



FROM THE NEWSROOM OF:

HOUSE COMMITTEE *on* APPROPRIATIONS

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Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

[Rules Committee Print for H.R. 5893](#) | [Explanatory Materials for H.R. 5893](#)

The 2024 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies funding bill provides \$58.7 billion, a decrease of \$25 billion – 29 percent – below 2023. The legislation:

- **Defunds law enforcement**, eliminating thousands of Federal agent, analyst, and prosecutor positions, and further weakening an already strained State and local law enforcement workforce reliant on these Federal partnerships.
- **Harms communities and hurts the economy** by gutting Economic Development Administration (EDA) programs that predominately serve rural communities, as well as the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA).
- **Makes families and children less safe** by slashing legal services, Juvenile Justice Programs, Missing and Exploited Children Programs, and other resources that prevent violence.
- **Opens our schools, grocery stores, churches, concerts, and communities up to more devastating mass shootings** by making it easier for guns to end up in the wrong hands.

While Republicans dangerously cut programs hardworking families depend on, they are making it easier for billionaires and big corporations to continue not paying their fair share in taxes. The bill rescinds \$22 billion from Internal Revenue Service (IRS) enforcement and operations support, effectively providing tens of billions of dollars in tax breaks for the ultra-wealthy and well-connected by making it easier for them to cheat on their taxes.

Key provisions of the bill include:

U.S. Department of Commerce – \$9.6 billion for the Department of Commerce, a reduction of \$1.6 billion below 2023.

- **International Trade Administration (ITA)** – \$570 million, \$55 million below 2023.
- **Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)** – \$191 million, equal to 2023 but \$31.4 million below the request.
- **Economic Development Administration (EDA)** – Guts economic development assistance for distressed local communities by providing just \$211 million for EDA grant programs, a level not seen since 2014, and amounting to a reduction of \$219 million, 51 percent, below 2023 and 37 percent below 2022.
- **Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)** – \$55 million, a cut of \$15 million, 21 percent, below 2023.
- **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** – \$5.43 billion is provided, a reduction of \$921.5 million below 2023.

U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) – \$36.5 billion, \$2.2 billion below 2023.

Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) – \$700 million, equal to 2023. However, the bill shoves into this account \$30.5 million in grant programs previously funded in another account, effectively cutting legacy OVW grant programs by \$30.5 million below 2023. Within this overall total, the bill eliminates funding for the following programs that were funded in 2023:

- Restorative Justice Responses (\$15 million was provided in 2023)
- Culturally Specific Services (\$11 million was provided in 2023)
- Underserved Populations (\$5 million was provided in 2023)
- Financial Assistance Program (\$4 million was provided in 2023)
- Campus Assault Program (\$1.5 million was provided in 2023)
- LGBT Specific Services Program (authorized in section 206 of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Reauthorization Act of 2022) (\$1 million was provided in 2023)

State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance/Office of Justice Programs – \$2.488 billion, an increase of \$71.1 million over 2023. However, this is misleading, because the bill shoves various Juvenile Justice, Research, and COPS programs into this account, while many legacy programs in this account are greatly underfunded and/or eliminated. For example:

- The following research programs are shoved into this account:
 - Bureau of Justice Statistics—\$35 million is provided, a \$7 million decrease below 2023
 - National Institute of Justice—\$25 million is provided, a \$10 million decrease below 2023
- Several Juvenile Justice Programs are shoved into this account, including the Part B – State Formula Grants and Missing and Exploited Children Grants programs.
- Several grant programs are eliminated, including:
 - Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Grants (\$50 million was provided in 2023).
 - Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act Grants, which help law enforcement prevent, investigate, and prosecute hate crimes (\$25 million was provided in 2023);
 - Community-based Approaches to Advancing Justice (a separate hate crime prevention program for community organizations, for which \$10 million was provided in 2023); and
 - The National Center for Restorative Justice (\$3 million was provided in 2023).

Juvenile Justice Programs – This bill eliminates the separate Juvenile Justice account and, as noted above, moves several Juvenile Justice programs to the State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance account. In the process, the bill also cuts the following individual Juvenile Justice programs:

- It zeroes out funding for Title V – Delinquency Prevention Incentive Grants (\$65 million was provided in 2023).
- Zeroes out funding for the Juvenile Indigent Defense Program (\$2.5 million was provided in 2023)

Community Relations Service (CRS) – The bill eliminates funding for this agency, which performs critical work, serving as “America’s Peacemaker” for U.S. communities facing conflict based on actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. CRS enables facilitated dialogue, mediation, training, and consultation to assist these communities to come together, develop solutions to the conflict, and enhance their capacity to independently prevent and resolve future conflict.

Executive Office for Immigration Review – \$760 million, a decrease of \$100 million below 2023.

Federal Law Enforcement – As noted below, the bill imposes very significant budget cuts to Federal law enforcement agencies. These cuts, in turn, will further cripple an already strained workforce of state and local law enforcement officers, who rely on their ability to have close and dependable partnerships with Federal law enforcement.

FBI Salaries and Expenses – \$10.276 billion is included, a cut of \$415.3 million below 2023, which will inevitably force reductions in FBI agent and analyst positions, greatly hindering the FBI’s ability to stop cybercriminals, terrorists, and other violent criminals.

United States Attorneys – \$2.31 billion is included, a huge cut of \$320 million below 2023 and \$558.4 million below the request. This will inevitably result in a loss of Federal prosecutor positions, hindering the Federal Government’s ability to prosecute dangerous criminals.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) – \$1.53 billion is provided, a cut of \$149.9 million below 2023 and \$344.4 million below the request, greatly harming the Nation’s ability to stop gun violence and illegal firearms trafficking.

Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) salaries and expenses – \$8.5 billion, an increase of \$100 million above 2023 but \$151.7 million below the request.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) – \$25.4 billion is provided, a cut of \$17.3 million below 2023. Within this total, the NASA Science account is cut by \$415 million below 2023.

National Science Foundation STEM Education – \$1.006 billion, a cut of \$240 million, or nearly 20 percent below 2023, amounting to a major disinvestment in programs that help develop the scientific talent and technical workforce we need to remain competitive with our largest global competitors.

Legal Services Corporation (LSC) – \$489 million, a cut of \$71 million (13 percent) below 2023. LSC provides basic civil legal aid to the lowest income Americans. A cut of this magnitude would likely result in hundreds of thousands fewer seniors, veterans, children, domestic violence survivors, and disabled persons receiving basic legal assistance that helps them remain in their homes, keep families safe and together, access needed services, exercise their individual rights, and ensure due process protections.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission – \$420 million is provided, \$35 million below 2023 and \$61.1 million below the request.

Office of the U.S. Trade Representative – \$71 million is provided, a cut of \$5 million below 2023.

The bill also includes new dangerous, partisan policy riders, including on:

Guns

- The bill includes a number of funding prohibitions that would:
 - Eliminate requirements for licensed firearm dealers to report to the Justice Department on the sale of multiple rifles or shotguns to the same individual (Section 537);
 - Forbid the implementation, enforcement, and legal defense of the ATF’s Frame or Receiver firearm Final rule aimed at regulating ghost guns, a weapon of choice for criminals (Section 544) as well as the ATF’s Stabilizing Brace Final rule (Section 550), and the administration and enforcement of Executive Order 14092, “Reducing Gun Violence and Making Our Communities Safer” issued by President Biden on March 14, 2023 (Section 545);
 - Bar the implementation of any measure, regulation, or guidance issued or finalized by the ATF after January 21, 2021, effectively blocking many of the Biden Administration’s current and any future efforts to reduce gun violence (Section 549);
 - Block funds for gun buyback or relinquishment programs (Section 566), the implementation of red flag laws or extreme risk protection orders (Section 568) and the Demand 2 program – a program designed to increase oversight of federal firearm licensees with a high number of sales of guns used in crimes within three years of their purchase – unless reporting thresholds are modified (Section 572);
 - Require notification and hearing opportunities to gun owners prior to the confiscation of a firearm – effectively jeopardizing law enforcement (Section 567);
 - Prohibit the study, preparation, or proposal for any future administrative or executive actions that would be interpreted as a restriction on the production, purchase, sale, or transfer of any firearm unless expressly authorized by Congress (Section 569);
 - Prohibit funding from being used for a firearms registry (Section 570);
 - Eliminate funds to advise, promote, or otherwise support any civil actions to which the ATF is not a named party against any person purported to be subject to the regulation and oversight of the ATF (Section 571);
 - Bar the Justice Department’s ability to classify, tax, or register any firearm with an attached stabilizing brace, like the one used in the mass shooting at Christian Covenant School in Nashville, TN earlier this year (Section 573).

- Prohibit funding to enforce the ATF’s rule entitled “Definition of ‘Engaged in the Business’ as a Dealer in Firearms” published in September 2023. This rule is aimed at better regulating the gun seller markets in accordance with the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (P.L. 117-159) to clarify that regardless of the venue (e.g., online and/or gun shows), a gun dealer intending to “predominantly earn a profit” must obtain a license and run background checks (Section 605);
- Make it more difficult for the ATF to revoke or suspend the licenses of firearms dealers engaged in unlawful conduct (Section 606); and
- The bill withholds 40 percent of ATF funds until processing times for National Firearms Act applications meet certain thresholds.

Immigration

- The bill includes a number of provisions that may further exacerbate the current immigration court backlog:
 - Section 546 prohibits the use of funds for the rule entitled “Procedures or Credible Fear Screening and Consideration of Asylum, Withholding of Removal, and CAT Protection Claims by Asylum Officers” which allows asylum officers to adjudicate asylum claims for individuals subject to expedited removal – an effort intended to help alleviate the immigration court backlog;
 - Section 547 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act to implement any new regulations regarding asylum law and process or the administrative closure of cases in immigration court; and
 - Section 557 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act to close or dismiss immigration cases without adjudicating the merits of the case.
- Requires EOIR to implement case performance metrics linked to the performance review for immigration judges.
- Section 559 prohibits the use of funds to include undocumented immigrants in the Decennial Census apportionment determinations. This would effectively implement a Trump-era policy that was blocked by the Supreme Court in 2019 in the case of *Department of Commerce vs. New York*.
- Section 560 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act to pay any settlements related to civil actions brought by undocumented immigrants against the United States.
- Section 607 prohibits funding in this or any other Act from being used to sue any State for violating the Rivers and Harbors Act for implementing border security measures. This is in response to the Justice Department suing the state of Texas after it deployed a string of buoys in the middle of the Rio Grande River this summer.

Culture Wars

- Section 551 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act to implement the Attorney General’s school boards memo (“Partnership Among Federal, State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Law Enforcement to Address Threats Against School Administrators, Board Members, Teachers, and Staff”). This would block efforts by the Justice Department to address the rise in violent threats against school administrators, school board members, teachers, and staff.

- Section 553 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act for various offices and programs related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This would prevent the agencies funded in the bill from pursuing a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. It further prevents agencies from implementing DEI programs and training.
- Section 562 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act for diversity, equity, inclusion, critical race theory, implicit bias, unconscious bias, or culturally relevant teachings for Federal employees. This would prevent funding for organizations that train Federal employees on DEI issues and activities.
- Section 565 prohibits the use of funds made available by this or any other Act to discriminate against individuals who define sex to mean biological sex as determined by the type of gamete an individual produces.
- Section 577 prohibits the use of funds made available by this or any other Act to hire a person based on the person's race, national origin, sex, or religion.
- Section 578 prohibits the use of funds made available by this or any other Act for sex-altering surgeries.
- Section 583 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act to discriminate against anyone with a sincerely held religious belief or moral conviction that marriage should be recognized as a union of one man and one woman.
- Section 597 prohibits funds made available by this Act from being used to classify or facilitate the classification of any communications by a United States person as misinformation, disinformation, or malinformation or to partner with any entity to censor lawful and constitutionally protected speech of United States persons.
- Section 608 prohibits the Federal Bureau of Prisons from assigning an individual to a facility that does not correspond to such individual's biological sex.
- Section 609 prohibits funding to implement Executive Order 14043, "Requiring Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccination for Federal Employees" or Executive Order 14042, "Ensuring Adequate COVID Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors" at any Federal department, bureau, or subagency.

Other Justice Department-Related Riders

- Section 543 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act to implement or enforce Executive Order 14006, which prohibits the use of private detention facilities.
- Section 548 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act to implement section 19 or section 20 of Executive Order 14074, "Advancing Effective, Accountable, Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety."
- Section 582 prohibits the use of funds made available by this or any other Act to sue a State or local government over its redistricting plans.
- Section 588 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act for settlements that require the defendants to donate or contribute funds to an organization or individual.

Environment

- Section 554 prohibits funding in the Act for:
 - the NIST Center of Excellence in Climate Change
 - climate change fisheries research
 - NSF for the U.S. Global Change Research Program or Clean Energy Technology Program; or
 - to enforce Executive Order 14008 (Jan. 27, 2021), entitled, “Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad”.
- Section 555 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act for implementation of Executive Order 14072, relating to the valuation of ecosystem and environmental services and natural assets in Federal regulatory decision-making.
- Section 564 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act for the promotion of or any contributions to Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) investments.
- Section 586 prohibits the use of funds made available by this or any other Act for an Office of Environmental Justice.
- Section 602 prohibits funding for the Commerce Department to enforce any new (since January 2021) vessel speed restrictions related to the North Atlantic Right Whale or Rice’s whale.
- NOAA appropriating paragraph includes a prohibition on NOAA changing the current North Atlantic Right Whale vessel strike reduction rule until a real time monitoring system is deployed.

Women’s Health

- Includes longstanding rider prohibiting DOJ from using funds to pay for abortions, except in cases of rape, incest, or danger to the life of the mother.
- Section 579 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act for the Department of Justice’s Reproductive Rights Task Force.
- Section 580 prohibits the use of funds made available by this Act to sue a State or local government over abortion laws.

Other

- Section 552 prohibits the use of funds made available by this or any other Act to implement or enforce the Office of Science and Technology Policy’s August 25, 2022, Memorandum, “Ensuring Free, Immediate, and Equitable Access to Federally Funded Research.
- Section 595 prohibits funds made available by this Act from being used for Federal employee union activities.