

Six months later: Final Fiscal Year 2022 Funding Becomes Law

Almost six months after Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 began, Congress passed the FY 2022 Consolidated Appropriations Act, H.R. 2471, a bill funding all Federal agencies through September 30, 2022. For the bill to be properly enrolled and presented to the President for his signature, Congress passed a third continuing resolution to keep the federal government open through March 15. President Biden signed the Act into law on March 15.

Action on FY 2022 was delayed due to stalled negotiations over defense and non-defense funding in which Republican leaders in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate were seeking greater parity between the two overarching spending categories. To secure a resolution, leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Committee agreed to adjust the overall spending levels, leaving less funding available for non-defense agencies and programs. As a result, many federal non-defense agencies received less in the final FY 2022 omnibus bill than had been recommended by the House and Senate during the year's deliberations.

Several agencies and programs that the Integrative Health Policy Consortium had been advocating for throughout the year emerged with modest increases, including the Veterans Administration Whole Health program, which received \$84 million, a \$10 million increase over its FY 2021 funding level, and the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which received approximately \$159.4 million, a \$5.3 million increase over the agency's FY 2021 level.

In a report accompanying the bill, Congress included language directing NCCIH to report on a toolkit that The Trans-NIH Music and Health Work Group is developing "to improve future clinical trials for music-based interventions to treat and prevent disorders of aging." In another provision, the Committee urges NIH, in collaboration with the Department of Defense and Veterans Affairs, "to continue research on non-pharmacological treatments for pain management and comorbidities including opioid abuse and disorders in military personnel, veterans, and their families." The report states that NCCIH can play an "important role" in coordinating trans-agency efforts.

Additional information about the final FY 2022 omnibus bill, including summaries of each major section, is available on the House Appropriations Committee home page.

With FY 2022 completed, attention turns to FY 2023. Currently, pundits predict that President Biden will submit his proposed FY 2023 budget to Congress before the second week of April. This submission will instigate a flurry of activity on Capitol Hill including hearings conducted by the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and the announcement of individual member submission deadlines regarding FY 2023 funding priorities.