

service system at the State and community level for individuals who sustain a traumatic brain injury.

Developmental Disabilities State Councils

The Committee recommends \$80,000,000 for State Councils on Developmental Disabilities, which is \$4,000,000 above the fiscal year 2019 enacted level and \$24,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 budget request. The Developmental Disabilities State Councils work to develop, improve and expand the system of services and supports for people with developmental disabilities.

Developmental Disabilities Protection and Advocacy

The Committee recommends \$43,000,000 for Developmental Disabilities Protection and Advocacy, which is \$2,266,000 above the 2019 enacted level and \$4,266,000 above the fiscal year 2020 budget request. This formula grant program provides funding to States to establish and maintain protection and advocacy systems to protect the legal rights of persons with developmental disabilities.

Voting Access for Individuals with Disabilities

The Committee recommends \$8,963,000 for Voting Access for Individuals with Disabilities program, which is \$2,000,000 above the fiscal year 2019 enacted level and \$4,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 budget request. The Voting Access for Individuals with Disabilities program authorized by the Help America Vote Act provides formula grants to ensure full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities, including registering to vote, accessing polling places, and casting a vote.

Developmental Disabilities Projects of National Significance

The Committee recommends \$13,000,000 for Developmental Disabilities Projects of National Significance, which is \$1,000,000 above the fiscal year 2019 enacted level and \$11,950,000 above the fiscal year 2020 budget request. This program funds grants and contracts that develop new technologies and demonstrate innovative methods to support the independence, productivity, and integration of those living with a disability into the community.

University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

The Committee recommends \$41,619,000 for University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, which is \$1,000,000 above the fiscal year 2019 enacted level and \$9,073,000 above the fiscal year 2020 budget request. The University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service are a nationwide network of independent but interlinked centers, representing a national resource for addressing issues, finding solutions, and advancing research related to the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

Independent Living

The Committee recommends \$116,183,000 for the Independent Living program, of which \$25,378,000 is for the Independent Living State Grants program and \$90,805,000 is for the Centers for Independent Living program. This funding level is equal to the fiscal year 2019 enacted level and \$7,537,000 above the fiscal year 2020

budget request. Independent Living programs maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities.

National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research

The Committee recommends \$108,970,000 for the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), which is the same as the fiscal year 2019 enacted level and \$18,599,000 above the fiscal year 2020 budget request. NIDILRR generates knowledge and promotes its effective use to enhance the abilities of people with disabilities to perform activities of their choice in the community and to expand society's capacity to provide full opportunities for its citizens with disabilities.

Assistive Technology

The Committee recommends \$37,000,000 for Assistive Technology, which is \$1,000,000 above the fiscal year 2019 enacted level and \$5,061,000 above the fiscal year 2020 budget request. The Committee provides a \$1,000,000 increase for Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act. Assistive Technology (AT) supports programs providing grants to States for addressing assistive technology needs of individuals with disabilities. The goal is to increase awareness of and access to assistive technology devices and services that may help with education, employment, daily activities, and inclusion of people with disabilities in their communities.

The Committee continues to provide \$2,000,000 for competitive grants to support existing and new alternative financing programs that provide for the purchase of AT devices.

Program Administration

The Committee recommends \$41,063,000 for Program Administration, which is the same as the fiscal year 2019 enacted level and \$2,076,000 above the fiscal year 2020 budget request. This funding supports Federal administrative costs associated with administering ACL's programs.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

OFFICE OF MEDICARE HEARINGS AND APPEALS

Appropriation, fiscal year 2019	\$182,381,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2020	182,381,000
Committee Recommendation	182,381,000
Change from enacted level	---
Change from budget request	---

This Office supports hearings at the administrative law judge level, the third level of Medicare claims appeals.

Medicare Appeals Backlog.—The Committee remains concerned about the size of the Medicare Appeals Backlog. The Committee continues to provide a significantly elevated funding level for the Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals—an amount that was initially provided in fiscal year 2018.

GENERAL DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Appropriation, fiscal year 2019	\$545,457,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2020	408,749,000
Committee Recommendation	549,997,000
Change from enacted level	+4,540,000
Change from budget request	+141,248,000

Of the funds provided, \$64,828,000 shall be derived from evaluation set-aside funds available under section 241 of the Public Health Service Act, which is the same as the fiscal year 2018 enacted level and \$4,012,000 below the fiscal year 2020 budget request.

This appropriation supports activities that are associated with the Secretary's roles as policy officer and general manager of the Department of Health and Human Services. The Office of the Secretary also implements administration and Congressional directives, and provides assistance, direction and coordination to the headquarters, regions, and field organizations of the department. In addition, this funding supports the Office of the Surgeon General and several other health promotion and disease prevention activities that are centrally administered.

Advertising Contracts.—The Committee understands that, as the largest advertiser in the United States, the federal government should work to ensure fair access to its advertising contracts for small disadvantaged businesses and businesses owned by minorities and women. The Committee directs the Department to include the following information in its fiscal year 2021 budget justification: Expenditures for fiscal year 2019 and expected expenditures for fiscal years 2020 and 2021, respectively, for (1) all contracts for advertising services; and (2) contracts for the advertising services of (I) socially and economically disadvantaged small business concerns (as defined in section 8(a)(4) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(a)(4)); and (II) women- and minority-owned businesses.

Customer Service.—The Committee continues to support efforts to improve customer service in accordance with Executive Order 13571—Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service. The Committee directs the Secretary to develop standards to improve customer service and incorporate the standards into the performance plans required under 31 U.S.C. 1115.

Departmental Appeals Board.—The Committee includes \$20,000,000 for the Departmental Appeals Board, including rent and overhead costs, an increase of \$6,000,000 above the fiscal year 2019 enacted level. The additional funds are provided to address the growing backlog of cases at the Medicare Operations Division, as well as the influx in workload due to increased dispositions from the Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals.

Domestic Violence Survivors with Companion Animals.—The Committee urges the Secretary of Health and Human Services to enter into consultations with the Secretary of Agriculture as soon as possible, and enter into any memoranda of understanding as directed, in order to establish during fiscal year 2020 the requirements for grant application and execution under Section 12502 of P.L. 115–334, the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, to provide emergency and transitional shelter and housing options for domestic violence survivors with companion animals.