



**APHA Legislative Update
May 2010**

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I. Senate Budget Committee Approves Budget Resolution

On April 22nd, the Senate Budget Committee approved its FY 2011 budget resolution by a vote of 12-10, along party lines, with one Democrat, Sen. Feingold (Wisc.) voting against the measure. The proposal would freeze non-defense discretionary spending for the next three years.

Overall, the budget resolution provides a modest increase to \$59.8 billion for discretionary spending for federal health programs (function 550) for FY 2011, about \$7.3 billion less than the \$67.1 billion APHA and other health advocates are proposing. Additionally, the proposal calls for additional cuts to federal discretionary health spending through FY 2013. The Senate proposal also cuts global health activities funded through USAID and PEPFAR by \$4 billion, down to \$54.8 billion.

While the Chairman's mark for the Senate budget resolution identifies a number of increases for health-related issues, including community health centers, the State Access Health Program and the National Health Service Corps, it will ultimately be the Appropriations Committee which sets spending levels for specific agencies and programs based on the budget allocations provided them by the Budget Committee.

APHA is particularly troubled with the resolution's emphasis on achieving savings and deficit reduction by targeting non-defense discretionary spending (which comprises only one-eighth of federal spending) with more than \$4 billion in cuts. These discretionary health programs provide funding for many of the critical health services American's depend on in tough economic times.

It is unclear whether the House of Representatives will move forward with a budget resolution this year or whether they will adopt a so-called "deeming resolution" to set caps on discretionary spending for the 12 annual appropriations bills.

Additionally they could try to move the appropriations bills without any form of budget guidance legislation. House Democrats are trying to reconcile the desire for spending cuts from more fiscally conservative members of their caucus and rank-and-file Democrats who fear that such cuts could have too great of a negative impact on domestic programs such as health, education and other Democratic priorities.

APHA has been actively advocating for increased funding for federal public health spending as well as for specific increases for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Resources and Services Administration, our [testimony to the Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittees](#) on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education is available online.

You can send a message to your Representative and Senators urging them to provide strong [funding for CDC and HRSA](#) by visiting APHA's [Take Action](#) page online.

II. **Waiting on the Senate: Climate Change and Food Safety**

Food Safety

As the Senate slowly moves forward with Wall Street Reform legislation on the floor, action on two of APHA's top legislative priorities continue to be delayed. With reports suggesting that the current debate over Wall Street Reform could take until the Memorial Day weekend, a Senate floor vote on food safety reform (S. 510) may not take place until June. APHA continues to monitor proposed amendments that would threaten our food safety reform priorities.

Visit the APHA's website for more information on [APHA's food safety priorities](#) and [send a letter to your Senators](#) urging them to support food safety reform encouraging a floor vote.

Climate Change

APHA has been reaching out to various key Senate offices to encourage Senators involved in the negotiations to develop a new climate change proposal to ensure the public health funding in the House-passed climate bill is included in any proposal considered by the Senate. An earlier Senate bill introduced by Senators John Kerry (D-Mass) and Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) included language nearly identical to that in the House-passed bill. Senators Kerry, Lieberman (I-Conn.) and Graham (R-S.C.) had been working to develop a new proposal, but Sen. Graham has since dropped out of the negotiations due to a dispute with the White House and Senate Democratic leaders over immigration reform leaving the fate of a bipartisan compromise unclear.

You can read [APHA's most recent climate change legislation correspondence](#) with the Senate online and [send a message to your Senators](#) urging the inclusion of strong public health provisions in any climate change proposal considered by the Senate.

III. Senate Committee Moves Forward on Child Nutrition Legislation

In late March, the Senate Agriculture Committee unanimously passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, legislation to reauthorize federal child nutrition programs. The legislation would provide an additional \$4.5 billion dollars for the programs over the next 10 years. Some of the provisions included in the legislation would strengthen the nutritional quality of foods sold outside of the school lunch program, including vending machines and school stores, provide schools with a performance-based increase in school meal reimbursement rates and would require that WIC food packages be updated at least every 10 years.

Visit the APHA website to read [APHA's letter in support of the bill](#) and [send a message to Congress](#) urging them to pass strong child nutrition reauthorization legislation.

IV. Policy Watch: Public Health News From the States

Vermont Becomes the 21st State to Pass E-waste Recycling Law.

Vermont Governor Jim Douglas signed Senate Bill 77 into law on April 19th 2010 making Vermont the 21st state to pass statewide e-waste recycling legislation. The bill is intended to increase the collection and recycling of electronic devices by requiring manufactures of certain electronics to implement and fund a product take back program and in doing so placing the burden of paying for the electronic waste on manufactures. Additionally, it will help to reduce toxic waste and increase state wide recycling of electronic waste by providing free e-waste removal to residents, schools, small businesses and nonprofits.

Iowa Strengthens Nursing Workforce

Iowa Senate File 2384, legislation that will help recruit new nurses, strengthen the nursing workforce, and reduce the nurse shortage currently experienced in the state was signed into law by Governor Chet Culver (D) on Wednesday, April 21, 2010. The new law established the Iowa Needs Nurses Now Initiative which is intended to create new funding opportunities for training, recruitment, and retention of nurses in the state. Senate File 2384 also provides funding for the Nurse Residency Training Program meant to put nurses and nursing student into the Iowan nurse workforce.

Legislative Update Conference Call

Join APHA's Government Relations staff for a conference call to review the May Legislative Update. The call will be held on Monday, May 10, 2010 at 1:00pm (EST). Call (800) 442-5794; Passcode is 141930. Any problems with the call-in number should be directed to customer service at (877) 807-0970.

[Contact](#) * [APHA Home](#)

APHA 800 I Street NW, Washington DC 20001
202-777-APHA (phone) * 202-777-2534 (fax)