

House Appropriators To Mark Up Bill Defunding Health Law, Flat Funding NIH

House appropriators plan to mark up on a bill that would cut more than \$1 billion from Health and Human Services (HHS) in fiscal 2013, defund the healthcare law and put a prohibition on providing any new discretionary funding for the law's implementation. The bill also proposes flat funding for the National Institutes for Health (NIH). The proposal puts the lower chamber on a collision course with the Senate, where appropriators are pushing to boost CMS funding to implement the health law and slightly increase NIH funding.

A draft fiscal 2013 HHS funding bill released by the House Appropriations Committee includes an overall cut in discretionary spending of \$6.3 billion below fiscal 2012. The legislation includes \$68 billion for HHS, a \$1.3 billion cut from fiscal 2012 and \$1.8 billion below the president's request. CMS would receive \$3.5 billion under the bill, \$409 million below fiscal 2012 levels and \$1.4 billion below the president's request. The draft funding bill also provides \$30.6 billion for NIH in fiscal 2013 -- equal to last year's level and the president's request.

In contrast, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved a bill last month that would provide \$71 billion for HHS in fiscal 2013, including a boost to CMS for implementation of the healthcare law, and a slight increase for NIH.

The draft House bill contains several provisions to stop implementation of the healthcare law, including rescinding prior-year mandatory funds and prohibiting the use of any new discretionary funding to implement the law, according to the committee. These cuts include a rescission of \$300 million in previous-year funding for Community Health Centers, no additional funding for CMS to implement healthcare reform law programs and a prohibition on funding for the new Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight.