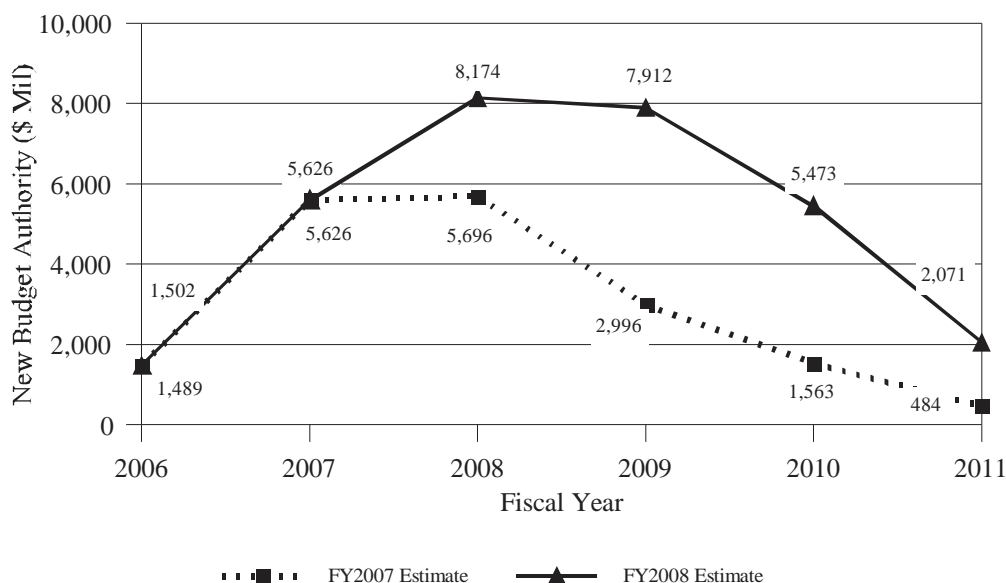
In its appropriations request for Fiscal Year 2007, DOD estimated that the total one-time implementation between 2006 and 2011 of the 2005 BRAC round (the realignment and closure of a number of military installations on United States territory) and the Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (the redeployment of 60,000 - 70,000 troops and their families from overseas garrisons to bases within the United States) would cost \$17.9 billion.²⁰

Between the submission of that request in February 2006 and submission of the Fiscal Year 2008 BRAC funding request, DOD advanced its planning for the execution of all military construction, movement of facilities, and relocation of personnel necessary to carry out the approved recommendations of the 2005 BRAC Commission. This revision caused the estimate of one-time

²⁰ The DOD Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (IGPBS) has been renamed the Global Defense Posture Realignment (GDPR).

implementation cost to rise to more than \$30.7 billion, due principally to significantly higher implementation cost estimates for Fiscal Years 2008-2011. **Figure 1** compares DOD BRAC 2005 new budget authority requirement estimates made for Fiscal Year 2007 and Fiscal Year 2008.²¹

Figure 1. New Budget Authority Estimates, BRAC 2005 Implementation



Sources: DOD Budget Justification Documents for FY2007 and FY2008

One response to the overall rise in estimated costs was the introduction of twinned bills, H.R. 3254 and S. 1902, the BRAC Cost Overruns Protection (BRAC COP) Act of 2007 in late July 2007.²² The proposed legislation is modeled on the Nunn-McCurdy amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1982, which potentially terminates weapon acquisition programs whose costs grow by more than 25%. These bills would require the Secretary of Defense to revise the business plan for any approved recommendation in the 2005 round that requires major base closure or realignment for which costs have grown by 25% or more.²³ The Secretary would then submit a recommendation to the President on whether to continue with implementation of the recommendation. Congress would be empowered to disapprove the recommendation in a process similar to that specified in the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 for disapproving the original recommendation list.

²¹ Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), *National Defense Budget Estimates for FY 2008*, Department of Defense, March 2007. A thorough discussion of the defense budget, including definition of budget-related terms such as “new budget authority,” can be found in CRS Report RL30002, *A Defense Budget Primer*, by (name redacted) and (name redacted).

²² Both bills were referred to their respective Committees on Armed Services, where they remain.

²³ DOD requires the responsible military departments and agencies to write a business plan for each approved BRAC Commission recommendation. These plans detail costs, movements, and other necessary actions. The proposed legislation defines a “major base closure or realignment” as one requiring \$150 million or more in military construction and overall one-time implementation costs of \$300 million or more. For more information on DOD BRAC business plans, see CRS Report RL33766, *Military Base Closures and Realignment: Status of the 2005 Implementation Plan*, by (name redacted).

Increased funding to accelerate the replacement of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in the District of Columbia with a new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, and a community hospital at Ft. Belvoir, VA, is addressed in the section above on the “FY2008 Emergency Supplemental Request for the Global War on Terror.”

Closing Ft. Monmouth, NJ

Two bills focused on the recommendation to close Ft. Monmouth, NJ, an installation devoted primarily to Army communications and electronics research, have been introduced in the 110th Congress. These bills, S. 1835 and H.R. 3097, would ban funding of the transfer of personnel and functions from Ft. Monmouth until the Comptroller General completes an audit of a report on the impact of those moves. The requirement for the Secretary of Defense to prepare such a report, which is to ascertain whether the moves will adversely affect the Global War on Terror, was included in the recommendation to close drafted by the BRAC Commission and approved by the President, though no time limit was placed on its submission. Both bills have been referred to the respective Committees on Armed Services.

Force Redeployment to United States Territory

The one-time implementation costs to carry out the President’s redeployments to new garrisons on United States territory are included within the BRAC 2005 cost estimate. **Table 3** displays DOD cost during the six-year BRAC implementation. This shows that \$756.9 million of the \$8.2 billion (9.2%) of the FY2008 BRAC 2005 appropriation request is devoted to the IGPBS/GDPR redeployment.²⁴

Table 3. IGPBS/GDPR One-Time Implementation Costs
(\$ in millions)

BRAC 2005 Subaccount	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	Total
Military Construction	344.6	744.9	635.6	488.7	334.0	0.0	2,547.8
Environment	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8
Ops. & Maint.	6.7	21.5	45.7	29.1	24.4	11.4	138.7
Other	0.0	28.0	75.6	42.6	63.6	20.4	230.3
Budget Request	352.0	794.4	756.9	560.4	422.0	31.8	2,917.5

Source: DOD FY2008 Army Budget Justification Documentation.

Note: The Department of the Army segregates funds into One-Time Implementation Costs, Recurring Costs, One-Time Savings, and Recurring Savings in calculating the net cost of IGPBS/GDPR. This table presents only One-Time Implementation Costs.

²⁴ IGPBS/GDPR is wholly funded by the Department of the Army BRAC 2005 account. The Army has requested \$3.3 billion for its BRAC 2005 account, indicating that the redeployment of overseas troops represents approximately 23% of Army BRAC requirements in FY2008.

Continuing resolution

Section 139 of the September continuing resolution (H.J.Res. 52) appropriated \$5.6 billion to the BRAC 2005 account to support BRAC implementation through November 16, 2007.

“Growing the Force”

DOD has recommended increasing the end strength of the regular Army by 65,000 soldiers and Marine Corps by 27,000 Marines and the Army National Guard and Army Reserves by an additional 9,200 citizen-soldiers over the next five years. This will require additional military construction to accommodate, train, and house these personnel and their families.

DOD requested more than \$3.7 billion in Fiscal Year 2007 emergency supplemental and Fiscal Year 2008 military construction appropriations to support this increase. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that the additional military construction cost between 2007 and 2013 of these soldiers and Marines will total \$15.7 billion, with the bulk of the appropriations required during Fiscal Years 2008-2010.²⁵

In its report on the Military Construction/VA bill, the Senate Committee on Appropriations noted that DOD has “yet to provide a comprehensive plan detailing the scope and cost of the total military construction requirement associated with the initiative, nor has it provided an explanation of the criteria on which stationing decisions were based.” The Committee noted that P.L. 110-28 directed the Secretary of Defense to provide Congress with a “Grow the Force” stationing plan and urged him to do so without delay.²⁶

Funding to accelerate the building of facilities to house, train, and operate two new Army Brigade Combat Teams and one new Marine Corps Regimental Combat Team is discussed in the above section on the “FY2008 Emergency Supplemental Request for the Global War on Terror.”

Overseas Initiatives

While redeploying a number of troops to the United States, DOD is also renegotiating the location and garrisoning of a number of its remaining overseas installations. These efforts are principally focused on the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, the Republic of Korea, and Japan. In addition, a number of new, relatively austere, installations are being created in eastern Europe and in the Pacific, Central, and Southern Command areas. Funding is being requested for the construction of “enduring” sites in the Central Command area of responsibility (Afghanistan and Djibouti). The House Committee on Appropriations noted that the establishment of a new Africa Command (AFRICOM) may create the need for future military construction on that continent.

In Germany, U.S. forces are continuing to consolidate at existing installations in the south of the country, while the installation near Vicenza, Italy, is being expanded in anticipation of the deployment of a modular brigade.

²⁵ Letter from Peter R. Orszag, Director, Congressional Budget Office, to the Hon. Carl Levin, Chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services, April 16, 2007, p. 8.

²⁶ S.Rept. 110-85, *Military Construction and Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2008*, June 18, 2007, p. 12.

DOD and the Government of Japan have agreed to move approximately 8,000 Marines and 9,000 of their family members from bases on Okinawa to new facilities in the U.S. territory of Guam. The construction costs associated with this move have been estimated at \$10 billion, and Japan has agreed to underwrite 60% of this expense. The Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force have separately initiated their own increase in presence on Guam, which is expected to add personnel and family members to this total over the next several years. The Senate Committee on Appropriations expressed concern that the expansion of U.S. forces stationed in the territory, redeployed from Okinawa and transferred from bases in the United States, will require efficient use of the limited available land on the island.²⁷

The Government Accountability Office addressed this issue in a report completed in September 2007.²⁸ The report concluded that although DOD had updated its overseas master plans, which lay out projected infrastructure requirements at overseas military installations, the Department had not sufficiently incorporated into its calculations the “residual value” of property being returned to host nations for reuse.²⁹ GAO also noted that neither DOD nor the military departments (Army, Navy, and Air Force) had yet finalized the number or makeup of forces being transferred to Guam from Japan and the United States. This meant that the housing, training and operational requirements, and community impact of significant force relocation could not be estimated.³⁰

U.S. forces in the Republic of Korea are in the process of shifting from sites immediately along the Demilitarized Zone, at the frontier between that nation and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), and from a large headquarters garrison in the capital of Seoul to expanded facilities further to the south. While the bulk of construction cost will be borne by the Korean government, this initiative could require as much as \$750 million in U.S. construction funding to complete.

Title II: Department of Veterans Affairs

Table 4. Department of Veterans Affairs Appropriations, FY2001-FY2007

(budget authority in billions)

	FY2001	FY2002	FY2003	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007
VA	\$47.95	\$52.38	\$58.10	\$61.84	\$65.84	\$71.46	\$79.55

Source: Amounts shown are from reports of the Appropriations Committees accompanying the appropriations bills for the following years.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 14.

²⁸ Government Accountability Office, *Defense Infrastructure: Overseas Master Plans are Improving, but DOD Needs to Provide Congress Additional Information about the Military Buildup on Guam* (GAO-07-1015), September 12, 1007.

²⁹ GAO stated that compensation received for the residual value of returned real property could affect overseas construction funding requirements.

³⁰ Guam’s population is currently estimated at approximately 173, 400, or roughly 30% of that of the District of Columbia on land area of 212 sq. mi., or about one-eighth (13.7%) that of the State of Rhode Island. DOD reported that 2,828 active duty military personnel, predominantly Air Force, were stationed in the territory as of June 27, 2007. The movement of more than 17,000 military personnel and family members is therefore likely to have a significant impact on surrounding communities.

Agency Overview

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) administers directly, or in conjunction with other federal agencies, programs that provide benefits and other services to veterans and their spouses, dependents and beneficiaries. The VA has three primary organizations to provide these benefits: the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), the Veterans Health Administration (VHA), and the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). Benefits available to veterans include service-connected disability compensation; a pension for low-income veterans who are elderly or have a nonservice-connected disability; vocational rehabilitation for disabled veterans; medical care; life insurance; home loan guarantees; burial benefits; and educational and training benefits to transition active servicemembers to civilian life.

Table 5. Appropriations: Department of Veterans Affairs, FY2006-FY2008
(budget authority in billions)

Program	FY2006 Enacted	FY2007 Enacted	FY2008 Request	FY2008 House (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Senate (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Omnibus (H.R. 2642)
Total	71.458	79.551	83.904	87.697	87.501	87.595
<i>Mandatory</i>						
Compensation, pensions, burial	33.898	38.007	41.236	41.236	41.236	41.236
Readjustment benefits	3.309	3.262	3.300	3.300	3.300	3.300
Insurance/indemnities	0.046	0.050	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.041
Housing programs (net, indefinite) ^a	-0.047	-0.034	-0.091	-0.091	-0.091	-0.091
Subtotal: Mandatory	37.206	41.285	44.487	44.487	44.487	44.487
<i>Discretionary</i>						
Medical services	21.322	25.518	27.168	29.031	29.104	27.168
Emergency funding	1.225					
Emergency funding (P.L. 109-148)	0.225					
Emergency funding (P.L. 110-28)		0.401 ^d				
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						1.937
Medical administration	2.858	3.178	3.442	3.511	3.517	3.442
Emergency funding (P.L. 110-28)		0.250				
Emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						0.075
Medical facilities	3.298	3.570	3.592	4.100	4.092	3.592
Emergency funding (P.L. 110-28)		0.595				
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						0.508
Medical & prosthetic research	0.412	0.414	0.411	0.480	0.500	0.411

Program	FY2006 Enacted	FY2007 Enacted	FY2008 Request	FY2008 House (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Senate (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Omnibus (H.R. 2642)
Emergency funding (P.L. 110-28)		0.033				
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						0.069
Medical Care Collection Fund ^b						
(offsetting receipts)	-2.170	-2.329	-2.414	-2.414	-2.414	-2.414
(appropriations - indefinite)	2.170	2.329	2.414	2.414	2.414	2.414
<i>Subtotal: Medical programs & administration (appropriations)</i>	<i>29.341</i>	<i>34.024</i>	<i>34.613</i>	<i>37.122</i>	<i>37.213</i>	<i>37.201</i>
<i>Total available to VHA</i>	<i>31.511</i>	<i>36.353</i>	<i>37.027</i>	<i>39.536</i>	<i>39.627</i>	<i>39.615</i>
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						2.589
General administration expense ^e	1.411	1.481	1.472	1.599	1.612	1.472
Emergency funding (P.L. 109- 148)	0.025					
Emergency funding (P.L. 110- 28)		0.083				
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						0.133
Information technology	1.214	1.214	1.859	1.859	1.898	1.859
Emergency funding (P.L. 110- 28)		0.035				
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						0.107
National Cemetery Administration	0.156	0.161	0.167	0.170	0.218	0.167
Emergency funding (P.L. 109- 148)						
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						0.028
Inspector General	0.070	0.071	0.073	0.077	0.089	0.073
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						0.008
Construction	0.806	0.598	0.961	2.026	1.479	0.961
Emergency funding total	0.955	0.392 ^d				
Emergency funding (P.L. 109- 148)	0.369					
Emergency funding (P.L. 109- 234)	0.586					
Emergency funding (P.L. 110- 28)	0.000	0.392 ^d				
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						0.739

Program	FY2006 Enacted	FY2007 Enacted	FY2008 Request	FY2008 House (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Senate (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Omnibus (H.R. 2642)
Grants for state extended care facilities	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.165	0.250	0.085
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						0.080
Grants for state veterans cemeteries	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.037	0.100	0.032
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						0.008
Housing & other loan program administration	0.155	0.155	0.156	0.156	0.156	0.156
Disaster compensation (P.L. 106-148)	0.003					
<i>Subtotal: Other Discretionary</i>	<i>4.912</i>	<i>4.241</i>	<i>4.804</i>	<i>6.088</i>	<i>5.801</i>	<i>5.907</i>
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						1.103
Subtotal: Discretionary	34.252	38.265	39.417	43.210	43.014	43.108
Contingent emergency funding (H.R. 2764)						3.691

Source: Table prepared by the Congressional Research Service based on reports of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, various fiscal years.

- a. This negative budget authority is the result of combining the loan subsidy payments estimated to be needed during FY2006 with the offsetting receipts expected to be collected.
- b. Medical Care Collections Fund (MCCF) receipts are restored to the VHA as an indefinite budget authority equal to the revenue collected.
- c. \$200,000.
- d. Reflects a transfer in the FY2008 omnibus of \$66 million from medical services to major construction in FY2007 emergency funding under P.L. 110-28.
- e. Does not reflect a transfer in the FY2008 omnibus of \$6 million of general operating expenses to maintain funding for payments to state approving agencies at the FY2007 levels.

Key Budget Issues

The FY2008 budget submitted by the Administration in February 2007 called for funding VA at a level of \$83.9 billion for FY2008 (see **Table 5**). This would be an increase of \$4.4 billion, or 5.5%, over the FY2007 appropriation (including the supplemental).

One of the key issues for VA non-medical benefits has been the size of the disability claims workload and the average time (177 days in FY2006)³¹ to process claims. The U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (P.L. 110-28), provided additional funding to the VA for resources to address the large number of

³¹ Department of Veterans Affairs, *FY2008 Budget Submission, Summary - Volume 4*, pg. 1-22.

pending claims and shorten processing times. P.L. 110-28 provided an additional \$60.75 million for hiring and training of additional claims processing personnel, and \$20.0 million for information technology to support claims processing. In addition, the conference report for the Department of Defense Appropriations Act of 2008 (H.R. 3222, P.L. 110-116) directed the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs to report to Congress by January 15, 2008 on plans to update the Disability Evaluation System.³²

Both the House-passed appropriation bill, H.R. 2642, and the Senate Committee appropriation bill would have provided:

- additional funds for claims processing by including full-year funding for the personnel hired with P.L. 110-28 funding, and providing funding for the additional claims processing personnel proposed in the FY2008 budget request; and
- funds for a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for certain VA benefits including compensation benefits—i.e., disability compensation and dependency and indemnity compensation (the COLA is equal to the COLA applied to Social Security benefits).

The FY2008 Omnibus (H.R. 2764) provides \$124.2 million for the hiring of additional claims processors and \$2.0 million for leasing office space for the new hires. Additional funds are also provided to the Board of Veterans Appeals (\$3.7 million) and the Office of General Council (\$3.2 million) for additional personnel to handle the increase in the number of appeals.

The House-passed appropriation bill, H.R. 2642, included an increase of \$1.01 billion above the FY2007 appropriation for major construction, with no specific projects designated at this time. The Senate Committee appropriation bill, S. 1645, provided an increase of \$328.4 million for major construction. The FY2008 Omnibus provides an increase of \$604.1 million for major construction (after a transfer among accounts of \$66.0 million in emergency funding provided for FY2007), with \$341.7 million of the total as contingent funding.

The House-passed appropriation bill, H.R. 2642, included an increase (above the FY2007 enacted level with the additional funding provided by P.L. 110-28) of \$0.9 million in minor construction, with the requirement that the VA submit an expenditure plan for the total funding for minor construction (\$615.0 million) within 30 days of enactment. The Senate Committee appropriation bill, S. 1645, provided an increase (above the FY2007 enacted level with the additional funding provided by P.L. 110-28) of \$226.5 million for minor construction, including funding for deficiencies identified in the VA's rolling facilities condition assessments and to begin modernizing research facilities. The FY2008 Omnibus provides a total of \$630.5 million for minor construction, an increase of \$105.6 million from the FY2007 level, with \$397.1 million of the total as contingent funding.

The House passed appropriation bill, H.R. 2642, provided an increase of \$80.0 million in grants for construction of state extended care facilities, while the Senate Committee appropriation bill, S. 1645, provided an increase of \$165.0 million. The FY2008 Omnibus provides an increase of

³² The Disability Evaluation System is one component of the process used by the Department of Defense to determine if a servicemember is unfit for duty due to injuries or illness. For more information on the transition process for injured servicemembers, see CRS Report RL33991, *Disability Evaluation of Military Servicemembers*, by (name redacted) et al.

\$80.0 million in grants for construction of state extended care facilities, with all of the increase (\$80.0 million) as contingent funding.

Medical Care³³

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is a direct service provider of primary care, specialized care, and related medical and social support services to veterans through an integrated health care system. In FY2007, VHA operated 155 medical centers, 135 nursing homes,³⁴ 717 ambulatory care and community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs),³⁵ and 209 Readjustment Counseling Centers (Vet Centers).³⁶ VHA also pays for care provided to veterans by independent providers and practitioners on a fee basis under certain circumstances. Inpatient and outpatient care is provided in the private sector to eligible dependents of veterans under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA).³⁷ In addition, VHA provides grants for construction of state-owned nursing homes and domiciliary facilities, and collaborates with the Department of Defense (DOD) in sharing health care resources and services.

The total amount requested by the Administration for VHA for FY2008 is \$34.6 billion, a 1.7% increase in funding compared to the FY2007 enacted amount. The total amount of funding that would be available for VHA under the President's budget proposal for FY2008, including third-party collections, is approximately \$37.0 billion. For FY2008, the Administration is requesting \$27.2 billion for medical services, a \$1.2 billion, or 4.6%, increase in funding over the FY2007 enacted amount. The Administration's budget proposal is also requesting \$3.4 billion for medical administration, \$3.6 billion for medical facilities, and \$411 million for medical and prosthetic research.

As in FY2003, FY2004, FY2005, FY2006, and FY2007, the Administration has included several cost sharing proposals. The first proposal is the tiered annual enrollment fee for all enrolled Priority Group 7 and Priority Group 8 veterans, which is structured to charge \$250 for veterans with family incomes from \$50,000 to \$74,999; \$500 for those with family incomes from \$75,000 to \$99,999; and \$750 for those with family incomes equal to or greater than \$100,000. According to the VA, this proposal would increase government revenue by \$138 million beginning in FY2009, and by \$526 million over five years.

³³ For detailed information on the veterans' medical care budget, see CRS Report RL34063, *Veterans' Medical Care: FY2008 Appropriations*, by (name redacted).

³⁴ Data on the number of hospitals and nursing homes includes facilities damaged by Hurricane Katrina. The data are current as of December 1, 2006.

³⁵ Data on the number of CBOCs differ from source to source. Some count clinics located at VA hospitals while others count only freestanding CBOCs. The number represented in this report excludes clinics located in VA hospitals. VA plans to activate 38 new CBOCs in FY2007 and FY2008.

³⁶ On February 7, 2007, the Department announced that it will be establishing 23 new centers in communities across the nation during 2007 and 2008. New Vet Centers will be located in Montgomery, Alabama; Fayetteville, Arkansas; Modesto, California; Grand Junction, Colorado; Orlando, Fort Myers, and Gainesville, Florida; Macon, Georgia; Manhattan, Kansas; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Cape Cod, Massachusetts; Saginaw and Iron Mountain, Michigan; Berlin, New Hampshire; Las Cruces, New Mexico; Binghamton, Middletown, Nassau County and Watertown, New York; Toledo, Ohio; Du Bois, Pennsylvania; Killeen, Texas; and Everett, Washington. During 2007, VA plans to open facilities in Grand Junction, Orlando, Cape Cod, Iron Mountain, Berlin and Watertown. The other new Vet Centers are scheduled to open in 2008.

³⁷ For further information on CHAMPVA, see CRS Report RS22483, *Health Care for Dependents and Survivors of Veterans*, by (name redacted) and Susan Janeczko.

The Administration is proposing to increase the pharmacy copayments from \$8 to \$15 for all enrolled Priority Group 7 and Priority Group 8 veterans, whenever they obtain medication from VA on an outpatient basis for the treatment of a nonservice-connected condition.³⁸ The Administration put forward this proposal in its FY2004, FY2005, FY2006, and FY2007 budget requests as well, but did not receive any approval from Congress. At present, veterans in Priority Groups 2-8 pay \$8 for a 30-day supply of medication, including over-the-counter medications. The VA estimates that this proposal would increase government revenue by \$311 million beginning in FY2008, and by \$1.6 billion over five years.

Lastly, the Administration is proposing to bill veterans directly for treatment associated with nonservice-connected conditions. Presently, VA uses third-party collections to satisfy veterans' first-party debt; that is, if VA treats an insured veteran for a nonservice-connected disability, and the veteran is also determined by VA to have copayment responsibilities, VA will apply each dollar collected from the insurer to satisfy the veteran's copayment debt related to that treatment. The Administration proposes eliminating this practice. According to the VA, this proposal would increase government revenue by \$44 million beginning in FY2008, and by \$217 million over five years.

It should be noted that compared to previous budget proposals, the FY2008 budget proposals if implemented would deposit all collections in the U.S. Treasury and not in the Medical Care Collections Fund (MCCF) as is the current practice with regard to collections.³⁹ The President's budget request amount for medical services does not reflect these legislative proposals.

On June 15, 2007, the House passed its version of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill for FY2008 (H.R. 2642, H.Rept. 110-186). H.R. 2642 provides \$37.1 billion for the VHA for FY2008. This amount includes \$29.0 billion for medical services, \$1.9 billion (6.9%) above the President's request and \$3.0 billion (11.7%) over the FY2007 enacted amount of \$26.0 billion. H.R. 2642 also includes \$3.5 billion for medical administration, \$69 million above the Administration's request of \$3.4 billion; \$4.1 billion for medical facilities, a 14% increase over the President's request; and \$480 million for medical and prosthetic research, a 17% increase over the President's request of \$411 million. The House-passed version of H.R. 2642 **did not** include any bill language authorizing fee increases as requested by the Administration's budget proposal for VHA for FY2008.

Of the amount recommended for the medical services account, H.R. 2642 includes bill language stipulating \$2.9 billion for specialty mental health care, \$130 million for the homeless veterans grant and per diem program, \$429 million for the substance abuse program, and \$100 million for the blind rehabilitation services.

On June 14, 2007, the full Senate Appropriations Committee approved its version of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill for FY2008 (S. 1645, S. Rept. 110-85). S.

³⁸ The term "service-connected" means, with respect to disability, that such disability was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty in the active military, naval, or air service. VA determines whether veterans have service-connected disabilities, and for those with such disabilities, assigns ratings from 0 to 100% based on the severity of the disability. Percentages are assigned in increments of 10%.

³⁹ VA deposits copayments collected from veterans obligated to make such payments for either medical services or inpatient pharmacy benefits for outpatient medication, and third-party insurance payments from service-connected veterans for nonservice-connected conditions into MCCF. These collected funds do not have to be spent in any particular fiscal year and are available until expended.

1645, as reported, provides a total of \$37.0 billion for VHA. This amount includes \$29.0 billion for medical services, a \$3 billion (11.5%) increase over the FY2007 enacted amount, and \$1.8 billion over the FY2008 budget request; and \$3.6 billion for medical administration, \$200 million above the FY2008 Administration's request. Furthermore, S. 1645, as reported, provides \$4.1 billion for medical facilities, a 14.0% increase over the FY2008 request, and 1.7% less than the FY2007 enacted amount; and \$500 million for medical and prosthetic research. The Committee **did not** recommend any fee increases as requested by the Administration's budget proposal for VHA for FY2008.

As stated previously, no funding for the VA was included in the final version of H.R. 3043. If enacted, H.R. 3043 would have provided \$37.2 billion for VHA for FY2008, this is, \$2.6 billion above the Administration's request for FY2008. This amount includes \$29.1 billion for medical services, which is almost \$2 billion above the President's request. The amount appropriated for medical services includes an additional \$125 million to increase the beneficiary travel reimbursement mileage rate to 28.5 cents per mile; an additional \$70 million for substance abuse services; an additional \$12.5 million for expanded outpatient services for the blind; and an additional \$15 million for Vet Centers. The conference agreement (H.Rept. 110-424) also stipulates that of the total amount appropriated for medical services, not less than \$2.9 billion shall be expended for specialty mental health care, and not less than \$130 million shall be expended for the homeless grants and per diem program.

Title III: Related Agencies

American Battle Monuments Commission

The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) is responsible for the maintenance and construction of U.S. monuments and memorials commemorating the achievements in battle of U.S. armed forces since the nation's entry into World War I; the erection of monuments and markers by U.S. citizens and organizations in foreign countries; and the design, construction, and maintenance of permanent cemeteries and memorials in foreign countries. The Commission maintains 24 cemeteries and 25 monuments, memorials, and markers in 15 countries, including three memorials on U.S. soil.

The ABMC was responsible for the planning and construction of the World War II Memorial on the Mall in Washington, DC. Though the National Park Service assumed responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the Memorial at its dedication, the ABMC retains a fiduciary responsibility for the remaining public contributions given for its construction. The ABMC has undertaken the construction of an Interpretive Center at the Normandy American Cemetery in Normandy, France, to commemorate the World War II Allied invasion of France on June 6, 1944, and the subsequent land battles in Europe. The new facility opened on June 6, 2007.

U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims

The U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims was established by the Veterans' Administration Adjudication Procedure and Judicial Review Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-687). The Court is an independent judicial tribunal with exclusive jurisdiction to review decisions of the Board of Veterans' Appeals. It has the authority to decide all relevant questions of law; interpret constitutional, statutory, and regulatory provisions; and determine the meaning or applicability of

the terms of an action by the VA. It is authorized to compel action by the VA. It is authorized to hold unconstitutional or otherwise unlawful and set aside decisions, findings, conclusions, rules and regulations issued or adopted by the VA or the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

The Court currently occupies leased facilities near Judiciary Square in the District of Columbia and is searching for a permanent location. The Court's major operational initiative is its transition to an electronic case filing system, which is also funded through this appropriation.

Department of Defense - Civil (Army Cemeterial Expenses)

The Secretary of the Army is responsible for the administration, operation and maintenance of Arlington National Cemetery and the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery. In addition to its principal function as a national cemetery, Arlington is the site of approximately 3,100 non-funeral ceremonies each year and has approximately 4,000,000 visitors annually.

Both the House-passed appropriation bill, H.R. 2642, and the Senate Committee appropriation bill, S. 1645, included additional funds in FY2008 for realignment of government-issued headstones and the construction of a heavy equipment storage facility. The Senate Committee appropriation bill, S. 1645, also included additional funds for costs not included in the budget request related to the relocation of utilities at Arlington Cemetery. The FY2008 Omnibus includes funds above the budget request for the House Committee appropriation bill, S. 1645, included additional funds in FY2008 for realignment of government-issued headstones, construction of a heavy equipment storage facility, and funds for costs not included in the budget request related to the relocation of utilities at Arlington Cemetery.

Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH)

The Armed Forces Retirement Home Trust Fund provides funds to operate and maintain the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington, DC (also known as the United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home), and the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi (originally located in Philadelphia, PA, and known as the United States Naval Home). These two facilities provide long-term housing and medical care for approximately 1,600 needy veterans. The Gulfport campus, encompassing a 19-story living accommodation and medical facility tower, was severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina at the end of August, 2005, and is not currently in use. Residents of the facility were transferred to the Washington, DC, location immediately after the storm. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the AFRH and the General Services Administration (GSA) for the rebuilding of the Gulfport facility, with a targeted completion date in 2010.

The appropriation for the AFRH facilities is from the Armed Forces Retirement Home Trust Fund. The trust fund is maintained through gifts, bequests, and a \$0.50 per month assessment on the pay of active duty enlisted military personnel and warrant officers.

The FY2008 budget request includes a \$5.1 million federal fund contribution to the trust fund, and \$800,000 for a study of the long-term viability of the trust fund. The House-passed appropriation bill, H.R. 2642, did not include the federal contribution, but did include \$800,000 for the study. The Senate Committee appropriation bill, S. 1645, provided the general fund transfer of \$5.1 million to the trust, and \$800,000 in general funds for the study. The FY2008

Omnibus provides \$800,000 in general funds for the study of the long-term viability of the trust fund.

Table 6. Appropriations: Related Agencies, FY2006-FY2008
(budget authority in thousands)

Account	FY2006 enacted	FY2007 enacted	FY2008 request	FY2008 House (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Senate (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Omnibus (H.R. 2764)
American Battle Monuments Commission						
Salaries and expenses	\$35,888	\$37,000	\$42,100	\$43,470	\$45,600	\$44,600
Foreign currency fluctuations	15,098	5,000	11,000	11,000	11,000	11,000
<i>Total</i>	50,986	42,000	53,100	54,470	56,600	55,600
U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims						
Salaries and expenses	18,607	20,189	21,217	21,397	24,217	22,717
Department of Defense-Civil						
<i>Army cemeterial expenses</i>	28,760	30,000	26,892	30,592	31,865	31,230
Armed Forces Retirement Home						
Operations and maintenance	56,463	55,991	55,724	55,724	55,724	55,724
Capital program	1,236	1,236	—	—	—	—
	—	—	5,900	800	5,900	800
	65,800	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	299,499	57,227	61,624	56,524	61,624	56,524
Total, related agencies	\$397,852	\$149,146	\$162,833	\$162,983	\$174,306	\$166,071

Source: Table prepared by the Congressional Research Service based on reports of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, various fiscal years.

Appendix A. Consolidated Non-VA Funding Tables

Table A-I. DOD Military Construction

(budget authority in \$000)

Account	FY2006 Enacted	FY2007 Enacted	FY2008 Request	FY2008 House (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Senate (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Omnibus (H.R. 2764)
<i>Military Construction, Army</i>	1,757,507	2,017,321	4,039,197	4,070,959	3,928,149	3,936,583
Rescissions	(19,746)	(43,348)	—	—	—	(8,690)
Emergency Appropriations (P.L. 110-28)	—	1,255,890	—	—	—	—
Emergency Appropriations (P.L. 110-28, By transfer, Army Sec. 3309)	—	(6,250)	—	—	—	—
Supplemental Appropriation	187,100	—	—	—	—	—
Transfer	12,757	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	1,937,618	3,229,863	4,039,197	4,070,959	3,928,149	3,927,893
<i>Military Construction, Navy and Marine Corps</i>	1,145,570	1,130,821	2,104,276	2,125,138	2,168,315	2,198,394
Rescissions	(50,037)	(27,500)	—	(5,862)	—	(10,557)
Emergency Appropriations (P.L. 110-28)	—	370,990	—	—	—	—
Supplemental Appropriation	335,989	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	1,431,522	1,474,311	2,104,276	2,119,276	2,168,315	2,187,837
<i>Military Construction, Air Force</i>	1,275,645	1,083,000	912,109	927,428	1,048,518	1,159,747
Rescissions	(75,600)	(2,694)	—	(5,319)	—	(10,470)
Emergency Appropriations (P.L. 110-28)	—	43,300	—	—	—	—
Supplemental Appropriations	177,612	—	—	—	—	—
Transfer	6,434	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	1,384,091	1,123,606	912,109	922,109	1,048,518	1,149,227
<i>Military Construction, Defense-wide</i>	998,766	1,127,000	1,799,336	1,806,928	1,758,755	1,609,596
Rescissions	(20,000)	(110,229)	—	(7,592)	—	(10,192)
Supplemental	65,600	—	—	—	—	—

Account	FY2006 Enacted	FY2007 Enacted	FY2008 Request	FY2008 House (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Senate (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Omnibus (H.R. 2764)
Appropriations						
Transfer	(6,434)	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	1,037,932	1,016,771	1,799,336	1,799,336	1,758,755	1,599,404
Total, Active components	5,791,163	6,844,551	8,854,918	8,911,680	8,903,737	8,864,411
<i>Military Construction, Army National Guard</i>	<i>517,919</i>	<i>473,000</i>	<i>404,291</i>	<i>439,291</i>	<i>478,836</i>	<i>536,656</i>
Rescissions	(120,000)	(2,129)	—	—	—	—
Supplemental Appropriation	704,371	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,102,290</i>	<i>470,871</i>	<i>404,291</i>	<i>439,291</i>	<i>478,836</i>	<i>536,656</i>
<i>Military Construction, Air National Guard</i>	<i>312,956</i>	<i>128,000</i>	<i>85,517</i>	<i>95,517</i>	<i>228,995</i>	<i>287,537</i>
Rescission	(13,700)	—	—	—	—	—
Supplemental Appropriation	40,800	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	<i>340,056</i>	<i>128,000</i>	<i>85,517</i>	<i>95,517</i>	<i>228,995</i>	<i>287,537</i>
<i>Military Construction, Army Reserve</i>	<i>151,043</i>	<i>166,000</i>	<i>119,684</i>	<i>154,684</i>	<i>138,424</i>	<i>148,133</i>
<i>Military Construction, Naval Reserve</i>	<i>46,395</i>	<i>43,000</i>	<i>59,150</i>	<i>69,150</i>	<i>59,150</i>	<i>64,430</i>
Rescission	(66,090)	—	—	—	—	—
Supplemental Appropriation	144,402	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	<i>124,707</i>	<i>43,000</i>	<i>59,150</i>	<i>69,150</i>	<i>59,150</i>	<i>64,430</i>
<i>Military Construction, Air Force Reserve</i>	<i>104,824</i>	<i>45,000</i>	<i>26,559</i>	<i>39,628</i>	<i>27,559</i>	<i>28,359</i>
Rescissions	(13,815)	—	—	(3,069)	(3,100)	(3,069)
<i>Total</i>	<i>91,009</i>	<i>45,000</i>	<i>26,559</i>	<i>36,559</i>	<i>929,864</i>	<i>25,290</i>
Total, Reserve components	1,809,105	850,871	695,201	795,201	929,864	1,062,046
Total, Military Construction	7,600,268	7,695,422	9,550,119	9,706,881	9,833,601	9,962,657
NATO Security Investment Program	204,789	—	—	—	—	—
Rescission	(30,000)	—	—	—	—	—
Total, NSIP	174,789	204,789	201,400	201,400	201,400	201,400
Ford Island Improvement Account	100	—	—	—	—	—

Account	FY2006 Enacted	FY2007 Enacted	FY2008 Request	FY2008 House (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Senate (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Omnibus (H.R. 2764)
Family Housing Construction, Army	544,140	579,000	419,400	419,400	419,400	424,400
Rescissions	(16,000)	—	—	—	—	(4,559)
Transfer	(104,456)	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	423,684	579,000	419,400	419,400	419,400	419,841
Family Housing Ops and Debt, Army	795,953	671,311	742,920	742,920	742,920	731,920
Transfer	20,618	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	816,571	671,311	742,920	742,920	742,920	731,920
Family Housing Construction, Navy and Marine Corps	216,753	305,000	298,329	298,329	288,329	293,129
Supplemental Appropriation	48,889	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	191,714	305,000	298,329	298,329	288,329	293,129
Family Housing Ops and Debt, Navy and Marine Corps	582,773	505,472	371,404	371,404	371,404	371,404
Supplemental Appropriation	48,889	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	631,662	505,472	371,404	371,404	371,404	371,404
Family Housing Construction, Air Force	1,090,868	1,168,000	362,747	362,747	362,747	327,747
Rescissions	(43,900)	(18,000)	—	—	—	(15,000)
Supplemental Appropriation	278,000	—	—	—	—	—
Transfer	(36,819)	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	1,288,149	1,150,000	362,747	362,747	362,747	312,747
Family Housing Ops and Debt, Air Force	759,270	750,000	688,335	688,335	688,335	688,335
Supplemental Appropriation	47,019	—	—	—	—	—
Transfer	(8,000)	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	798,289	750,000	688,335	688,355	688,355	688,355
Family Housing Construction, Defense- wide	—	9,000	—	—	—	—
Family Housing Ops and Debt, Defense-wide	45,927	49,000	48,848	48,848	48,848	48,848
DOD Family Housing	2,476	2,475	500	500	500	500

Account	FY2006 Enacted	FY2007 Enacted	FY2008 Request	FY2008 House (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Senate (H.R. 2642)	FY2008 Omnibus (H.R. 2764)
Improvement Fund						
Permanent Indef Appropriation	58	—	—	—	—	—
Transfer	227,104	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	229,637	2,475	500	500	500	500
Total, Family Housing	4,425,633	4,021,258	2,932,483	2,932,483	2,922,483	2,866,724
Chemical Demilitarization Construction, Defense-wide	—	131,000	86,176	86,176	104,176	104,176
Base Realignment and Closure						
BRAC, 1990	252,279	252,279	220,689	270,689	320,689	295,689
BRAC, 2005	1,489,456	2,489,421	8,174,315	8,174,350	8,174,315	7,235,591
Emergency Appropriations (P.L. 110-28)	—	3,136,802	—	—	—	—
Transfer	13,038	—	—	—	—	—
<i>Total</i>	1,502,494	5,878,502	8,395,004	8,445,004	8,495,004	7,531,280
Grand Total, MilCon & FH	13,955,563	17,930,971	21,165,182	21,371,944	21,556,664	20,630,037

Notes: Adjusted for House floor amendments prior to passage. Does not include FY2008 GWOT Supplemental.

Appendix B. Additional Resources

Budget

CRS Report RL30002, *A Defense Budget Primer*, by (name redacted) and (name redacted).

CRS Report 98-720, *Manual on the Federal Budget Process*, by (name redacted) and Allen Schick.

Selected Websites

House Committee on Appropriations
<http://appropriations.house.gov/>

Senate Committee on Appropriations
<http://appropriations.senate.gov/>

House Committee on Armed Services
<http://www.house.gov/hasc/>

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<http://armed-services.senate.gov/>

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<http://veterans.house.gov/>

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<http://veterans.senate.gov/>

Commission on Review of Overseas Military Facility Structure of the United States (Overseas Basing Commission)
<http://www.obc.gov/>

CRS Appropriations Products Guide
<http://www.crs.gov/products/appropriations/apppage.shtml>

CRS Multimedia Library
<http://www.crs.gov/products/multimedia/multimedialibrary.shtml>

Congressional Budget Office
<http://www.cbo.gov/>

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC Commission)
<http://www.brac.gov>

Government Accountability Office
<http://www.gao.gov/>

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Related Agencies	(name redacted)	7-....	/redacted/@crs.loc.gov
Veterans Affairs	(name redacted)	7-....	/redacted/@crs.loc.gov
Veterans Affairs; Healthcare	(name redacted)	7-....	/redacted/@crs.loc.gov

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