

Congress Passes Bipartisan Spending Bill With Illinois Priorities Secured By Durbin

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, today released the following statement after the Senate passed the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 appropriations bill.

“This bill makes critical investments in Illinois’ public health, housing, transportation infrastructure, defense installations, environment, education, and security. America desperately needed a budget heading into 2021 as we continue to grapple with this pandemic and the crises it has caused. After much delay, I’m glad that Congress was able to come together on a bipartisan basis to pass this bill, which will benefit families and workers in Illinois.”

These funding bills include the following priorities for Illinois:

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

- *Medical Research*: Increases funding for medical research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) by \$1.25 billion, for a total funding level of \$42.9 billion in fiscal year 2021. Over the past six years, Durbin has led the bipartisan Congressional effort to increase funding for the NIH by \$12.6B, or 42 percent. Last fiscal year, Illinois universities, laboratories, and research organizations received \$1.1 billion in federal NIH funding.
- *Community Health Centers (CHCs)*: \$11.134 billion in new mandatory funding for CHCs for the next three years, including to support their efforts to address health disparities and tackle the COVID-19 pandemic in communities of color and underserved urban and rural areas. In Illinois, there are 51 CHCs that serve 1.4 million people in the state each year.
- *National Health Service Corps (NHSC)*: \$862 million in new mandatory funding for the National Health Service Corps scholarship and loan repayment programs to recruit doctors, nurses, and other clinicians to communities with health care shortages. In Illinois, 625 health care professionals serve in the NHSC to provide care in underserved communities.
- *Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage*: Includes passage of Durbin's bipartisan legislation, the Comprehensive Immunosuppressive Drug Coverage for Kidney Transplant Patients Act, to eliminate the current arbitrary 36-month limit and provide extended Medicare immunosuppressive drug coverage for kidney transplant patients to improve their health outcomes.
- *Public Health Preparedness*: Includes a \$58 million increase, for a total funding level of \$4.1 billion, for public health preparedness, data collection, and response efforts for public health departments and hospitals.
- *Pediatric Paramedic Network*: Includes \$10 million for a new Pediatric Pandemic Network Program of children's hospitals to prepare for and respond to public health threats.
- *Support for Rural Fire & EMS Agencies*: Includes a \$500,000 increase, for a total of \$5.5 million, for SIREN Act grants to rural fire and EMS agencies that Durbin passed into law in 2018.

- *Childhood Trauma*: Includes an additional \$3 million to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, \$5 million for CDC efforts to address Adverse Childhood Experiences, and an additional \$5 million to the Project AWARE school mental health grants.
- *Gun Violence Research*: The bill includes \$25 million for CDC and NIH to conduct gun violence research.
- *Opioid Epidemic*: Includes an additional \$85 million, for a total funding level of \$4 billion, for substance abuse prevention and treatment efforts.
- *Textbook Affordability*: Includes \$7 million for new grants under the Open Textbook Pilot program, a program based on Durbin’s legislation that awards grants to create and expand the use of freely accessible college textbooks. Durbin has secured \$24 million for this effort over four years.
- *Impact Aid*: Includes \$1.5 billion for Impact Aid—a \$15 million increase over FY20. Twelve Illinois school districts count on Impact Aid funds
- *Increasing Pell Grant Awards*: Increases the maximum Pell award by \$150 to \$6,495. The package also restores Pell Grant eligibility for incarcerated individuals.

Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development

- *BUILD Grants*: \$1 billion in nationwide funding for the BUILD multimodal infrastructure grant program (formerly ‘TIGER’), of which Illinois has been a major beneficiary since the program was created in 2009.
- *Amtrak*: \$2 billion in nationwide Amtrak funding including \$1.3 billion for the National Network, which supports Illinois’ long distance and state-supported routes. Combined with the \$1 billion in Amtrak funding included for COVID relief, this funding will prevent further layoffs and service reductions in Illinois.
- *Airport Improvements*: Includes \$400 million in FAA Airport Improvement Program funding, which will help support capital projects at Illinois airports.
- *Transit Grants*: Includes \$2 billion in FTA Capital Investment Grants including \$525 million for Core Capacity Projects. The Chicago Transit Authority uses Core Capacity funding for its Red and Purple Line modernization efforts.

- *Rail Safety Grants*: Includes \$375 million for grants through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement Program and \$400 million for grants through the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Program.
- *Bus Grants*: Includes more than \$243 million for Bus & Bus Facilities Grants and \$125 million for Low and No Emission Bus grants.
- *Highway and Bridge Funding*: Includes more than \$49 billion in highway funding, including \$1 billion for risk-based bridge rehabilitation and reconstruction.
- *Community Development Block Grants*: \$3.5 billion in flexible funding for states and localities to invest in affordable housing and economic development.
- *Public Housing Fund*: \$7.8 billion in funding for the newly consolidated Public Housing Capital and Operating Funds.
- *Homelessness Prevention*: \$3 billion in funding to help communities prevent homelessness, including full funding for the Homeless Assistance Grant program.
- *Lead Hazard Control*: Includes \$360 million for the HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control and Healthy Homes, including to provide Lead Hazard Reduction grants, which help to identify and remediate lead-based paint in homes.

Energy & Water

- *Department of Energy's Office of Science*: \$7.03 billion in funding.
- *Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory*: \$1.046 billion for the Office of Science's High Energy Physics Program, which provides 90% of Fermilab's funding. Within that amount, \$171 million is provided for the Long Baseline Neutrino Facility and \$79 million is provided for the Proton Improvement Plan-II.
- *Argonne National Laboratory*: \$2.245 billion for the Office of Science's Basic Energy Sciences Program, which provides approximately 40% of Argonne's funding. Within that amount, \$160 million is provided for the Advanced Photon Source Upgrade and \$525 million is provided for five Basic Energy Sciences light sources. This bill also provides \$150 million for Argonne's Leadership Computing Facility and \$24.1 million for the Batteries and Energy Storage Innovation Hub – the Joint Center for Energy Storage Research.

- *Army Corps of Engineers*: \$7.795 billion to support the planning, construction, and operation of Corps water infrastructure projects, a \$145 million increase from last year.
- *Quincy Bay Restoration*: The bill includes \$33 million for the Upper Mississippi River Restoration program, which is helping to fund the restoration of Quincy Bay.
- *St. Louis Locks*: \$12 million for continued rehab work on the Melvin Price Lock near Alton.
- *Chicago Shoreline*: Includes report language urging the Corps to provide funding to reassess and expand the Chicago Shoreline Project.
- *Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study*: Advances a new start for a coastal resiliency study targeting the Great Lakes.
- *NESP*: Continues preconstruction, engineering, and design funding for the Navigation and Ecosystem Sustainability Program (NESP), which will modernize and expand seven outdated locks along the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway System and fund ecosystem restoration.
- *Brandon Road/Asian Carp*: Includes report language urging Corps to provide funding to advance projects to protect the Great Lakes from invasive Asian Carp including the Brandon Road Project in Joliet.
- *Great Lakes Fisheries Commission*: \$47 million to help with invasive species in the Great Lakes.

Interior and Environment

- *Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)*: \$330 million in funding for the GLRI to support the inter-agency program to address issues affecting the Great Lakes, including invasive species and pollution. Since 2010 GLRI has invested more than \$226 million Illinois to implement 170 projects including the removal of toxic chemicals from Waukegan Harbor, green infrastructure projects like the Millennium Reserve near the Calumet River, and the restoration of 40 acres of land at Northerly Island.
- *Great Lakes Science Center*: \$23.1 million in funding to support the research efforts at the U.S. Geological Survey's Great Lakes Science Center.

- *EPA PFAS Programs*: \$49 million in funding for the EPA's Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Programs.
- *Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge in McHenry County*: \$500,000 in Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars

Military Construction and Veteran Affairs

- *Caregivers*: Includes \$1.2 billion for the Caregivers Program, a program Durbin established to provide support for veteran caregivers.
- *Veterans Homes*: Includes \$90 million for State Home Construction Grants, which provide strong financial support to Illinois Veterans Homes for renovations and new construction. In addition, the bill includes \$100 million for grants to such facilities to address COVID outbreaks, which has been an issue at Illinois Veterans Homes and across the country.
- *Veteran Health Records*: Includes Durbin's language supporting electronic health record integration between the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Durbin helped establish the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center as the first fully integrated, joint DOD and VA health care facility prior to its opening in 2010.
- *Medical Research*: Includes \$815 million for medical and prosthetic research to advance and promote the health and care of veterans through the development of cutting edge treatments in a host of areas, including mental health, wounded warrior care, and care for women veterans.

Defense

- *Medical Research*: \$2.7 billion in defense medical research provides for five percent real growth over last year's level. Defense medical research continues to provide breakthroughs to benefit military service members, their families, and ultimately all Americans.
- *Rock Island Arsenal*: \$120 million added for the production of maintenance shelters for Humvees. \$125 million added for the Arsenal Initiative to maintain labor rates at three Army arsenals, including Rock Island, which makes the arsenals a better deal for the taxpayer for work that would often be contracted out to defense industry. \$10 million added for accelerating the Center of Advanced Manufacturing. Direction for the Department of Defense and Department of Health

and Human Services to assess military organic industrial base support to pandemic response.

- *PFAS*: Provides \$227 million for response to PFAS contamination near military bases, which is an increase of 67 percent over the budget request. The provided funding is the maximum that the military services have reported they are able to spend in 2021 to address PFAS. These amounts will ensure continued response to PFAS pollution detected at Scott Air Force Base, Peoria Air National Guard Base, the Capital Air National Guard Base in Springfield, and other facilities. The amount also includes \$15 million to continue the CDC health assessment of PFAS on military communities.
- *Boeing*: Funding for production of 24 F/A-18 aircraft, 12 F-15EX fighters, and continued development of the MQ-25 Stingray drone, which will support the workforce at Boeing – St. Louis.

Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration

- *Protecting SNAP Benefits for Illinois Seniors*: The bill includes Durbin’s bill language to protect SNAP nutrition assistance benefits for 8,000 low-income seniors and elderly people in Illinois. In recent years, USDA has sought to strip SNAP eligibility and participation from 150 supportive senior living facilities across Illinois, and the Durbin amendment blocks this regulatory overreach.
- *Agricultural Research Service*: \$1.492 billion to support agricultural research including at the USDA lab in Peoria.
- *Bee Research*: The bill provides funding for the Agricultural Research Service facility in Peoria to sequence and study the genomes of all species of bees in the United States to assist in addressing the decline in bee pollinators across the country.
- *USDA Electronic Crop Reporting*: The bill includes Durbin’s report language directing USDA to adopt and deploy streamlined electronic crop reporting technology in full within 120 days so that farmers need only to submit one crop report for USDA.
- *Improved USDA export reports*. The bill includes Durbin’s report language directing USDA to issue quarterly reports on the five top agricultural export destinations, by country, for each state.

Homeland Security

- *Firefighter Grants*: Includes a total of \$720 million in funding through the Assistance to Firefighters (AFG) and Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grants.
- *FEMA Disaster Relief Fund*: \$17.1 billion in funding for FEMA's disaster relief efforts.
- *Fallen Firefighters Memorial*: Includes \$49.3 million for the U.S. Fire Administration, including full funding for a Fallen Firefighters Memorial.
- *Combating Domestic Terrorism*: Includes a requirement for the Department of Homeland Security to report on incidences of domestic terrorism, as well as train law enforcement to prevent infiltration of domestic terrorists in these careers.
- *Transportation Security Administration (TSA)*: The bill rejects reductions in the TSA workforce and recommends targeted increases to better staff checkpoints at all airports, including small and rural airports.

Commerce, Justice, and Science

- *Bureau of Prisons*: The bill includes \$7.8 billion to fund Bureau of Prisons staff, inmate care, and building construction and maintenance costs, in addition to \$300 million to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This amount ensures full funding of FY21 operations of USP Thomson, a high-security federal prison in Thomson, Illinois. \$409 million of the funding is specifically dedicated to the implementation of the First Step Act, at Durbin's request. Durbin was one of the lead authors of the First Step Act, a landmark, bipartisan law that uses evidence-based recidivism reduction programs to help inmates successfully return to society after serving their sentence; it also reduces some sentences for certain low-level, nonviolent offenders while preserving important law enforcement tools to tackle criminal enterprises.
- *National Science Foundation*: \$8.5 billion for basic science research to promote innovation, ensure America's competitiveness in the global economy and help train the future scientific and technical workforce. It also includes Durbin's language addressing the need for investment in high-performance computational systems to maintain U.S. leadership in scientific competitiveness.
- *NOAA*: The bill includes \$78.5 million for Coastal Zone Management Grants and \$46.7 million for Coastal Zone Management and Services to support regional

efforts to restore and protect coastal communities in the Great Lakes Region. The bill also includes \$4.6 million for the Regional Climate Centers to develop products and services for climate-related issues affecting sectors such as agriculture, transportation, energy generation, and water resources.

Financial Services and General Government

- *Dirksen Courthouse*: Directs GSA to provide advance notice and to consult with the Appropriations Committee before taking any actions to dispose or develop the federal buildings adjacent to the Dirksen Courthouse.
- *Election Security*: Includes \$17 million for the Election Assistance Commission to carry out its duties and ensure safe elections.