

The Appropriations Process

American League of Lobbyists

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Overview

- Authorizations vs Appropriations
- What is an Appropriation?
- Constitutional Authority
- Congressional Appropriations Structure
- Congressional Appropriations Process
- How Do You Lobby for An Appropriation?

Authorizations vs. Appropriations

- Any money spent by the Federal government must first be **authorized** by Congress
- Almost any committee can authorize the expenditure of money except the Appropriations and Budget Committees
- You don't get cash, credit, or a check with an authorization

Constitution

- Article 1, Section 9
 - “No money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law....”
- Legislative Power Only
- Executive Branch must spend only the money Congress makes available for the purposes for which it is made available

Appropriations Process

- Congressional Budget Act (33 U.S.C. 1105)
- President submits his budget annually
- Congress Adopts a Budget Resolution
- Appropriations Committees then make allocations among their subcommittees
- Subcommittees recommend bills with specific appropriations

Appropriations Process (cont'd)

- Full Committee adopts each Appropriations Bill
- Sent to the floor
- House usually acts first
- Senate develops and adopts its own appropriations bills
- Differences are ironed out in Conference Committee

Types of Appropriations Measures

- Regular appropriations bill
- Supplemental appropriations bill
- Continuing Resolution

Continuing Resolution

- Funds government agencies if a formal appropriations bill has not been signed into law by the end of the Congressional fiscal year
- Needed if one or more regular appropriations bills has not been signed into law by October 1
- Lasts for as long as Congress decides

Lobbying for an Appropriation

- Draft and send Request letter
- Fill out form(s) for Members of Congress
- Members' offices fill out forms for subcommittees
- Important to meet deadlines for submitting
- Follow-up with meetings

Rescissions

- President can recommend to Congress that a specific appropriations amount be cancelled or reduced.
- Congress must pass a bill approving the request within 45 days
- Congress can disagree, agree in full, or agree to a lesser amount
- Congress can also initiate rescissions

Report Language & Managers' Statement

- Background
- Spending explanations
- Spending restrictions
- Earmarks
- Comparison to funding levels requested by the President
- Cost estimates over 5 years