



Federal Update:

USU Place-based Priorities Under Threat in Next Round of FY 2011 Appropriations Debates

Talking Points

FY 2011 Appropriations Update

As Congress continues to debate the budget for the federal government for the remainder of fiscal year 2011, it has become clear that several USU legislative priorities are at risk, particularly those place-based investment programs that many USU members have been able to benefit from.

On February 17, 2011, the House of Representatives passed its spending bill (H.R. 1) for 2011 that eliminated funding for federal programs critical to USU and would trim more than \$60 billion off the government's budget. Facing a government shutdown on March 4th with the expiration of a Continuing Resolution (CR) passed last December, the U.S. Congress passed the fifth short-term CR for 2011 on March 2, 2011 to fund the government through March 18th. The short-term spending bill reduces spending by \$4 billion. Although USU priority programs were not eliminated in this short-term CR, it is expected that moving forward with consideration of 2011 Appropriations, the Senate will look for additional spending reductions and eliminations to bring the overall reductions to a level closer to the House-passed bill, which eliminated all of three of these programs. Thus the future of these federal programs helpful to USU members remains uncertain.

While it looks like another short-term continuing resolution will be passed to keep the government running through April 8 (it has passed the House and Senate support is expected), place-based programs remain under threat for the final Appropriations bill. We encourage USU members to act by March 25, 2011 to ensure funding for these important programs is maintained for the remainder fiscal year 2011.

The rest of this document contains timely and easy steps you can take to help support USU's priorities.

Goal: Maintain Funding for USU priorities for the 2011 Fiscal Year

Talking Points:

Within the past year, USU has submitted letters to Congress and the Administration requesting the preservation of funding for USU-friendly federal programs. USU recently sent a letter to House and Senate leadership outlining its fiscal priorities which are listed below. These priorities can serve as talking points for any federal outreach.

- Maintain \$100 million for the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant program funded by Transportation-Housing and Urban Development Appropriations, which aims to strengthen and expand the economic vitality and sustainability of the many metropolitan regions USU members represent.
- Preserve \$10 million for the Promise Neighborhood program funded by Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations to support the development of plans for comprehensive neighborhood programs designed to combat the effects of poverty and improve education and life outcomes for children, from birth through college.
- Fund the Social Innovation Fund Grant program, funded by Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations, at \$60 million to expand effective solutions across the issue areas of economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development and school support.

Actions

Since specific Senate programmatic reductions are unknown at this time, the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities urges USU Members, USU community partners, and other stakeholders to contact their Senators (information on how to contact them below) requesting they preserve federal funding levels for federal programs critical to USU Members. Specific amounts include:

- \$100 million for the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program (Transportation-HUD Appropriations)
- \$10 million for the Promise Neighborhood program (Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations)
- \$60 million for the Social Innovation Fund Grant program (Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations)

USU and VSA will be reaching out to and requesting meetings in Washington, D.C. with Members of Congress serving in leadership positions on the Senate and House Budget and Appropriations Committees as well as those Members on the Budget and Appropriations Committees representing Congressional Districts containing USU institutions to discuss these priorities. If any Member wishes to join in on these meetings or request a specific meeting with their Member of Congress, or for more information about the timing of these meeting please let Dr. Shari Garmise, Vice President, USU/APLU Office of Urban Initiatives APLU know via [email](#) or at 202-478-6040.

Action Resources:

To contact your Senator:

http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

To read about HUD's Sustainable Communities Planning Grant program:

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities

To read about the Department of Education's Promise Neighborhood program:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/index.html>

To read about the Social Innovation Fund Grant program:

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/programs/innovation.asp>

Additional Information:

For additional information, please contact Dr. Shari Garmise, Vice President, USU/APLU Office of Urban Initiatives APLU at sgarmise@aplu.org or 202-478-6040