



December 12, 2013

Just in time for the holiday season, Congress has found the spirit of bi-partisanship.

Earlier this evening, the House of Representatives passed a 2-year bipartisan budget by a vote of 332-94. Republicans were split on the vote 169-62, while Democrats voted by a margin of 163-32.

While the bill is not perfect, it is a strong step forward and should bring some much needed funding stability to the process. More importantly, the bill significantly reduces the likelihood of another government shutdown in January.

This is just the first step in a longer process to fund our important programs. This is the bill that sets the overall funding limits from which the Appropriations Committees can fund individual programs. The higher the limit, the more money the committees have to spend on individual programs - like workforce development.

What does the bill REALLY do?

- It replaces sequester cuts slated to take effect in January with more targeted spending cut.
- It restores about two-thirds of the scheduled nondefense discretionary cuts that were scheduled to go into effect in 2014.
- It cuts the deficit by \$23 billion.

What does the bill NOT do?

- It does not set specific funding levels for individual programs such as WIA, SCSEP, SNAP E&T or Job Corps.
- It does not extend expanded unemployment benefits that expire at the end of December.
- It does not address the debt ceiling and Congress will have to address this later in 2014.

What happens next?

The Senate is scheduled to take up this bill early next week. Since the current continuing resolution (CR) expires on January 15th, appropriators will need work quickly to determine funding levels for individual programs. Most likely, they will combine all 12 appropriations bill into an omnibus bill.

Do you want more details?

For my fellow policy wonks, you can get all of the nitty-gritty details below:

- Summary of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 [bba2013summary.pdf](#)
- Legislative Text of Bipartisan Budget Act [BipartisanBudgetActFINAL.pdf](#)
- Section By Section Analysis of Bipartisan Budget Act [Section-by-Section-FINAL.pdf](#)

This is a strong step forward. But, the fight for an adequate federal investment in workforce development is not over. We need to work collaboratively to illustrate the strong return-on-investment of our programs on the unemployment rate, competitive edge of our nation's businesses, and overall health of our local communities.

While Congress works in the next few weeks to settle on funding for our programs, NAWDP will be actively working to protect funding for all of workforce development and job training programs.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at Bridget@nawdp.org or 202/589-1790.

Bridget Brown, CWDP
Executive Director

Last night, the House and Senate approved a bill to reopen the government.

The Senate passed **the measure** by a vote of 81-18 and the House passed it by a margin of 285-144. A little after midnight, President Obama signed it into law.

The measure contains a variety of provisions including:

- Extending the Continuing Resolution (CR) through January 15, 2014, applied retroactively to October 1st.
- Increasing the national debt limit until February 7th
- Creating another budget super committee to create a long term funding agreement by mid December
- Providing retroactive pay for federal employees

The Department of Labor **issued guidance** that formally indicated that the new allotments that will be forthcoming may be used to cover the costs of allowable WIA adult and dislocated worker activities that were provided on or after October 1, 2013.

Next steps

While the reopening of the government is extremely important and positive, the fight is not over. The issues that brought us to this point remain and will need to be addressed before the agreement runs out in early 2014.

It is important to note that 2014 is an election year for many in Congress, which may factor into the future debates and agreements. It also is important to realize that while the CR runs through January 15th, sequestration is scheduled to go back into effect on January 14th. This means that there will be strong pressure for Congress to come to an agreement before more cuts are implement to non- defense and defense discretionary programs.

NAWDP realizes that the last few weeks have been extremely difficult for the workforce development field and that the shutdown has personally impacted many NAWDP members.

In the next few days, we will be coming back to you with specific initiatives and activities that will help raise the profile of workforce development with our federal officials in order to help ensure that this does not occur again in early 2014.

Thank you for all of your efforts to serve our nation's employers and job seekers. Workforce Development Professionals are at the heart of our economic recovery and you should take pride in all of your efforts.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at Bridget@nawdp.org or 202/589-1790.

Bridget Brown, CWDP
Executive Director