

**Public Affairs Update**  
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**Fiscal Year 2006 Appropriations Wrap Up**

At the end of December, the Fiscal Year 2006 appropriations process concluded. For the first time in several years, Congress passed all twelve appropriations bills separately without resorting to an omnibus measure. The final outcome though was mixed for most of the federal agencies important to the Population Association of America (PAA).

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) budget for 2006 will be \$28.6 billion, which after a 1% across-the-board spending cut Congress approved for all federal discretionary programs (except those under the Veteran's Administration), leaves NIH with a 1% decrease-- marking the first NIH budget decrease in 36 years. As a result of this outcome, NIH has projected a decline in the number of research grants for 2006. To accommodate the 1% cut, the agency announced that it would be reducing funding to non-competing grants by 2.35% in FY 2006 (*NIH Guide*, January 13, 2006). The only significant budget increase at NIH will go to the Office of the Director (OD), where the budget has increased by 33.5% to \$478 million. However, almost a quarter of this funding (\$97 million) will be transferred directly from the Office of the Health and Human Services Secretary to the Office of NIH Director to be spent on the development of medical countermeasures against nuclear, radiological, and chemical terrorist attacks. The remaining 8% of the OD's budget increase will be dedicated to clinical research, high-risk basic research, and collaborative research, as part of the NIH Roadmap Plan.

The final Labor and Health and Human Services appropriations conference report contained one item of interest to the behavioral and social research community. Specifically, the conferees included language, urging the NIH Director, in consultation with the directors of the NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs) and the NIH Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research, to develop a structural framework for managing support of NIH basic behavioral science research. Congress requested the framework include a division of portfolio and funding responsibility among the affected ICs and encourage co-funded trans-Institute research initiatives. A report on the agency's progress is due to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees by May 1, 2006.

The National Science Foundation budget for FY2006 is \$5.6 billion, 3% increase over the FY2005 appropriation. However, the increase for FY2006 is less than a FY2005 cut to NSF's budget, resulting in a 2006 budget that is smaller than the budget for 2004. Once inflation is taken into account, the 2006 budget is smaller than the budgets for the past three years.

There is one success story that emerged from the FY 2006 appropriations process. As reported in the November issue of *PAA Affairs*, the Census Bureau emerged with a higher level of funding passed by the House of Representatives, ensuring the continuation of the American Community Survey and the 2006 census field tests.

The below table summarizes the final FY 2006 final appropriations as compared to FY 2005 appropriations. The table does not reflect, however, the one percent across-the-board cut or any other recessions or taps some of the agencies may face after receiving their allocations.

Agency / Institute	(\$Millions)		% Difference
	FY 2005	FY 2006	
National Institutes of Health	\$28,130	\$28,600	1.7%
National Institute on Aging	\$1,050	\$1,060	1.0%
National Institute of Child Health and Human Development	\$1,270	\$1,280	0.8%
National Center for Health Statistics	\$109	\$109	0.0%
National Science Foundation	\$5,470	\$5,650	3.3%
Census Bureau	\$755	\$812	7.6%
USAID Child Survival/Maternal Health	\$345	\$360	4.3%

The Fiscal Year 2007 appropriations process will officially begin when President Bush releases the Administration's proposed budget the first week of February.