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Biden Administration Releases Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Budget Request

On Thursday, March 9, the Biden Administration released initial information from its \$6.9 trillion FY 2024 President’s budget request to Congress. The budget request and associated fact sheets can be found [here](#). Additional Analytical Perspectives chapters and other supporting materials have been posted on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) website this week. We will provide additional information as it becomes available.

A President’s budget request is often considered “dead on arrival” in Congress and this year is no exception. House Republicans are expected to propose significant spending cuts to nondefense discretionary spending, setting up a likely clash with Senate Democrats and the White House later this year. In addition, policy proposals included in the President’s budget request are another part of the negotiations dance with Republicans over the looming need to increase the debt limit; Republicans have indicated increasing taxes is a non-starter.

The \$6.9 trillion request includes \$1.73 trillion in new FY 2024 discretionary funds. This figure does not count emergency supplementals and previously authorized add-ons for things like disaster aid and biomedical research. That is a nearly \$91 billion or 5.5 percent total increase over the current year. In contrast, House Republicans are seeking cuts from FY 2023 levels totaling roughly 9 percent, based on OMB’s new figures.

President Biden’s proposed spending levels include \$886.4 billion on defense for FY 2024, a 3.3 percent increase over this year’s enacted level. Nondefense discretionary spending would increase by over 8 percent, to roughly \$841 billion. This year’s budget request includes smaller increases for both defense and nondefense spending than last year’s request.

The request includes the following for the Social Security Administration:

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is responsible for providing essential benefits to retirees, survivors, individuals with disabilities, and older Americans with limited income and resources. The President’s 2024 Budget for SSA supports investments in improving service delivery and advancing equity. The Budget also proposes to establish a nationwide paid family and medical leave program that would give workers the time they need to care for themselves or a loved one or to bond with a new child.

The Budget requests \$15.5 billion in discretionary budget authority for 2024, a \$1.4 billion or 10-percent increase from the 2023 enacted level, including allocation adjustment funding.

The President’s 2024 Budget:

Protects the Benefits that Americans Have Earned. The Administration is committed to protecting and strengthening Social Security, and opposes any attempt to cut Social Security benefits. The Administration looks forward to working with the Congress to strengthen Social Security by ensuring high-income individuals pay their fair share. In addition, the

Administration looks forward to improving the Supplemental Security Income program to help low-income older Americans and people with disabilities afford their basic needs.

Improves Service Delivery. Each year, SSA processes more than six million retirement, survivors, and Medicare claims, as well as more than two million disability and Supplemental Security Income claims. The Budget provides an increase of \$1.4 billion, 10 percent over the 2023 enacted level, to improve customer service at SSA's field offices, State disability determination services, and teleservice centers for retirees, individuals with disabilities, and their families. The Budget also improves access to SSA's services by adding staff to process more disability claims and reduce wait times.

Modernize SSA's Information Technology: The Budget continues investment in SSA's information technology (IT) to reduce the burden on the public, modernize SSA's website and online services, and provide an improved customer experience. To accelerate SSA's progress, the Budget includes \$50 million in dedicated no-year funding for SSA's Benefits Modernization efforts. SSA's Benefits Modernization efforts will provide employees with better technology tools to determine eligibility and process claims in order to better serve the public. The Benefits Modernization project is in addition to the efforts SSA is taking to sustain the agency's systems.

Provides National, Comprehensive Paid Family and Medical Leave. The vast majority of America's workers do not have access to paid family leave, including three out of four private sector workers. Among the lowest-paid workers, who are predominantly women and workers of color, 92 percent have no access to paid family leave through their employers. As many as one in five retirees leave the workforce earlier than planned to care for an ill family member, which negatively impacts families as well as the Nation's labor supply and productivity. The Budget proposes to establish a national, comprehensive paid family and medical leave program administered by SSA. The program would: provide workers with progressive, partial wage replacement to take time off for family and medical reasons; include robust administrative funding; and use an inclusive family definition. The Budget would provide up to 12 weeks of leave to allow eligible workers to take time off to: care for and bond with a new child; care for a seriously ill loved one; heal from their own serious illness; address circumstances arising from a loved one's military deployment; or find safety from domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. The Budget would also provide up to three days to grieve the death of a loved one. The Administration looks forward to continuing to work with the Congress to make this critical investment and strengthen America's economy.

Advances Equity and Accessibility. The Administration is committed to making it easier for people to access the services they rely on, including individuals experiencing homelessness, children with disabilities, and people with mental and intellectual disabilities. The Budget makes investments to decrease customer wait times, simplify the Supplemental Security Income application processes, and increase outreach to people who are difficult to reach. SSA will also continue to modernize its information technology systems to make more services available online and improve 800 Number access for those who call.

The FY 2024 Budget Appendix includes the following Commissioner's Budget:

As directed by Section 104 of Public Law 103–296, the Social Security Independence and Program Improvements Act of 1994, the Commissioner of Social Security shall prepare an annual budget for SSA, which shall be submitted by the President to the Congress without revision, together with the President's request for SSA. The Commissioner's budget includes \$16,467 million (\$16,317 million without fees) for total administrative discretionary resources in 2024. This represents \$16,223 million for SSA administrative expenses including State supplemental fees, \$124 million for research, and \$120 million for the Office of the Inspector General.

The President's budget request also includes a proposed average pay increase of 5.2 percent for federal workers. If enacted, this would be the largest annual pay raise since 1980. The budget documents released last week do not specify what portion of the raise will be dedicated to across-the-board increases in basic pay, although traditionally Presidents have set aside 0.5% of an overall pay raise figure for average boosts in locality pay. The proposed increase represents parity with members of the military who would also receive a 5.2 percent increase as part of the President's budget request.

Looking forward, as is always the case, the President's budget request is just the beginning of the annual budget and appropriations process. Of note, the Commissioner's budget request of \$16.223 billion for SSA's administrative expenses will be included in our communications with the Hill and others. As happens every year, the President's budget request is likely to see significant changes as Congress takes it up. We will continue to monitor, communicate with the Hill and others, and provide updates as appropriate.

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