



## **Senate COVID-19 Stimulus Bill**

### **Summary of Elections and Legislative Branch Provisions**

#### **Congress Is Protecting Our Elections:**

The Election Assistance Commission (EAC) will receive \$400 million in grants to states to prevent the spread of, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus for the 2020 federal election cycle.

- The EAC has 30 days to distribute the grants to the states.
- Fifteen days before every federal election in the 2020 cycle, each state must submit a report with a full account of its uses for the payment and an explanation of how those uses went toward preparation for and response to coronavirus.
- Within three days of receiving this report, the EAC must send copies to the Committees on Appropriations, the Committee on House Administration, and the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.
- All unused money as of December 31, 2020, is to be returned to the Treasury.
- These grants allow states to remain in complete control of the entire electoral process.

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) will receive \$9.1 million to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, domestically or internationally (Elections is a small part of CISA).

#### **Congress Is Looking Out for Families:**

Family and Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA) – This bill allows changes for FMLA eligibility for employees covered under the Congressional Accountability Act (CAA).

- Rather than having to have a year before an employee is eligible for benefits, it reduces the FMLA eligibility to 3 weeks, which is consistent with how FMLA is being administered to the executive branch during the COVID-19 emergency.

#### **Congress Is Responding to COVID-19:**

Below is a list of offices and funds Congress shall receive to respond to COVID-19.

- Office of Attending Physician – \$400,000
- Capitol Police – \$12,000,000 in response to coronavirus, personal protection equipment for officers and overtime pay for officers.
- Senate Sergeant at Arms and Doorkeeper – \$1,000,000
- Architect of the Capitol (AOC) – \$25,000,000
  - Capital Construction and Operations will be able to purchase and distribute cleaning and sanitation products throughout all facilities and grounds under AOC.
  - AOC must provide a report every 30 days on the expenditure of these funds to House Administration Committee, the Appropriations Committees, and Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.
  - Authorizes AOC to pay service contractors for salaries and benefits of furloughed employees for 16 weeks, subject to available appropriations, and AOC must promulgate regulations.
- House Communications Standards Commission – Offices in the blackout period will be allowed to send physical mail in response to or to address threats to life safety, like COVID-19.

- House of Representatives – \$25,000,000 available until September 30, 2021, for Salaries and Expense
  - \$5,000,000 shall remain available until expended and allocated in accordance with Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) spending plan to be approved by House Appropriations Committee.
- Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) – Emergency authority to break contracts.
  - In an emergency, the CAO may pay more for goods than originally contracted for in order to ensure the vendor is not eating the cost contingent CHA approval. For example, if the House contracted for bottles of hand sanitizer at \$1, but the bottles have now gone up to \$2, this provision allows the CAO to break the contract and pay \$2 for the hand sanitizer.
- Senate Miscellaneous Items – \$9,000,000 in response to coronavirus-related expenses and technology needs.
- Library of Congress (LOC) – \$700,000 (Salaries and Expenses)
  - This goes to domestic and international coronavirus issues contingent on Committees on Appropriations, the Committee on House Administration, and the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration approval.
  - Additional authorities will be given to the US Copyright Register to waive certain statutory deadlines in a national emergency. Copyright office must submit a report to Congress explaining such action.
- Government Accountability Office (GAO) – \$20,000,000
  - For domestic and international coronavirus audits and investigations based on subsequent GAO timeline and spend plan that must be approved by appropriators.

#### **Congress Is Taking Care of Childcare Workers:**

- House of Representatives Child Care Center – In an emergency situation, the CAO may pay the salaries of employees and other expenses as appropriated.
  - This applies in FY2020 and each succeeding fiscal year.
- Senate Employee Child Care Center – All personnel costs are to be reimbursed and must not exceed \$84K per month from the Senate “Miscellaneous Items” amount.
  - This will begin starting April 1, 2020.
- GAO’s Tiny Findings Child Development Center – \$600,000
  - This applies to salary reimbursement of employees from April 1, 2020—September 30, 2020
  - Approval should come from Committees on Appropriations, the Committee on House Administration, and the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration.
- Library of Congress’ Little Scholars Child Development Center – The LOC shall reimburse childcare center salaries for employees from April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020, for workers furloughed without pay.