

The FY2016 Continuing Resolution (H.R. 719)

September 25, 2015 (IN10148)

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Funding for most federal government departments and agencies is provided in [annual appropriations acts](#). When one or more [regular appropriations](#) acts have not been enacted by the beginning of the fiscal year (October 1), temporary funding to continue the operations of the federal government is typically provided in a [continuing appropriations act](#) (often referred to as a "continuing resolution" or CR).

[No regular appropriations acts for FY2016 have been enacted](#), or are expected to be enacted, by October 1.

On September 22, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell offered an [amendment in the nature of a substitute](#) ([S.Amdt. 2669](#)) that would provide temporary FY2016 continuing appropriations through December 11, 2015. This amendment was offered to an unrelated measure that was pending before the Senate (Hire More Heroes Act of 2015; [H.J.Res. 61](#)). On September 24, the Senate did not achieve the necessary three-fifths vote to invoke cloture on [H.J.Res. 61](#), 47-52. Subsequently, Majority Leader McConnell made a motion to consider an alternate Senate amendment ([S.Amdt. 2689](#)) to provide temporary FY2016 continuing appropriations through December 11 in the form of a further Senate amendment to a different, unrelated measure pending before the Senate (TSA Office of Inspection Accountability Act of 2015, [H.R. 719](#)).

As offered, the CR would generally provide [budget authority](#) for projects and activities through a formula that references the purposes and amounts in the previous fiscal year's regular appropriations acts (Divisions A-K of the FY2015 Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, [P.L. 113-235](#); and Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2015, [P.L. 114-4](#)), with some exceptions.

The CR [covers](#) all 12 regular appropriations acts funded therein. The funding in the CR is provided under the same authority and conditions, and to the same extent and manner, as was provided in the referenced FY2015 appropriations acts (Sections 101, 103, and 104). In addition, many of the FY2015 provisions that stipulated or otherwise placed limits on agency authorities during that fiscal year would also apply to the FY2016 funds provided by the CR (Section 104).

Projects and activities covered by the CR would be funded at the [rate](#) they were funded in the FY2015 Consolidated Act, minus an across-the-board reduction of less than 1% (0.2108%) (Section 101[b]). This percentage reduction would also apply to FY2016 [advance appropriations](#) that were previously enacted (Section 115). It would not apply to funds in the CR designated as Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism, disaster relief (Section 114[b][1]), or an emergency (Section 135). The reduction also does not apply to certain funds in the Social Security Administration—Limitation on Administrative Expenses account for continuing disability reviews and redeterminations (Section 114[b][2]) or the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services—Health Care Fraud and Abuse Control account (Section 114[b][3]). For entitlement and other mandatory spending that is funded through appropriations acts, the CR provides funding to maintain program levels under current law (Section 111).

According to the [Congressional Budget Office](#), on an annualized basis, the CR provides about \$1,016.582 billion in budget authority for FY2016 that is subject to the [statutory limits on discretionary spending](#). A total of \$83.380 billion in additional spending is designated or otherwise provided so as to be effectively exempt from the statutory

discretionary spending limits. The vast majority of this spending is designated as for Overseas Contingency Operations/Global War on Terrorism (\$74.758 billion). It also includes an additional \$700 million in emergency-designated spending for [wildfire suppression](#). The total appropriations in the CR are \$1,099.962 billion in annualized budget authority.

The CR enumerates certain exceptions to the purposes, amount of funds, or other authorities that would be made available through its formula. Such exceptions are referred to as "[anomalies](#)." The CR also contains provisions that would extend expiring statutory provisions in other laws or make other changes to existing law. For information about these provisions, please contact the relevant CRS expert listed below.

Table 1. Selected CRS Appropriations Experts

Appropriations Title	Topic	CR Section	CRS Expert Name, Phone Number, and Email
Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies	Commodity Assistance Program	116	Randy Aussenberg, 7-8641, raussenberg@crs.loc.gov
	Rural Housing	117	Maggie McCarty, 7-2163, mmccarty@crs.loc.gov
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	Department of Commerce—National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	118	Harold F. Upton, 7-2264, hupton@crs.loc.gov
	Department of Justice—United States Marshals Service	119	Nathan James, 7-0264, njames@crs.loc.gov
	Science Agencies—National Aeronautic and Space Administration	120	Daniel Morgan, 7-5849, dmorgan@crs.loc.gov
	Broadband Technology Opportunities Program	121	Lennard G. Kruger, 7-7070, lkruger@crs.loc.gov
Department of Defense		122	Pat Towell, 7-2122, ptowell@crs.loc.gov
Energy and Water Development and Related Agencies		123	Mark Holt, 7-1704, mholt@crs.loc.gov
Financial Services and General Government		124-128	Baird Webel, 7-0652, bwebel@crs.loc.gov
Department of Homeland Security		129-133	William L. Painter, 7-3335, wpainter@crs.loc.gov
Departments of the Interior, Environment,		134-138	Carol Hardy Vincent, 7-8651,

and Related Agencies			chvincent@crs.loc.gov
Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies	Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	139	Sarah A. Lister, 7-7320, slister@crs.loc.gov
	Department of Education (ED)—Highly Qualified Teachers	140	Jeffrey J. Kuenzi, 7-8645, jkuenzi@crs.loc.gov
	HHS—State Children's Health Insurance Program	141	Alison Mitchell, 7-0152, amitchell@crs.loc.gov
	ED—National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity	142	Alexandra Hegji, 7-8384, adhegji@crs.loc.gov
Legislative Branch		143	Ida A. Brudnick, 7-6460, ibrudnick@crs.loc.gov
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	Veterans Affairs	144-146	Sidath Viranga Panangala, 7-0623, spanangala@crs.loc.gov
Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	International Religious Freedom	147	Alex Tiersky, 7-7367, atiersky@crs.loc.gov
	Ukraine assistance	148	Susan Epstein, 7-6678, sepstein@crs.loc.gov ;
			Marian Lawson, 7-4475, mlawson@crs.loc.gov
	Public Diplomacy Commission	149	Matthew Weed, 7-4589, mweed@crs.loc.gov
Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	Department of Housing and Urban Development	150	Maggie McCarty, 7-2163, mmccarty@crs.loc.gov

For more information on continuing resolutions, including historical data on their duration and frequency of enactment, see CRS Report R42647, [Continuing Resolutions: Overview of Components and Recent Practices](#), by Jessica Tollestrup.

For more information about the FY2016 appropriations process, see CRS Report R44062, [Congressional Action on FY2016 Appropriations Measures](#), by Jessica Tollestrup.