

## **American Heart Association Federal Priorities in the President's FY 2015 Budget**

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In recent years, the president's proposed budget has become a poor predictor of policy outcomes. However, the appropriations committees use the proposed program levels as one benchmark and it's useful to know what that benchmark is.

Below is a summary of how the proposals in President Obama's FY2015 budget request align with the American Heart Association's federal advocacy priorities:

### **RESEARCH**

#### **Protect and restore funding for the NIH**

This budget provides \$30.2 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which equals about a \$200 million increase over the last year. In a [press statement](#), the association described the NIH funding level as "utterly inadequate."

Included in the NIH's budget is \$100 million for the BRAIN Initiative, an increase of \$60 million from FY14. The budget also creates an "Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative," which if funded, would provide an additional \$970 million for NIH. This funding would support about 650 additional new grants, more funding for the BRAIN Initiative, new DARPA-inspired initiatives and support other priorities. Chances are slim that initiative will be approved by Congress because it breaches the bipartisan budget caps already agreed to.

#### **Support and Promote NIH Heart and Stroke Research Funding**

The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute receives about \$2.988 billion under this budget, about \$5 million more than the FY14 level. In addition, the FY15 budget would provide about \$1.608 billion for the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, a 1.4 percent increase, or about \$23 million more than the previous year.

### **PREVENTION**

#### **Incorporate the FIT Kids Act into ESEA**

The president's budget includes language from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)/FIT Kids that would support competitive grants and other activities to assist states, local educational agencies, and partnerships between these agencies and non-profit organizations or local government entities. These partnerships would support safe, healthy, and drug-free environments in schools.

Unfortunately, the program excludes the 20 percent set aside that was part of the Senate ESEA bill for physical education. In addition, the budget terminates the \$75 million Physical Education Program (PEP) and consolidates the funding into the new \$214 million competitive grant program described above. As a result, funding specifically allocated for physical education would decline by nearly 50 percent from current levels.

### **Advocate for Physical Activity Guidelines Legislation**

There are no specific references in the President's FY15 budget related to the Physical Activity Guidelines.

### **Advocate for Nutrition and Physical Activity Standards in Universal Early Education**

This proposed budget would create a voluntary federal-state partnership that would ensure universal access to high-quality preschool for all four-year olds from low-income and moderate-income families. Specifically, the request includes \$1.3 billion for Preschool for All in FY15 and \$75 billion over 10 years. Funding for this program over the ten-year period is fully paid for by raising federal tobacco taxes.

The budget also includes \$500 million for Preschool Development Grants, which would provide grants to states to carry out activities that would build state capacity for implementing high-quality preschool programs, and expand model programs at the local level. An additional \$250 million would be provided through the Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative, for a total discretionary investment of \$750 million for Preschool Development Grants.

The budget also includes \$1.117 billion, or level funding, for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program.

Additionally, the FY15 request also includes \$650 million in the base budget and \$800 million in the Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative for Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships. This funding would support the creation of provider networks with center-based and family child care providers that meet Early Head Start Program Performance Standards. This program is estimated to provide full-day, full-year high quality slots to a total of more than 100,000 children.

If any of these initiatives move forward, the association will advocate for the inclusion of nutrition and physical activity guidelines.

### **Support Measures that Improve the Built Environment**

To promote outdoor recreation opportunities in national parks and other public lands the administration's budget provides \$900 million in discretionary and mandatory funding in FY15 funding for America's Great Outdoors initiative. It also permanently authorizes \$900 million in annual mandatory funding for the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture Land and Water Conservation Fund programs beginning in FY16. These programs are designed to help promote outdoor recreation and physical activity.

The president's proposal allocates \$120 million for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative in addition to \$280 million from the proposed Growth, Opportunity and Security Initiative. These funds will

support comprehensive revitalization in high-poverty neighborhoods and help fund the administration's Promise Zones Initiative, which brings in mix use to low-income neighborhoods. These funds can also be used to promote physical activity spaces and help encourage the location of grocery stores that sell nutritious foods.

The Surface Transportation Program (STP) which provides flexible funding that may be used by states and localities would receive \$10.3 billion for a variety of projects, including those that preserve and improve the condition and performance of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The Integrated Planning and Investment Grants Program would get \$75 million to support 30-40 regional and community planning efforts that coordinate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments.

Other highlights include fully funding MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act) and providing \$836 million for the Transportation Alternatives Program, which supports investments in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

In a somewhat symbolic gesture, the budget renames the Highway Trust Fund, the Transportation Trust Fund and creates a new multimodal account to supply competitive funds for investments in surface transportation infrastructure. There is also \$1.25 billion in mandatory funding set aside for TIGER grants, which competitively fund innovative, multimodal surface transportation infrastructure projects. The budget also contains \$1 billion for the Fixing and Accelerating Surface Transportation (FAST) program, which could be used to modify transportation plans to include bike and pedestrian infrastructure.

### **Shape and Protect FDA Tobacco Regulations**

There are no specific references in the president's budget related to FDA tobacco regulations; however, as noted above, the request would raise the federal tobacco tax to pay for an early childhood education initiative.

In addition, the administration's proposal allots \$1.1 billion to support anti-tobacco efforts across the HHS, an increase of \$33 million above FY14. The budget notes that the FDA will implement the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act through the expansion of inspection programs, compliance, advertising campaigns, and monitoring activities. Of the total in FY15, \$211 million is allocated to the CDC to implement comprehensive tobacco control and prevention activities, enhance educational efforts, expand the Tips from Former Smokers national mass-media campaign, and increase tobacco cessation quit line capacity.

### **Shape and Protect USDA and FDA Nutrition Regulations and Dietary Guidelines**

The FY15 budget includes \$838 million for the Agriculture Research Service, including \$86 million – level funding from FY14 – for the human nutrition research program. Four specific areas of research are currently emphasized in this program: nutrition monitoring and the food supply, dietary guidance for health promotion and disease prevention, prevention of obesity and related diseases (including research as to why so few people follow the Dietary Guidelines for Americans), and life stage nutrition and metabolism.

Additional funding for nutrition-related programs include \$6.823 billion for WIC; \$84.256 billion for SNAP – and \$407 million for SNAP-Ed; \$35 million for grants to upgrade school kitchens; \$13 million for the Health Food Financing Initiative included in the recently passed Farm legislation; and \$67 million for WIC farmers’ markets.

### **Advocate for Reduced Sodium Levels in the Food Supply**

There are no specific references in the President’s FY15 budget request related to sodium or sodium reduction standards or regulations.

### **Support CDC’s Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention**

President Obama proposes \$130.188 million for CDC’s Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, the same as FY14, (including the \$73 million increase for CDC’s DHDSP).

### **Protect the Prevention and Public Health Fund, including Million Hearts®**

The Prevention and Public Health Fund receives \$1 billion. This total includes \$4 million for Million Hearts®, a public-private partnership to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017.

### **CDC’s WISEWOMAN**

To help uninsured, underinsured low-income women avoid heart disease and stroke, the FY15 budget recommends funding of \$21.170 million for CDC’s WISEWOMAN program. This support provides preventive health services, referrals to health care providers, as needed, and lifestyle counseling and interventions tailored to identified risk factors to promote lasting, healthy behavior change.

### **Access to Nutrition and Supportive Services for Older Americans**

The Obama administration’s budget provides \$1.4 billion to support of an array of existing programs that focus on health and independence for seniors and their caregivers authorized by the Older Americans Act. This amount includes \$348 million for Home and Community-Based Supportive Services; \$438 million for Congregate Nutrition Services; \$216 million for Home-Delivered Nutrition Services; \$160 million for the Nutrition Services Incentive Program; \$21 million for the Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program; and \$20 million for Preventative Health Services. All of these programs are level funded.

### **Measures that Improve Air Quality**

Under this proposal, state and tribal environmental protection received an increase of \$76 million – up to \$1.1 billion – for the implementation of delegated authorities, including support for air and water quality management and building tribal program capacity.

The budget also includes \$2.3 billion for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, which helps states, local governments, and private-sector sponsors reduce highway congestion and harmful emissions. This is an increase of \$1 billion from FY14.

## ACCESS

### **Defend Access to Health Insurance Under the Affordable Care Act; Protect Patient Access to Quality Care; Government Programs Under Medicare and Medicaid?**

The president's FY15 budget invests a total of \$1.8 billion in the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) "Marketplaces," which provide access to insurance for those in need of coverage.

The request also includes \$4.6 billion for health centers, which will make affordable care available to 31 million patients at 9,500 existing sites and 150 new center sites. Of this amount, \$3.6 billion is funded by the ACA's Community Health Center Fund. This funding will not only support the establishment of new health centers where they do not currently exist, but will also enhance quality and support capital development and facility improvement at existing centers to improve their capacity to provide quality primary and preventive-health services.

### **Repeal and Replace Medicare Therapy Caps**

There is no specific reference to therapy caps in the budget request.

### **Expand Access to Stroke Telemedicine**

There is no specific language related to stroke and telemedicine in the FY15 budget. The budget does, however, provide a total of \$23 million – \$6 million less than FY14 – for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), health information technology (health IT) research portfolio. This program area develops and disseminates evidence and evidence-based tools to inform policy and practice on how health IT can improve the quality of U.S. health care.

### **Increase Access to Cardiac Rehabilitation**

There are no specific references in the president's FY15 request related to cardiac rehabilitation.

### **Support Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Rural and Community Access to Emergency Devices (AED) Program**

Funding for HRSA's Rural and Community AED program is eliminated under this budget. This program provides funding to states to buy AEDs in bulk for locations where cardiac arrest is likely to occur and trains lays rescuers and first responders in their use. The program received \$3.364 million in FY14.

## QUALITY/VALUE

### **Ensure Evidence-based Coverage Policies That Reflect Our Clinical Practice Guidelines; Support Policies that Bolster In- and Outpatient Quality Improvement**

The administration's budget includes a total program level of \$440 million for the AHRQ, \$24 million less than the FY14 level. AHRQ's mission is to produce evidence to make American health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable, and to work with HHS divisions and other partners to make sure that the evidence is understood and used.

The \$440 million includes a program level of \$306 million, \$25 million below FY14, for research on issues affecting the cost, quality, and effectiveness of health care services at AHRQ. The agency's research on health costs, quality, and outcomes is organized into six main research portfolios: patient safety; health information technology; patient-centered health research; prevention and care management; health services research, data and dissemination; and value.

The request also includes \$106 million for the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Trust Fund, an increase of \$13 million above FY14.

### **Support Delivery System Reforms that Result in High Value Care for Patients**

The Obama administration supports a permanent, fiscally responsible reform to the Sustainable Growth Rate. While it does not specify what the reform would look like, the FY15 budget applauds the bipartisan congressional reform efforts. The administration is committed to working with Congress to continue progress toward reforming Medicare physician payments to provide predictable payments which incentivize quality and efficiency in a fiscally responsible way.

### **Support Assistance to Caregivers**

The president's FY15 budget includes \$146 million for the Family Caregiver Support Services program, level funding from FY14.

### **Eliminate Health Disparities**

Under the White House's financial plan, the Office of Minority Health receives \$36 million, a decrease of \$21 million from FY14. The Office of Minority Health leads, coordinates and collaborates on minority health activities under HHS. This funding will help the office continue some targeted grants and health promotion, service demonstration, and educational efforts to prevent disease, reduce and ultimately eliminate disparities in racial and ethnic minority populations across the country.

The president's FY15 budget also includes \$268 million for The National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) is level funded at \$268 million. This institute leads scientific research to improve minority health and eliminate health disparities. Specifically, NIMHD conducts and supports research, training of a diverse workforce, research capacity and infrastructure development, public education, and information dissemination programs.

The budget includes \$810 million for the National Health Service Corps, of which \$710 million is mandatory funding. Since its inception in 1972, the corps has worked to build healthy communities by supporting qualified health care providers dedicated to working in rural and other areas of the country where access to care is limited and where shortages of health care professionals persist.

Between FY15 and FY20, HRSA will devote a total of \$4 billion in mandatory funding to the National Health Service Corps to address health professional shortages in high-need rural and urban communities across the country. Starting in FY15, HRSA will also devote \$5.2 billion to a new Targeted Support for Graduate Medical Education program, a competitive grant program aimed at supporting medical residency positions across the country that advance key workforce goals,

including the training of more physicians in primary care and understaffed specialties and encouraging physicians to practice in rural and other underserved areas. Unfortunately, the budget request would eliminate the REACH program, which is a national initiative vital to the CDC's efforts to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in health

### **Support Policies and Outreach Activities to Increase Medication Adherence**

There are no specific references to medication adherence in the president's FY15 budget proposal. However, there are a set of proposed rules out for comment concerning Medication Therapy Management programs.

### **Support Policies to Improve Advanced Illness Care and Palliative Care**

There are no specific references to advanced illness care or palliative care in the president's FY15 budget.

### **Advocate for Funding for the National EMS Information System**

The administration's budget requests \$1.5 million for the National EMS Information System (NEMSIS), or a decrease of \$1.5 million from the FY14 \$3 million funding level. The FY14 funding level, however, did include one-time funding to support information technology improvements for NEMSIS Technical Assistance Center, which provides critical assistance to states for submission of data to the National EMS Database and for initial data analysis to assess EMS response and patient care.

NEMSIS provides a comprehensive, standardized approach to collecting Emergency Medical Services (EMS) patient care data at local, state and national levels.

## **NONPROFIT**

### **Protect Charitable Giving in Tax Reform Legislation**

The president's budget request includes a provision to cap at 28 percent the value of itemized deductions, including the charitable deduction, for high-income taxpayers. This marks the sixth consecutive budget that the president has proposed capping the charitable deduction.

### **Protect Nonprofit Postal Rates in Postal Reform Legislation**

There are no specific references to nonprofit postal rates in the president's FY15 budget request.