



The Social Services Block Grant, Title XX of the Social Security Act Update (December 2006)

Recent Congressional and Administration Actions

- **Five Hundred Million Funding Reduction Proposal:** The FY 2007 Administration Budget Proposal calls for a 29% one year reduction to SSBG. The rationale used for the reduction appears to question the structure and flexibility of block grants by stating that “program performance outcomes may be achieved more effectively by careful targeting of federal dollars to other more clearly focused programs than through this block grant.” (see attached funding chart of potential state by state cuts).
- **Budget and Appropriations:** The present continuing resolution funds SSBG at the \$1.7 billion level. Both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees rejected the Administration’s proposal to cut SSBG. In addition, during the debate over the budget resolution in the Senate Budget Committee, the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator Grassley (R-IA) put forward an amendment to expressly reject any reductions to SSBG. This amendment was accepted by the Budget Committee Chair and included in the Managers mark.
- **HHS Instructions to States:** In its instructions to states on submission of the FY 2007 SSBG Pre-Expenditure report, the Department of Health and Human Services has bypassed Congress that alone has the authority to set SSBG funding levels and has requested that states submit their report based on the Administration’s proposed reduction in SSBG.
- **TANF Transfer:** The Deficit Reduction Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 2005 (DRA), PL 109-171 restored the amount states can transfer from their TANF grant to SSBG to 10% through FY 2010.
- **Emergency Hurricane Appropriation:** The Department of Defense, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations to Address Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, and Pandemic Influenza Act of 2006 provided \$550 million in one-time SSBG funding to states impacted by Hurricanes in the Gulf in 2005. This funding was identified through a reallocation of FEMA funding. In addition to other uses permitted by SSBG, funds could be used for health and mental health services and for repair, renovation and construction of health facilities including mental health facilities.

Key Congressional Committees

- **Finance Committee:** In the Senate, this committee has jurisdiction over SSBG and is considered the “authorizing committee”.

Leadership: *Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT), Chair and Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA), Ranking*

- **Ways and Means Committee:** In the House, this committee and more specifically, its Human Resources Subcommittee has jurisdiction over SSBG and is considered the “authorizing committee”.

Full Committee Leadership: *Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY) Chair and Rep. Jim McCreary (LA), Ranking*
Subcommittee Leadership: *Rep. Jim McDermott (D-WA), Chair and Ranking yet to be decided*

- Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations Committee: Although SSBG is a capped entitlement and not under the jurisdiction of this committee, annual funding is identified in the subcommittee's appropriation bill.

Senate Subcommittee Leadership: *Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA), Chair and Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA), Ranking*
House Subcommittee Leadership: *Chair yet to be decided and Rep. Ralph Regula, Ranking*

- Budget Committee: As part of the annual budget process, this committee is responsible for putting forth a resolution that can address both discretionary and mandatory spending. This resolution does not hold the force of law but identifies spending parameters for Congress.

Senate Committee Leadership: *Sen. Kent Conrad (D-ND), Chair and Sen. Judd Gregg (R-NH), Ranking*
House Committee Leadership: *Rep. John Spratt (D-SC), Chair, and Ranking yet to be decided*

National FY2004 SSBG Services and Funding

Elderly Persons and Persons with Disabilities who are in Danger of Abuse, Neglect, or Financial Exploitation: States utilized over \$134 million in SSBG funds on protective services and elder abuse, far exceeding the \$7 million appropriated through Title VII (Elder Abuse) of the Older Americans Act. These services may include: investigation; immediate intervention; emergency medical services; emergency shelter; case plan development; initiation of legal action (if needed); counseling for the individual and the family; assessment/evaluation of family circumstances; alternative or improved living arrangements; assistance in obtaining benefits; and case management and referral to service providers.

Children in Danger of Abuse or Neglect: States utilized over \$732 million for such child welfare services such as foster care, child protection, prevention and intervention, and adoption. With only \$27 million available federally under the Child Abuse and Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) for the protection of children, states made use of over \$194.3 million in SSBG funds for the same purpose.

Persons with Disabilities Living Independently in the Community: States spent over \$872 million on services for Adults and Children with Disabilities such as adult foster care, residential treatment, transportation needs, special services, home-based services, information and referral, case management, and substance abuse treatment. These services support persons with mental illness, mental retardation or developmental disabilities, and physical disabilities.

At-Risk Adolescents and Young Adults: Although youth often are served through SSBG services as part of the child welfare system, states utilized over \$111.8 million for youth services such as independent and transitional living, services to young wed and unwed adolescent parents, residential treatment, and special services for youth.

Elderly Persons in the Community and in Assisted Living Facilities: States utilized over a \$175 million for the Elderly community including services such as congregate meals, day care-adult, home-delivered meals and protective services-adult. States utilized over \$28.4 million for home-delivered (often referred to as Meals on Wheels) and congregate meals. The goal of both of these services is to make sure elderly and disabled persons receive at least one meal a day, not only to prevent malnutrition but also institutionalization and feelings of isolation.

Low Income Working Families in Need of Child Care and Nutritional Assistance: States utilize over \$254 million in SSBG for child care to make sure that children in local child care programs and centers are able to receive a nutritional breakfast, lunch, or snack. Many states identify a small amount of SSBG funds for child and adult care in order to leverage the Child and Adult Food Care Program. SSBG serves as the vital link between this critical nutrition program targeted to child care.

Housing and Support for Homeless Youth and Adults: SSBG funds are essential for programs dedicated to ending homelessness. In particular, youth housing programs and permanent supportive housing providers often receive over \$11 million in for housing support from state, county and local

funds which originate from the SSBG. In many cases, families and individuals need support services to maintain their housing. As the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has focused its funding on housing, programs that provide both housing and social services have struggled to fund the service component of their program.

Relevant Talking Points to Address Proposed Reduction

- **SSBG as an Offset is Unacceptable:** Either in the FY 2007 or future budgets by the Administration, a cut in SSBG to offset spending is irresponsible. States and localities are already operating on fewer SSBG dollars than ever before. A block grant historically funded at \$2.8 billion dollars has been reduced to \$1.7 billion. In order to make up this loss, many states have transferred TANF dollars into SSBG, a practice that may need to be reassessed following changes to the TANF program as part of the Deficit Reduction Act.
- **Relationship of Cut to Emergency Spending:** Some have suggested that the proposed cut is an offset for a one-year emergency allocation of SSBG in the FY 2006 defense supplemental bill. That increase was already offset through a reallocation of FEMA funds.
- **Insufficient Time to Budget:** States are on a different budget cycle and have already budgeted in the legislature for FY 2007. It is unlikely that any state budgeted for the reduction as it is a mandatory program and authorizers have not called for a reduction, even during the process of finding savings under their jurisdiction as part of the DRA.
- **The OMB PARTS Assessment Cannot Accurately Measure SSBG:** The Office of Management and Budget explains that the flexibility of the block grant makes it hard to know if the services it funds are actually high performers. A Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) assessment conducted in 2005 judged SSBG as “results not demonstrated”. This tool, which grades on such standards as whether the program is “...designed so that it is not redundant or duplicative of any other federal, state, local or private effort?” overlooks the very history, evolution and purpose of SSBG.

**State Allocations and FY 2007 Administration Budget Proposal in SSBG
Funding from present \$1.7 billion to proposed \$1.2 billion**

STATE	2007 Allocation (\$1.7b)	Proposed (\$1.2b)	Amount of Cut
Alabama	\$25,994,486	18,349,049	\$7,645,437
Alaska	\$3,785,049	2,671,799	\$1,113,249
Arizona	\$33,873,486	23,910,696	\$9,962,790
Arkansas	\$15,850,312	11,188,456	\$4,661,856
California	\$206,071,998	145,462,587	\$60,609,411
Colorado	\$26,606,842	18,781,300	\$7,825,541
Connecticut	\$20,020,231	14,131,928	\$5,888,303
Delaware	\$4,810,859	3,395,900	\$1,414,958
District Columbia	\$3,139,779	2,216,315	\$923,464
Florida	\$101,460,697	71,619,316	\$29,841,381
Georgia	\$51,743,503	36,524,826	\$15,218,677
Hawaii	\$7,272,797	5,133,739	\$2,139,057
Idaho	\$8,150,544	5,753,325	\$2,397,218
Illinois	\$72,793,166	51,383,411	\$21,409,754
Indiana	\$35,770,861	25,250,020	\$10,520,841
Iowa	\$16,917,854	11,942,015	\$4,975,839
Kansas	\$15,653,737	11,049,697	\$4,604,040
Kentucky	\$23,802,126	16,801,501	\$7,000,625
Louisiana	\$25,799,548	18,211,446	\$7,588,102
Maine	\$7,536,922	5,320,180	\$2,216,741
Maryland	\$31,940,619	22,546,319	\$9,394,299
Massachusetts	\$35,763,990	25,245,169	\$10,518,820
Michigan	\$57,722,167	40,745,059	\$16,977,107
Minnesota	\$29,273,825	20,663,876	\$8,609,948
Mississippi	\$16,659,803	11,759,861	\$4,899,942
Missouri	\$33,080,832	23,351,176	\$9,729,656
Montana	\$5,336,394	3,766,866	\$1,569,527
Nebraska	\$10,030,867	7,080,612	\$2,950,255
Nevada	\$13,772,337	9,721,650	\$4,050,687
New Hampshire	\$7,470,964	5,273,622	\$2,197,342
New Jersey	\$49,720,827	35,097,054	\$14,623,772
New Mexico	\$10,998,127	7,763,384	\$3,234,743
New York	\$109,814,677	77,516,243	\$32,298,434
North Carolina	\$49,523,020	34,957,426	\$14,565,594
North Dakota	\$3,631,152	2,563,166	\$1,067,985
Ohio	\$65,382,720	46,152,508	\$19,230,211
Oklahoma	\$20,234,600	14,283,247	\$5,951,352

STATE	2007 Allocation (\$1.7b)	Proposed (\$1.2b)	Amount of Cut
Oregon	\$20,765,987	14,658,344	\$6,107,643
Pennsylvania	\$70,889,665	50,039,764	\$20,849,901
Rhode Island	\$6,137,815	4,332,575	\$1,805,239
South Carolina	\$24,267,959	17,130,324	\$7,137,635
South Dakota	\$4,425,368	3,123,789	\$1,301,578
Tennessee	\$34,008,465	24,005,975	\$10,002,489
Texas	\$130,376,954	92,030,791	\$38,346,162
Utah	\$14,084,752	9,942,178	\$4,142,574
Vermont	\$3,553,433	2,508,306	\$1,045,127
Virginia	\$43,159,423	30,465,475	\$12,693,947
Washington	\$35,860,893	25,313,572	\$10,547,321
West Virginia	\$10,362,051	7,314,389	\$3,047,662
Wisconsin	\$31,574,542	22,287,912	\$9,286,630
Wyoming	\$2,904,650	2,050,341	\$854,308
American Samoa	\$48,518	34,248	\$14,270
Guam	\$293,103	206,896	\$86,206
Northern Mariana	\$58,621	41,380	\$17,241
Puerto Rico	\$8,793,103	6,206,896	\$2,586,206
Mass- Blind	\$729,877	515,207	\$214,669

** State allocations from HHS, Office of Community Services FY 2007 State Allocation Table*