



Summary of CWLA Policy Update: **January 19, 2022**

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Held: Wednesday, January 19, 2022

Time: 12:00 PM Eastern Time

SUMMARY

I. Congress: Legislation: re: Reconciliation

In December, Congress continued to delay appropriations by passing a continuing resolution (CR) that provides FY 2021-year funding into February 2022. The next CR expires on February 18, and it is not clear how close both sides are to reaching an agreement for a full year budget. Most agree on overall spending for the entire appropriations, and that amount will need to be divided in the twelve (12) appropriations areas.

Republicans have made clear that they would like to see larger increases in the Defense budget, and a year-long CR will preclude those increases if Congress adopts a year-long CR. A CR would merely carry over 2021 funding levels into FY 2022. Just as concerning for advocates, including CWLA, a year-long CR might encourage an effort to impose a CR for FY 2023. That would mean frozen spending levels for three years.

II. Appropriations: FY 2022

The Defense Authorization, which is a separate annual bill, in conjunction with the Defense Appropriations bill, did get bipartisan agreement and it raises the authorization to a proposed spending level of \$740 billion up from \$715 billion. The Biden Administration has requested \$715 billion. President Biden has now signed that Defense bill, but an authorization still requires a separate appropriation.

This separate appropriation may be the ultimate leverage to get a deal on the 12 appropriations bills. The Republican leader for appropriations, Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL) indicated some progress during comments on the Senate floor last week; however, nothing formal has been announced. A deal would likely mean a roll-back in some of the domestic spending but at least some of the significant increases adopted by the House, especially for the Labor-HHS-Education bill could survive.

Talks are at the level of the four leaders of the two appropriations committees: Senator Leahy (D-VT,) Senator Shelby (R-AL,) Congresswoman DeLauro (D-CT,) and Congresswoman Granger (R-TX).



III. FY 2023 Proposed Budget

By law, the new budget is supposed to be released by the Administration the first week of February. However, at this point the final FY 2022 budget is unknown. Increasingly budgets are not being released on time. Some observers are hoping the new budget will come out some time in March—by the President’s State of the Union address.

IV. State of the Union

The President has delayed his State of the Union until March 1, 2022. Usually, the SOU comes at the end of January with a budget the following week. The White House is hopeful that some progress will have been made on key issues like a final appropriation and a revised Build Back Better reconciliation bill.

V. Reconciliation Status

There is hope but mixed signals about a revised reconciliation that might get the support of Senator Joe Machin D-WV,) and Kirsten Sinema (D-AZ). Potentially a bill could be built around some of the environmental/global warming provisions and some human service issues especially universal pre-k and universal childcare as well as some health care. Discussions and negotiations have stopped since December and the Senate will focus on voting rights for much of January.