

Senate Appropriations Committee Advances Spending Bills With Illinois Priorities Secured By Durbin, Duckworth

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today announced that the Senate Appropriations Committee advanced three Fiscal Year 2022 appropriations bills for Energy and Water, Agriculture, Rural Development and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. Durbin and Duckworth worked to secure various priorities for Illinois in these appropriations bills, both through Congressionally Directed Spending requests and through the programmatic appropriations process.

“These bills makes critical investments in Illinois and support President Biden’s agenda to build back better. I’m glad the Senate Appropriations Committee was able to come together on a bipartisan basis to advance these bills, which will benefit families, communities, and the economy in Illinois,” Durbin said. “I’m also pleased to see the return of Congressionally Directed Spending for this upcoming fiscal year. Senators and Representatives know their states and districts better than federal agency personnel in Washington.”

“In order to build back better in Illinois, we must make significant investments from the federal level,” Duckworth said. “I’m glad that our working families across the state will benefit from these bipartisan bills, and I’ll keep working and using every tool available to help bring much needed funding for our communities and all Illinoisans.”

These funding bills include the following Illinois priorities secured by Congressionally Directed Spending requests:

Energy and Water

- ***Illinois Locks and Dams:*** \$45.1 million for the Army Corps to fund the first NESP construction on Lock and Dam 25 north of St. Louis and fund environmental restoration projects. NESP would expand and modernize seven locks at the most congested lock locations along the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers as well as fund \$1.7 billion in ecosystem restoration.
- ***Sewer Projects in Madison and St. Clair Counties:*** \$6,025,000 for ongoing sewer projects in Madison and St. Clair Counties.
- ***Chicago Clean Energy Retrofits Program:*** \$500,000 to the City of Chicago for a clean energy retrofit program for homes and communities to reduce energy consumption by 50%.
- ***Evanston Accessible Solar Program:*** \$500,000 to the City of Evanston to install solar energy on low income properties.
- ***Fox River Restoration:*** \$250,000 for the Army Corps Chicago District to complete the feasibility study for the environmental restoration of the polluted Fox River.
- ***Upper Des Plaines River Flooding and Restoration Project:*** \$1,525,000 for preconstruction, engineering, and design of levees, reservoirs, and ecosystem

restoration to reduce flooding in communities in Upper Des Plaines River watershed.

Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration

- ***Federal Inspection Station Upgrades, Chicago:*** \$250,000 to the Chicago Department of Aviation to complete the pre-construction design to reconfigure the 25-year-old Federal Inspection Station at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport to meet current agency standards, streamline passenger and baggage processing, and expand overall capacity.
- ***Hospital Upgrades, Dixon:*** \$334,000 to Katherine Shaw Bethea Hospital to renovate three labor and delivery rooms to include new casework, lighting and equipment, and restroom facilities.
- ***River Habitat Conservation and Restoration Initiative, Chicago:*** \$1,000,000 to the John G. Shedd Aquarium, in partnership with the Chicago Park District, to address deferred habitat restoration and conservation needs in the polluted ecosystem on the South Branch of the Chicago River, aka "Bubbly Creek."
- ***Rural Telemedicine Initiative, Pittsfield:*** \$115,000 to Illini Community Hospital to expand their rural telemedicine program covering a town of 4,200 and a service area of 12,000.

Military Construction and Veterans Affairs

- ***Base Civil Engineer Complex, Springfield:*** \$10.2 million for new facilities to house the Base Civil Engineer Complex of the Air National Guard 183rd Wing at Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport.

These funding bills include the following Illinois projects that were included in the President's budget and funded by the committee:

Energy and Water

- ***Chicago Shoreline Project:*** \$500,000 for a reevaluation of the Chicago Shoreline project needed before new work can be done on the project.

- ***Great Lakes Coastal Resiliency Study:*** \$500,000 to begin a comprehensive study of the impact of climate change on the Great Lakes.
- ***Asian Carp/Brandon Road Project in Joliet:***\$4.9 million in preconstruction, engineering, design funding for the Joliet lock and dam project that will prevent the spread of Asian Carp into the Great Lakes.
- ***Quincy Bay Restoration:*** \$33 million to fully fund the current projects in the Upper Mississippi River Restoration program, including the restoration of Quincy Bay.
- ***Melvin Price Lock and Dam (Metro East):***\$24 million in construction funding.
- ***Carlyle Lake, Carlyle:***\$14.3 million in operations and maintenance funding.
- ***Chicago Harbor, Chicago:*** \$3.08 million in operations and maintenance funding.
- ***Chicago River:*** \$635,000 in operations and maintenance funding.
- ***Chicago Ship and Sanitary Canal Aquatic Nuisance Species Barrier System, Chicago:*** \$12.95 million in operations and maintenance funding to continue operation of the barrier system to eliminate invasive aquatic nuisance species such as the Asian carp and to continue construction of permanent barriers.
- ***Farm Creek Reservoirs, East Peoria:*** \$541,000 in operations and maintenance funding.
- ***Kaskaskia River Basin, Central Illinois:*** \$4.38 million in operations and maintenance funding.
- ***Lake Michigan Diversion:***\$1.19 million in operations and maintenance funding.
- ***Lake Shelbyville, Shelbyville:*** \$17.97 million in operations and maintenance funding.
- ***Illinois River:*** \$81.033 million in operations and maintenance funding.
- ***Upper Mississippi River, Rock Island and St. Louis Districts:*** \$64.61 million in operations and maintenance funding.
- ***Rend Lake, Rend Lake:***\$12.8 million for operations and maintenance funding.
- ***Waukegan Harbor:*** \$11,000 in operations and maintenance funding.

- ***Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory.*** \$1.079 billion for the Office of Science's High Energy Physics Program, which provides 90% of Fermilab's funding. Within that amount, \$176M is provided for the Long Baseline Neutrino Facility. The bill also provides \$90M for the Proton Improvement Plan-II.
- ***Argonne National Laboratory.*** \$2.32 billion for the Office of Science's Basic Energy Sciences Program, which provides approximately 40% of Argonne's funding. Within that amount, this bill provides \$101M for the Advanced Photon Source Upgrade and \$538M for five Basic Energy Sciences light sources. This bill also provides \$25M for the Batteries and Energy Storage Innovation Hub – the Joint Center for Energy Storage Research.

Agriculture and Food and Drug Administration

- Agricultural Research Service (ARS): \$1.5 million to continue mapping the bee genome at the ARS facility in Peoria (in conjunction with University of Illinois)

Military Construction and Veterans Affairs

- ***Vehicle Maintenance Shop, Bloomington:***\$15 million for a new vehicle maintenance shop for the Illinois Army National Guard.

These funding bills include additional Illinois priorities through the programmatic appropriations process:

Energy and Water

- ***Army Corps of Engineers:*** \$8.7 billion
- ***Office of Science:*** \$7.49 billion for the Department of Energy's Office of Science is one of Durbin's *American Innovation Act* target agencies.

Agriculture and Food and Drug Administration

- ***FDA-Food Safety Activities:*** \$1.15 billion to support ongoing implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act, including enhancing FDA's foreign presence, inspections, and outbreak detection.

- ***FDA-Tobacco User Fees:*** Authorization of \$712 billion in user fees to support the FDA tobacco program and contribute to the Department's efforts to reduce tobacco use in the United States, including developing product standards to protect the public health; developing an FDA-wide nicotine regulatory policy; finalizing premarket and post-market product controls; finalizing compliance and enforcement activities and standards; and implementing public education efforts, particularly among youth.
- ***FDA-Dietary Supplements:*** \$14 million to allow the Office of Dietary Supplement Programs to strengthen and expand its crucial inspection and enforcement activities of the dietary supplement industry.
- ***Food Safety Outreach Program:*** \$10 million to provide food safety training and technical assistance, education, and extension to owners and operators of small farms, small food processors, and small fruit and vegetable vendors affected by the FSMA.
- ***Agricultural Research Activities:*** \$445 million to provide competitive grant funding to support critical research priorities addressing issues of national, regional and multi-state importance to the safety, sustainability, and quality of American agriculture with a special emphasis on human nutrition and obesity reduction, food safety, sustainable bioenergy, global food security, and climate change.
- ***Agricultural Research Service:*** \$1.67 billion to fill research vacancies and advance critical research priorities in food safety, crop production, and crop protection programs within the Agriculture Research Service (ARS). ARS research plays a key role in the continuing advancement of livestock and crop production, food safety, nutrition, bioenergy, and environmental stewardship.
- ***Animal Welfare:*** \$34.5 million for USDA to, among other activities, follow through with the recommended improvements identified in an audit performed by USDA's Inspector General in May 2010, detailing serious shortcomings in the ability of APHIS' Animal Care Unit to effectively address problematic dog dealers and ensure their compliance with minimum humane care standards.
- ***Conservation Activities:*** \$938 million to support the Conservation Operations programs of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, critical in nationwide efforts to ensure the health and viability of agriculture and rural America through land conservation activities and improving wildlife habitat, wetland protection, and water quality.

- ***USDA Food Safety Activities:***\$1.15 billion to carry out food safety inspection, surveillance, and data collection activities conducted within USDA.
- ***Plant Health, Tree and Wood Pests:***\$61.2 million to help identify and contain wood-boring pests threatening tree health across the country, including the Emerald Ash Borer.
- ***Rural e-Connectivity Pilot Program (ReConnect Program):*** \$700 million to support loans and grants that facilitate broadband deployment in rural areas without sufficient broadband access at minimum speeds of 10 Mbps/1 Mbps. This program helps to cover the costs of construction or improvement of broadband facilities, as well as acquisition of facilities and equipment needed to expand broadband access in rural areas.
- ***McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program:*** \$245 million to fight hunger and increase access to education among the world's most vulnerable children, particularly among girls.
- ***Food for Peace:*** \$1.7 billion to meet emergency food needs around the world. Humanitarian crises around the world are driving higher needs for food assistance.
- ***Local and Regional Procurement:***\$24 million to provide food aid commodities more quickly and at a lower cost by procuring them locally or regionally instead of shipping overseas.

Military Construction and Veterans Affairs

- ***Family Caregivers Program:*** \$1.4 billion to help the VA continue to expand benefits and services for caregivers, to include for veterans of all eras, as well as hire and train additional staff to manage the increased workload associated with the program's expansion.
- ***Medical and Prosthetic Research:***\$882 million for VA Medical and Prosthetic Research to continue the development of innovative treatments to ensure quality health care for our nation's veterans.
- ***Information Technology Systems:*** \$4.8 billion for IT systems to continues to develop, modernize, and enhance the technology systems used by the VA. The bill also includes \$2.5 billion for the VA's ongoing electronic health record modernization effort.

- ***State Home Construction Program:*** \$50 million for grants to make critical renovations and updates to existing State Veterans Homes and construct new facilities to serve the aging veteran population. This program has been particularly helpful to State Veterans Homes in Illinois, which have needed assistance in constructing new homes to meet demand in the Chicago area, as well as in making significant facilities' improvements in order to mitigate and prevent both the COVID-19 outbreak and Legionnaires' outbreaks.
- ***Women Veterans:*** \$820 million for gender-specific healthcare services and other initiatives aimed at supporting women veterans. These efforts will be especially helpful to correct gender-related gaps in provisions of VA medical care, including to train clinicians to provide primary and emergency care to women veterans.
- ***PFAS and Toxic Exposures:*** Language to support PFAS and toxic exposure-related healthcare services, including requiring the Department to create a registry for such exposures and a plan of action to provide blood testing for veterans who served as military firefighters.
- ***Lovell FHCC:*** Language to support the operation and continued integration of the services and medical record systems at the Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center.
- ***Smoke-Free VA:*** Language, modeled after Durbin's smoke-free VA bill, supporting the Veterans Health Administration's smoke-free policies, to include a prohibition on e-cigarettes and vape pens, on any of its facilities.