

Senate Provides Request for NASA

(The complete series of AAAS R&D Funding Updates, including continually updated analyses of R&D by agency in FY 2000 appropriations, is available on the AAAS R&D Web Site (<http://www.aaas.org/spp/R&D>) in the “FY 2000 R&D” or the “What’s New” sections.)

The Senate Appropriations Committee has drafted an FY 2000 VA-HUD appropriations bill (S 1596) that would give increases to R&D programs in the National Science Foundation (NSF) and provide the requested amounts for most programs in the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Unlike the companion House bill, which would impose a \$1 billion cut on NASA, **the Senate would provide the requested amount of \$13.6 billion for NASA’s budget, a cut of \$87 million or 0.6 percent.** The House would provide only \$12.7 billion. **Total NASA R&D would increase slightly by 0.6 percent to \$9.8 billion, the same amount as the request** (see Table).

As the October 1 start of FY 2000 approaches, Congress is struggling to draft the 13 appropriations bills within discretionary spending caps that are forcing sharp cuts to domestic discretionary programs. The discretionary spending caps, enacted in 1997, require FY 2000 discretionary spending to be nearly \$20 billion below FY 1999 funding levels. The **FY 2000 VA-HUD bill**, the 12th bill to be drafted by the Senate, totals only \$70 billion in discretionary budget authority, nearly \$3 billion below the FY 1999 level and \$5 billion below the amount needed to keep pace with inflation. The total was originally even lower, but the Appropriations Committee added funds to the VA-HUD bill by raiding the Labor-HHS bill’s allocation. As a result, the unlucky Labor-HHS bill, the only bill yet to be drafted in both the House and the Senate, now has an allocation that is nearly \$12 billion below the FY 1999 funding level, a level that could require cuts of almost 20 percent for its programs. Even the revised allocation of \$70 billion was insufficient for the Senate, and an extra \$4.2 billion was found at the last minute by funding some housing programs with FY 2001 rather than FY 2000 funds.

Within the \$70 billion total for the House VA-HUD bill, the House made clear its priority for veterans’ programs and increased funding by nearly \$2 billion, putting even more pressure on other programs in the bill. As a result, the other agencies funded in the bill, including EPA, NASA, and NSF, face steep cuts (see the August 6 R&D Funding Updates for information on House appropriations for these three agencies). The Senate, although faced with the same total, put a higher priority on science programs and, aided by the extra \$4 billion in FY 2001 funds, managed to meet the President’s request for all three agencies. (Please see the NSF and EPA Funding Updates for information on proposed Senate appropriations for R&D in these agencies.) The Senate would fund NASA at the requested level of \$13.6 billion, a cut of \$87 million or 0.6 percent, in sharp contrast to the House’s proposed budget of \$12.7 billion. Two-thirds of the NASA budget, which excludes the Space Shuttle program and its associated costs, is classified as R&D. **NASA’s R&D would total \$9.8 billion in the Senate plan, a slight increase of 0.6 percent over FY 1999.** Although funding for development of the International Space Station would increase, the **Science, Aeronautics, and Technology (SAT)** account would decline by 4.1 percent to \$5.4 billion. The House would cut NASA’s R&D by 7.0 percent.

The SAT account, which funds nearly all of NASA’s R&D not related to the Space Station, would receive \$5.4 billion from the Senate, a reduction of 4.1 percent from FY 1999 but the same as the request, in contrast to a proposed 12 percent cut in the House bill. Within the total, the Senate would rearrange NASA’s priorities. The Senate would cut \$120 million from the request for **Space Science**, resulting in a program budget of \$2.1 billion, 2.0 percent less than FY 1999. Within the declining amount, the Senate instructs NASA to set aside \$26 million for costs associated with

replacing the gyroscopes on the Hubble Space Telescope. The Senate would add \$100 million to the request for **Aero-Space Technology**, leaving the program with \$1.1 billion, 17.4 percent less than FY 1999. The increase over the request would go toward the design, development, and testing of future launch technologies, including the X-33 and X-34 programs. The Senate would add \$20 million to the request for **Academic Programs**, resulting in a budget of \$120 million, down 13.4 percent from FY 1999. The **Life and Microgravity Sciences and Applications (LMSA)** account within SAT would receive \$256 million appropriation, down 2.8 percent from FY 1999 but the same amount as the request. Earth Science would receive \$1.5 billion as requested, an increase of 3.2 percent over FY 1999.

The Senate would provide the requested \$2.5 billion for continued development and construction of the **International Space Station**, \$231 million or 10.3 percent more than FY 1999. The Senate expresses strong concerns about the escalating costs and lengthening construction schedule of the project, and the Senate bill appropriates Space Station funds in a separate account to prevent NASA from siphoning funds from other Human Space Flight programs to cover cost overruns in the Station. The non-R&D **Space Shuttle** program, the other major program within Human Space Flight, would receive \$3.0 billion, just slightly less than its current funding. The Senate bill contains language directing NASA to add a research shuttle mission in FY 2000 in addition to the currently planned nine missions, seven for building the Space Shuttle and two for repairing the Hubble Space Telescope. The House bill contains similar language.

The Senate VA-HUD bill is scheduled for floor debate this week. The House approved its version of the bill on September 9. If the Senate approves the bill this week, the two versions will head to a House-Senate conference, but the conference report is unlikely to be completed and approved by both chambers before October 1. Continuing resolutions are likely to provide temporary FY 2000 funding for NASA and the other agencies until the final VA-HUD bill is signed by the President. The Clinton Administration has issued a veto threat over the funding levels in the House bill, so the ultimate fate of the bill may depend on whether its funding levels are closer to the House or the Senate figures. If the conference report is delayed, or if the President vetoes the final bill, the final funding levels for VA-HUD, and therefore for NASA programs, will most likely be determined in an omnibus appropriations bill.

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**Table. National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Senate Appropriations Committee Action on R&D in the FY 2000 Budget
(budget authority in millions of dollars)**

	FY 1999 Estimate	FY 2000 Request	FY 2000 House	Action by Senate				
				FY 2000 Senate	Chg. from Request Amount	Chg. from Request Percent	Chg. from FY 1999 Amount	Chg. from FY 1999 Percent
Summary of R&D by Appropriation:								
1. Human Space Flight (HSF) *								
Space Station	2,252	2,483	2,383	2,483	0	0.0%	231	10.3%
Other	20	6	6	6	0	0.0%	-14	-69.7%
Total R&D HSF *	2,272	2,489	2,389	2,489	0	0.0%	217	9.6%
2. Science, Aeronautics and Technology (SAT)								
Space Science	2,119	2,197	1,956	2,077	-120	-5.5%	-43	-2.0%
Life & Microgravity Sciences	264	256	263	256	0	0.0%	-7	-2.8%
Earth Science	1,414	1,459	1,174	1,459	0	0.0%	45	3.2%
Aero-Space Technology	1,339	1,007	1,050	1,107	100	9.9%	-232	-17.4%
<i>Aeronautics</i>	769	620	656	620	0	0.0%	-149	-19.4%
<i>Adv. Space Transportation</i>	430	254	254	354	100	39.4%	-76	-17.6%
<i>Commercial Technology Progs.</i>	140	133	141	133	0	0.0%	-8	-5.6%
Mission Communications Serv.	380	406	406	406	0	0.0%	26	6.9%
Academic Programs	139	100	126	120	20	20.0%	-19	-13.4%
Total R&D SAT	5,654	5,425	4,976	5,425	0	0.0%	-229	-4.1%
3. Mission Support R&D	1,790	1,856	1,668	1,857	0	0.0%	67	3.7%
Total NASA R&D	9,715	9,770	9,032	9,770	0	0.0%	55	0.6%
NASA Non-R&D Activities:								
Space Shuttle (in HSF) *	2,998	2,986	2,836	2,987	1	0.0%	-12	-0.4%
Russian Cooperation (HSF)	53	0	0	0	0	-	-53	-100.0%
Other Non-R&D in HSF *	157	163	163	163	0	0.1%	6	3.9%
Mission Support Non-R&D	721	638	602	638	0	0.0%	-83	-11.5%
Inspector General	20	21	21	20	-1	-3.8%	0	0.0%
Total NASA Non-R&D Activities	3,950	3,809	3,622	3,808	0	0.0%	-141	-3.6%
TOTAL NASA Budget	13,665	13,578	12,654	13,578	0	0.0%	-87	-0.6%

AAAS estimates. Includes conduct of R&D and R&D facilities.

All figures are rounded to the nearest million. Changes calculated from unrounded figures.

* The Senate bill appropriates FY 2000 Human Space Flight funds in two accounts: one for the International Space Station and another for all other HSF programs, including the Space Shuttle. The table shows HSF funds in the current structure.

FY 2000 Senate figures represent Senate Appropriations Committee-approved funding levels.

These figures may be amended on the Senate floor.

FY 2000 House figures represent House-approved funding levels.