



The Independent Budget Statement: Conference Agreement on H.R. 5895

The House-Senate Appropriations Committee conference agreement on H.R. 5895 would provide much needed increases for veterans health care and other critical programs

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THE INDEPENDENT BUDGET

A Budget for Veterans by Veterans

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Statement of the Independent Budget Veterans Service Organizations (DAV, PVA, VFW) on the Appropriations Conference Report on H.R. 5895

The House-Senate Appropriations Committee conference agreement on H.R. 5895, which contains funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), would provide much needed increases for veterans health care and other critical programs, including new funding to begin implementing key provisions of the VA MISSION Act.

Although the conference agreement does not meet all of The Independent Budget's recommendations for FY 2019 funding, it does include significant increases for VA's medical care, community care, construction, research and IT programs, as well as for benefit claims and appeals modernization.

The Conference agreement does not, however, provide sufficient advance appropriations for FY 2020, falling at least \$8 billion short of what VA estimated will be needed to fully and

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faithfully implement the new community care program, expanded caregiver assistance and other capacity enhancements included in the VA MISSION Act.

While Congress and the Administration must reach agreement as soon as possible to address the significant shortfall in VA's FY 2020 medical care advance appropriations, it is imperative that the House and Senate pass, and the President enact, this conference agreement to ensure that VA has a full year FY 2019 appropriation in place before the start of the new fiscal year on October 1st.