Bond Case Briefs

Municipal Finance Law Since 1971

NACo: Trump Signs First Round of FY2019 Spending Bills.

The president's signature is on three of 12 necessary spending bills for FY2019

President Trump signed into law Sept. 21 a bipartisan minibus spending package consisting of three FY2019 spending bills: the Energy-Water, Military Construction-Veterans Affairs and Legislative Branch appropriation bills. The president's signature completes three of 12 spending bills that need to be signed into law for FY2019.

Following are highlights from the bills of interest to counties:

Energy and Water Appropriations bills

The Energy and Water portion of the bill funds the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civil works program, U.S. Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation and several other federal government agencies at a total cost of $44.64 billion for FY 2019.

The Energy and Water Appropriations bill is important to counties because it funds federal energy, water and flooding-related infrastructure projects in local communities.

U.S. Department of Energy (DOE): The bill contains $35.7 billion for DOE, $4.9 billion above FY2018 levels. DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) will see its budget increased by $57 million to $2.4 billion. EERE works to develop and promote clean, affordable and secure energy.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) civil works program: The Army Corps will see its budget increased by $172 million to $7 billion. The Army Corps is charged with building, maintaining and operating coastal and inland waterways, addressing flooding risk and strengthening ecosystem restoration through their civil works program.

Specific programs of importance to counties include the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, which will receive $1.55 billion, a $150 million increase above FY2018 levels and water infrastructure projects funded at $2 billion to be allocated toward flood and storm damage reduction activities.

U.S. Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation: The legislation includes $134 million for water storage projects authorized in the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WINN) Act, which is overseen by the Bureau of Reclamation.

Military Construction-Veterans Affairs Appropriations bill

The Military Construction-Veterans Affairs portion of the bill provides more than $86.5 billion in discretionary funding for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), an increase of $5 billion over FY2018 enacted levels.

This funding, which will help ensure the nation's veterans receive the quality health care services they have earned, is broken down as follows:

VA Medical Care: $72.3 billion is allocated to the VA to provide health care services, about $5 billion above FY2018 levels. Of this, $8.6 billion is allocated toward mental health services; $206 million for suicide prevention outreach; $400 million for opioid abuse prevention; $270 million for VA rural health initiatives; and $7.5 billion for treatment, housing and other services for homeless veterans.

Medical Community Care: $9 billion is provided to the Medical Community Care program, which funds non-VA care provided to veterans, family caregiver programs and other services. Specifically, the family caregiver program will receive $865 million in FY2019.

Veteran Homelessness: $1.8 billion will be directed to VA's homeless assistance programs such as the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program, which will receive $380 million.

Veterans Justice Outreach: This program, which provides access to mental health and substance abuse resources and treatment for justice-involved veterans, will receive more than $54 million.

Congress has until Sept. 30, the end of the fiscal year, to wrap-up the FY2019 annual appropriations process or pass a continuing resolution to keep the government open past that date.

National Association of Counties

Oct. 1, 2018

Copyright © 2026 Bond Case Briefs | bondcasebriefs.com