



# The College on Problems of Drug Dependence

May 2017 Newsletter

Prepared by Van Scoyoc Associates

## **FISCAL 2017 APPROPRIATIONS**

On May 5<sup>th</sup> President Trump signed into law an FY17 omnibus spending bill that comprised all 11 unfinished FY17 bills to fund the government for the rest of the fiscal year. Within the omnibus, the NIH received \$34.1 billion, an increase of \$2 billion above FY16. The bill included \$1.09 billion for the National Institute on Drug Abuse, an increase of \$13.365 million. Read more [here](#) about what is included in the bill for programs that are needed to provide a comprehensive response to addiction.

## **PRESIDENT RELEASES FISCAL YEAR 2018 BUDGET**

President Trump's FY18 budget, released May 23, cuts NIH by \$7.3 billion, reducing its funding to \$26.9 billion from its \$34.3 billion appropriation in FY17, a 21.51% reduction. For NIDA, the budget recommends \$865 million, a reduction of \$225 million or 20.6%, below the FY17 level. [See NIH table](#). The proposed budget calls for around \$28 billion across all federal agencies for drug control programs, including drug trafficking efforts at the Justice Department and the State Department, and drug abuse programs at the Veterans Affairs and Health and Human Services departments. More [here](#).

## **TRUMP BUDGET CALLS FOR CAP ON INDIRECT COSTS**

Many of the NIH cuts in Trump's proposed FY18 budget would come from a reduction in how much grant money is given for costs that are not directly related to research, or indirect costs. The Budget includes an indirect cost rate for NIH grants that will be capped at 10 percent of total research. Read more [here](#).

## **OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY**

On May 23, the Trump administration in its FY18 budget proposal walked back anticipated cuts to the Office of National Drug Control Policy after blowback from Congress and groups that support funding for addiction treatment. A draft budget document that circulated on Capitol Hill in early May suggested that the administration would cut ONDCP's funding by around 95 percent. In response to the report, more than 200 organizations, including CPDD, signed onto a letter urging the administration to reconsider this proposal. Read the letter [here](#).

## **HHS SECRETARY PRICE COMMENTS ON OPIOID DRUGS TO TREAT ADDICTION**

On May 9, the HHS secretary had said he was skeptical of the maintenance therapies that use milder opioid drugs to treat addiction. "If we just simply substitute buprenorphine or methadone or some other opioid-type medication for the opioid addiction, then we haven't moved the dial much," Price [told](#) the Charleston Gazette-Mail. Read more [here](#). In response to his comments, CPDD sent a [letter](#) to Secretary Price.

## **HHS ANNOUNCES GRANTS TO ADDRESS OPIOID CRISIS**

On May 31<sup>ST</sup> HHS [announced](#) the availability of \$70 million over multiple years to help communities and healthcare providers prevent opioid overdose deaths and provide treatment for opioid use disorder, of which \$28 million will be dedicated for medication-assisted treatment (MAT).

## **PUBLIC-PRIVATE RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP ON OPIOIDS**

At the recent National Rx Drug Abuse & Heroin Summit in Atlanta, Dr. Francis Collins spoke about the launch of a public-private research partnership on opioids that would be similar to partnerships that have been created in the past for diseases such as diabetes and Alzheimer's disease. Read an [article](#) on Dr. Collins' presentation.

### **HOUSE HEARING ON ADVANCES IN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH**

On May 17, the House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee [convened](#) an oversight hearing to discuss the impact of the NIH. NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, testified on behalf of the agency and was joined by five NIH institute directors, including Dr. Nora Volkow from NIDA. More [here](#).

### **MARINO PULLS OUT AS DRUG CZAR NOMINEE**

Rep. Tom Marino (R-PA) is no longer being considered to be head of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. Read more [here](#).

### **WHITE HOUSE OPIOID COMMISSION**

The President officially designated New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie to be head of the White House commission and named four other members to the group, including North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper; Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker; Former Democratic Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy; and Bertha Madras, a Harvard biopsychologist and former deputy director in the White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy. More [here](#).

### **FDA STEERING COMMITTEE TO ADDRESS OPIOID CRISIS**

FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb has established a steering committee to address the opioid crisis and advise regulators on such steps as prescription limits. Gottlieb, who said overuse of painkillers was his top priority during his confirmation hearing, wrote in a blog [post](#) that the committee will address whether the FDA should mandate training for health professionals and work with providers to ensure the number of doses prescribed is closely related to the condition for which a patient is being treated.

### **HOUSE PASSES AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT**

On May 4th, the House passed an amended version of the American Health Care Act (AHCA) by a vote of 217 - 213. House passage came after Rep Upton (R-MI) and Rep Long (R-MO) offered an amendment to provide \$8 billion to offset the costs of individuals with pre-existing conditions who cannot afford their insurance premiums. An amendment by Rep. MacArthur (R-NJ) that would allow states to waive essential health benefits and community rating requirements if the state has established a high-risk pool, also passed. The bill now moves to the Senate where a bill will be developed by a working group of members from various committees. Read more [here](#).

### **BILL SEEKS MORE AID FOR OPIOID-AFFECTED GRANDPARENTS**

On May 11<sup>th</sup> Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Bob Casey (D-PA) introduced the Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Act to create a federal task force charged with supporting grandparents raising children of opioid-addicted parents. The bill would form a federal panel to provide resources to grandparents thrust back into primary caregiving roles, as well as look for gaps in resources and support. Read the full announcement [here](#).

### **ADMINISTRATION DELAYS ENFORCEMENT OF E-CIGARETTE RULE**

The FDA is delaying for three months the compliance dates for parts of a rule finalized last that year that imposed stricter oversight of electronic cigarettes, cigars, hookah and other tobacco products. The move was revealed by the Justice Department in court filings May 1<sup>st</sup> [according to The Washington Post](#). Portions of the rule scheduled to take effect May 10 would have required, among other things, cigar manufacturers to put new warnings on their products and would have banned the use of "light" or "mild" on product labeling.