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CENSUS NEWS FLASH

PROPOSED FY2008 FUNDING LEVELS COVER 2010 AND SIPP, BUT ECONOMIC STATS COULD TAKE A HIT

House appropriators are proposing funding levels for the Census Bureau in Fiscal Year 2008 (FY2008) that would reflect the President's overall budget request, but could result in cuts to economic statistics programs. The total proposed funding level for the Census Bureau is \$1,230.244 million

The proposed Omnibus Appropriations bill – which covers all non-defense federal programs – allocates \$202.838 million for Salaries and Expenses, including \$24 million for the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The Senate originally proposed that \$8 million be used to improve service sector measurements; the House-proposed Omnibus bill redirects those funds to SIPP.

The new bill allocates \$1,027.406 million for Periodic Censuses and Programs, which covers the 2010 census (including the American Community Survey), and the 2007 Economic Census and Census of Governments. The proposed funding level, which meets the President's request, includes \$797.114 million for 2010 census activities, but it does not fund the ACS Methods Panel or provide \$3.6 million for Master Address File (MAF) enhancements. The Appropriations Committee noted that the Census Bureau will conduct a complete (e.g. 100 percent) address canvass in 2009, to verify addresses on the MAF.

The bill also includes \$9.1 million to launch the 2010 Census Partnership Program – money the President did not request for 2008. The committee called the partnership program a “vital component of the effort to obtain the most accurate decennial census count possible,” and directed that the money be spent to hire partnership specialists for activities at both the regional and national levels.

The House of Representatives will consider the Omnibus Appropriations bill in the next day; the Senate will consider its own version, and the two chambers hope to reconcile any differences before Congress recesses for the holidays. All non-defense federal programs are operating under a third Continuing Funding Resolution that runs through December 21. The Census Bureau was partially exempted from flat-line funding in that bill, pursuant to exception language worked out in the second Continuing Resolution last month.

Census Director nomination will move forward: The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs will hold a hearing tomorrow to consider the nomination of

Dr. Steven Murdock to be Census Bureau director. President Bush nominated Dr. Murdock in June to replace Charles Louis Kincannon, who announced his intent to resign more than a year ago. Senator Thomas Carper (D-DE), who chairs the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the census, will chair the hearing. The full committee is expected to vote on the nomination on Wednesday.

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