



Thursday, March 19, 2020

The link here <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr6074/BILLS-116hr6074enr.pdf> will show you the 12 page bill passed and signed in to law yesterday. In summary it does the following

Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2020

This bill provides \$8.3 billion in emergency funding for federal agencies to respond to the coronavirus outbreak.

Within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the bill provides FY2020 supplemental appropriations for

- the Food and Drug Administration,
- the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention,
- the National Institutes of Health, and
- the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund.

In addition, the bill provides supplemental appropriations for

- the Small Business Administration,
- the Department of State, and
- the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The supplemental appropriations are designated as emergency spending, which is exempt from discretionary spending limits.

The programs funded by the bill address issues such as

- developing, manufacturing, and procuring vaccines and other medical supplies;
- grants for state, local, and tribal public health agencies and organizations;
- loans for affected small businesses;
- evacuations and emergency preparedness activities at U.S. embassies and other State Department facilities; and
- humanitarian assistance and support for health systems in the affected countries.

The bill also allows HHS to temporarily waive certain Medicare restrictions and requirements regarding telehealth services during the coronavirus public health emergency.

Secondly here <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr6201/BILLS-116hr6201enr.pdf> is a separate bill passed both houses last night and will most likely be signed today. It does in summary

Families First Coronavirus Response Act

This bill responds to the coronavirus outbreak by providing paid sick leave and free coronavirus testing, expanding food assistance and unemployment benefits, and requiring employers to provide additional protections for health care workers.

Specifically, the bill provides FY2020 supplemental appropriations to the Department of Agriculture (USDA) for nutrition and food assistance programs, including

- the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC);
- the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP); and
- nutrition assistance grants for U.S. territories.

The bill also provides FY2020 appropriations to the Department of Health and Human Services for nutrition programs that assist the elderly.

The supplemental appropriations provided by the bill are designated as emergency spending, which is exempt from discretionary spending limits.

The bill modifies USDA food assistance and nutrition programs to

- allow certain waivers to requirements for the school meal programs,
- suspend the work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as the food stamp program), and
- allow states to request waivers to provide certain emergency SNAP benefits.

In addition, the bill requires the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue an emergency temporary standard that requires certain employers to develop and implement a comprehensive infectious disease exposure control plan to protect health care workers.

The bill also includes provisions that

- establish a federal emergency paid leave benefits program to provide payments to employees taking unpaid leave due to the coronavirus outbreak,
- expand unemployment benefits and provide grants to states for processing and paying claims,
- require employers to provide paid sick leave to employees,
- establish requirements for providing coronavirus diagnostic testing at no cost to consumers,
- treat personal respiratory protective devices as covered countermeasures that are eligible for certain liability protections, and
- temporarily increase the Medicaid federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP)