



FY2020 LHHS Appropriations: Status

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Congress has begun consideration of the FY2020 appropriations bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies ([LHHS](#)). The LHHS bill is the largest (\$1.06 trillion in FY2019) of the [12 annual appropriations bills](#), when accounting for both [mandatory and discretionary funding](#).

Most recently, the House completed its initial consideration of the FY2020 LHHS bill, passing it as part of a four-bill omnibus on June 19, 2019 (Division A of H.R. 2740). This omnibus was the first FY2020 appropriations measure to be passed by the House on initial floor consideration. Prior to this, LHHS had not been the first bill initially passed in the House (even as part of a package) since the current budget process was first implemented in FY1976. While the House has completed initial consideration of the FY2020 LHHS bill, Senate LHHS action has yet to occur.

Scope of the Bill

The LHHS bill provides annually appropriated [budget authority](#) for the [Department of Labor](#), the majority of the [Department of Health and Human Services](#) (except for the Food and Drug Administration, the Indian Health Service, and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, which are funded in other appropriations bills), the [Department of Education](#), and more than a dozen related agencies, including the [Social Security Administration](#) and the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#).

In general, mandatory funding represents just over 80% of the total LHHS bill, supporting annually [appropriated entitlements](#), such as [Medicaid](#) and [Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\)](#). Discretionary funds account for less than 20% of total funds in the bill, but tend to receive the most attention throughout the LHHS appropriations process. This is because the appropriations process generally has little control

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over the amounts provided for appropriated entitlements; rather, the authorizing statute controls the program parameters (e.g., eligibility rules, benefit levels) that entitle certain recipients to payments.

While discretionary appropriations represent a relatively small share of the entire LHHS bill, the bill itself is typically the largest single source of nondefense discretionary funding for the federal government. (The [Department of Defense bill](#) is the largest single source of discretionary funding overall.)

Context for FY2020 Appropriations

The House and Senate have not yet agreed to overall FY2020 discretionary funding levels, either by adopting a [congressional budget resolution](#) or through other means. On April 9, 2019, the House adopted provisional FY2020 levels through a [deeming resolution](#) (H.Res. 293). It allocated about \$176 billion (+16%) more for discretionary spending than would be available under the combined FY2020 current law discretionary spending limits established by the [Budget Control Act of 2011](#) (\$1.119 trillion; \$576 billion for defense spending and \$543 billion for nondefense spending). Because the House allocation exceeds the current law limits and the Senate has not agreed to the same levels, complications may arise as the House and Senate seek to resolve their differences on appropriations.

Congressional Action

The House has completed its initial consideration of annual LHHS appropriations for FY2020, whereas the Senate has not started its consideration of the FY2020 bill.

On June 19, the House passed (226-203) the FY2020 LHHS bill (Division A of H.R. 2740) after combining it with three additional divisions funding other appropriations acts. Prior to House passage of the measure, the House adopted 64 of the 73 LHHS floor amendments that were offered.

Previously, on May 15, the FY2020 LHHS bill was reported to the House (H.R. 2740, H.Rept. 116-62). For a summary of the House Appropriations Committee's recommended funding levels for agencies, accounts, and programs across the bill, see the [detailed table](#) in H.Rept. 116-62. May 15 is the earliest the LHHS bill has been reported to the House since the current budget process was implemented in FY1976. In addition, the last time LHHS was the first bill reported to the House was FY1980, when it was one of three bills reported on the same day. (This year, it was one of two bills reported on May 15.)

LHHS was also the first FY2020 annual bill to have been [marked up](#) by the House Appropriations Committee (on May 8). At that markup, the committee considered 17 amendments to the bill, [adopting 6](#), and ordered the bill reported by a vote of 30-23. The full committee markup followed subcommittee approval of the bill, by voice vote, on April 30.

FY2020 LHHS Discretionary Funding

Table 1 displays the FY2020 House proposed discretionary appropriations for LHHS, along with the comparable FY2019 funding level. The table displays current-year budget authority subject to discretionary spending limits ("regular appropriations") as well as a funding total that includes the upward adjustments to the spending limits that are allowed under the Budget Control Act ("adjusted appropriations"). (In the case of the LHHS bill, these adjustments may occur for "Program Integrity" and "Emergency Requirements" funding.)

Relative to FY2019, the House-passed bill would increase FY2020 regular appropriations for LHHS by about \$11.8 billion (+7%).

Table 1. FY2019 Enacted and FY2020 House Proposed LHHS Discretionary Appropriations
Budget authority in millions of dollars

	FY2019 Enacted	FY2020 House Initial Passage
Regular Appropriations	\$178,076	\$189,876
Adjustments:		
Program Integrity	\$1,897	\$1,842
Emergency Requirements	\$611	—
Adjusted Appropriations	\$180,584	\$191,718

Source: The FY2019 comparable and FY2020 House floor amounts are as scored by the [Congressional Budget Office](#).

Notes: Regular appropriations reflect current-year discretionary budget authority subject to spending limits. Adjusted appropriations include discretionary funds for which special rules apply with regard to the spending limits, including certain funds for program integrity activities and (where applicable) provided as emergency requirements. Totals exclude funds provided under authorities in the 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114-255) that are effectively exempt from the spending limits.

Additional Resources

For more information on the status of FY2020 appropriations as a whole, see the [CRS Appropriations Status Table](#). CRS [reports](#) addressing key funding questions for the programs and agencies funded by the LHHS appropriations bill are available on the CRS website. For assistance with the LHHS bill, please reach out to the [relevant CRS expert](#).

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