The Federal Budget Process

**Key Players**

- President’s Budget Request
- House Budget Committee & Full House
- Senate Budget Committee & Full Senate
- Conference
- House Appropriations Committee
- Senate Appropriations Committee
- Senate Appropriations Committee & Full Senate
- House Appropriations Committee & Full House
- Senate Appropriations Committee & Full Senate
- Conference
- Full House
- Full Senate
- President Signs

**Timeline**

- Feb.
  - President submits detailed budget request to Congress
- March
  - Budget Committees decide top line budgets (spending targets) which are voted on in full chamber
  - House and Senate resolve the differences between their budget resolutions
- April
  - Decide the total amount each appropriations subcommittee can allocate
  - Allocate the maximum amount of money to the NIH & NSF subcommittees
- May-July
  - Subcommittees hold hearings and decide the budgets for each agency under their purview
  - Allocate the maximum amount of money to NIH and NSF
- June-Sept.
  - Amendments are added and bill is voted on in committee and then in full chamber
  - Support (or don’t support) the appropriations bill
- Sept.
  - House and Senate resolve the differences between their appropriations bills in conference
  - Pass a budget—don’t rely on a continuing resolution (which would flat-fund NIH & NSF at best)
- Sept.
  - Differences reconciled, each chamber votes on conference report
- Before Oct. 1
  - President signs the conference report and budget is final

**Legislative Action**

- Allocate the maximum amount of money toward the top line budget
- Allocate the maximum amount of money to NIH & NSF subcommittees
- Allocate the maximum amount of money to NIH and NSF
- Support (or don’t support) the appropriations bill
- Pass a budget—don’t rely on a continuing resolution (which would flat-fund NIH & NSF at best)
The President’s Budget requested $3.8T in expenditures (and included a $31.1B request for NIH). The President’s budget is detailed but ultimately carries little weight in subsequent negotiations.

The House set spending at $3.5T. The Senate set spending at $3.7T. The huge difference in top-line budgets means a conference is unlikely.

A budget conference is unlikely, due to the huge differences in the budgets. No conference means the House and Senate proceed under different top-line numbers.

The House assigned $121B and the Senate assigned $164B to the subcommittee which oversees NIH. This difference means that the Senate will be able to allocate more money to NIH.

The House has not marked up the Labor-HHS bill. The Senate appropriated $30.9B to NIH. No mark-up means no bills to vote or conference on.

The House has not considered the bill. The Senate Appropriations Committee advanced the bill to the full Senate, but the full Senate has yet to consider the bill. Both chambers must act before conference.

A conference is unlikely, even if Labor-HHS is marked up in the House, due to differences in numbers. If no conference, a continuing resolution (for at least a few months) to fund the government is likely (or the government will shut down).

NIH was funded at $30.6B in FY 2013 (less sequestration, it was funded at $28.9B). A continuing resolution would essentially mean flat-funding from last year minus FY 2014 sequestration.