



NASA'S FY2015 BUDGET REQUEST

Overview

For FY2015, President Obama requested \$17.461 billion for NASA, \$186 million less than the \$17.647 billion it received from Congress for FY2014.

Congress instead appropriated \$18.010 billion, an increase of \$549 million above the request and \$363 million above NASA's FY2014 funding level.

NASA is funded as part of the Commerce-Justice-Science (CJS) appropriations bill, one of 12 regular appropriations bills that fund the government. For FY2015, the CJS appropriation is Division B of the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (H.R. 83, P.L. 113-235). That act is colloquially referred to as the "**CRomnibus**"—a combination of a short-term Continuing Resolution (CR) for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and a full-year (through the end of fiscal year 2015 on September 30, 2015) omnibus for everyone else. An "omnibus" combines most or all of the 12 regular appropriations bills into one to expedite congressional consideration. In this case, the omnibus includes 11 of the 12. DHS is the 12th and received only a CR until February 27, 2015 to signal Republican dissatisfaction with President Obama's executive order on immigration, which is part of the DHS portfolio.

This fact sheet has four tables:

- Table 1 compares what Congress appropriated for FY2014, the FY2015 base budget request, the House-passed amounts in the FY2015 Commerce-Justice-Science (CJS) appropriations bill (H.R. 4660), the amounts approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee in S. 2437 (the bill never reached the floor for a vote), and the final amount included in the CRomnibus.
- Table 2 shows the OGSF request (see next section) for historical purposes.
- Table 3 shows NASA's funding for its "Asteroid Initiative," which includes the Asteroid Redirect Mission (ARM). Those activities are not grouped together in NASA's budget documents and are spread across several NASA Headquarters organizations. This table brings it all together where the information is available.
- Table 4 consolidates the funding for the Space Launch System (SLS), which is spread across three subaccounts, where the information is available.

Base Budget Request versus the President's OGS

The \$17.461 billion request from President Obama was referred to as NASA's "base budget" request to differentiate it from additional funds the President requested as part of his "Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative" (OGSI).

The base budget request adhered to budget caps President Obama and Congress agreed to in December 2013 as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA). However, the President requested an additional \$56 billion for FY2015 spread across the government in the OGS. NASA would have received \$885.5 million of those funds. Table 2 below shows the amounts allocated to each of NASA's budget accounts in the OGS. Because the request was outside of the budget cap, the likelihood of Congress adopting it was quite small as the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. Hal Rogers (R-KY) [made very clear](#) the day the request was released. The OGS was never formally considered by Congress, though Congress did add \$549 million to the amount requested for NASA's base budget.

Congressional Action on NASA's FY2015 Appropriations Bill

As noted, NASA is in CJS appropriations bill, which includes the Department of Commerce (of which NOAA is part), the Department of Justice, NASA, the National Science Foundation, and related agencies such as the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).

House Action. The House Appropriations CJS subcommittee held a [hearing](#) on NASA's request on April 8, 2014 and subcommittee markup was on April 30. The full committee [marked up](#) the FY2015 CJS bill (H.R. 4660) on May 8, 2014 and reported it on May 15 ([H. Rept. 113-448](#)). The House passed the bill at 1:15 am EDT on May 30, 2014.

The House-passed bill increased NASA's FY2015 budget request by \$435 million, to \$17.896 billion from the requested level of \$17.461 billion. The net increase is composed of added funding for some programs (including science, the Space Launch System and Orion spacecraft, and aeronautics) and reduced funding for others (including commercial crew and space technology).

Several amendments were offered during floor debate to take money from NASA and spend it on other activities in the CJS bill, but all were defeated. One amendment was adopted to shift \$7 million from Space Operations to Space Technology, and another prohibits spending any funds on the Advanced Food Technology program that is developing food for humans travelling to Mars. A May 30, 2014 SpacePolicyOnline.com [article](#) summarizes the House action.

The House bill continued a prohibition on NASA or OSTP engaging in bilateral discussions of any kind with China on space cooperation unless certain conditions are met.

Senate Action. The Senate Appropriations CJS subcommittee held a [hearing](#) on NASA's request on May 1, 2014. Subcommittee markup took place on June 3 and full committee markup on June 5 (S. 2437, [S. Rept. 113-181](#)). The Senate bill increased the request by \$439 million,

very close to the House addition, although how it is allocated within the NASA budget accounts is quite different in some cases (see Table 1).

The CJS bill was bundled with two other appropriations bills (Transportation-HUD and Agriculture) into a “minibus” (a mini-omnibus) with the intention of Senate action in mid-June, but partisan politics derailed that effort as explained in a June 19, 2014 SpacePolicyOnline.com [article](#). The Senate took no further action on S. 2437, but it was used in behind-the-scenes negotiations on what ultimately passed in the CRomnibus.

Final Action. On September 17 and 18, 2014 respectively, the House and Senate passed a FY2015 Continuing Resolution (CR), H. J. Res. 124, because none of the regular FY2015 appropriations bills had cleared Congress (the House passed seven; the Senate passed none). The CR funded the government through December 11, 2014 at the same level as FY2014, \$1.012 trillion. Agencies like NASA were funded at their FY2014 levels minus a 0.0544 percent across-the-board reduction.

On December 9, the CRomnibus (see “overview”) was introduced as a Senate amendment to H.R. 83, an unrelated bill that earlier had passed the House. The [text of the amended bill](#) is on GPO’s website. The [joint explanatory statement](#) is currently on a House website, though that may change at the end of the 113th Congress. Scroll down to the heading “Senate amendment to H.R. 83” to see links to the various divisions of the bills. NASA is in “Division B,” the CJS portion. (The bill and statement also are available on SpacePolicyOnline.com’s website; links are in a [SpacePolicyOnline.com article](#) published December 13. Note that H.R. 83 originally was a bill concerning the Department of the Interior and was reported from committee and passed the House during the summer. It was used as the legislative vehicle for the CRomnibus even though it was on an unrelated topic. Information about the bill before December 9 is not relevant to the FY2015 appropriations debate.)

The CRomnibus was very controversial for reasons unrelated to NASA. Conservative Republicans objected because it did not send a stronger message to President Obama about their dissatisfaction over his executive order on immigration, liberal Democrats were angry at a provision that changed the Dodd-Frank financial regulations, and members of both parties were unhappy about changes to campaign finance laws. Ultimately, however, the bill [passed](#) the House by a narrow vote (216-206) on December 11, 2014, hours before the CR was due to expire. Since the Senate still needed time to consider the measure, another CR was passed to keep the government operating for two more days, until Saturday, December 13.

The Senate [passed](#) the CRomnibus on December 13. It was also very controversial there, but passed by a wider margin (56-40).

The final version of the bill increases NASA’s budget more than in the House-passed or Senate-committee approved versions, providing the agency with \$18.010 billion. That is \$549 million more than the President requested for FY2015, and \$363 million more than the agency received in FY2014. The bill (H.R. 83 as amended) was signed into law on December 16 (P.L. 113-235).

The increase represents increases for some programs (aeronautics, science – especially for a mission to Europa and for the SOFIA airborne observatory, the Space Launch System and Orion spacecraft) and decreases for others (especially space technology and commercial crew). See Table 1 for details. The prohibition on NASA or OSTP engaging in bilateral discussions of any kind with China on space cooperation unless certain conditions are met is included in this final version.

NASA Authorization Bill

(Not sure of the difference between an appropriation and an authorization? See our [“What’s a Markup”](#) Fact Sheet.)

Action in Calendar Year 2013. Congress considered, but did not pass, a new authorization bill for NASA in 2013. The 2010 NASA Authorization Act (P.L. 111-267) provided funding recommendations for three years (through FY2013), so they have now expired. The policy provisions of that law remain in force, however, until repealed or replaced by subsequent law.

The House Science, Space and Technology (SS&T) Committee and the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, which authorize NASA activities, [acted on separate and very different versions](#) of a new NASA authorization bill in 2013, but neither bill was reported out of committee. A major difference was the amount of funding, with the Senate recommending \$18.1 billion compared to \$16.9 billion in the House bill.

The disparity was the result of vastly different federal spending caps included in Budget Resolutions passed by each chamber. In December 2013, the two chambers reached agreement on the total amount of federal spending allowed for both FY2014 and FY2015 in the [“Ryan-Murray”](#) budget agreement. It was hoped the budget agreement would make it easier for the House and Senate to agree on a new NASA authorization bill in 2014 (see below). Since the FY2014 funding amounts in the bills considered in CY2013 are no longer relevant, they are not included in Table 1. For reference purposes, they are in the [FY2014 version of this fact sheet](#).

Action in Calendar Year 2014. The House SS&T Committee approved a completely new NASA authorization bill (H.R. 4412) on April 29, 2014. The bill was approved quickly on a bipartisan basis, starkly different from the partisan rancor of the previous year.

The only funding recommendations were for FY2014, already in progress, not for FY2015 or beyond so they are not included in Table 1 below. The policy provisions of the House committee bill are summarized in an April 29, 2014 SpacePolicyOnline.com [article](#). The bill passed the House without amendment on June 9, 2014 under suspension of the rules by a vote of 401-2. The committee’s report on the bill ([H. Rept. 113-470](#)) was published after the vote.

The Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation has not yet acted on its version of the bill. With the Senate completing work for the year in the next few days, it is very unlikely that there will be action this year.

Table 1: NASA's FY2015 Base Budget Request and Congressional Action
(in \$ millions, see notes below)

Account	2014 Enacted	2015 Req	Authorization ^(see note 5)			Appropriation		
			House	Senate	Final	House-passed	Senate Cmte	Final ^(see note 9)
Science	5,151.2	4,972.0				5,193.0	5,200.0	5,244.7
<i>Earth Science</i>	<i>1,826.0</i>	<i>1,770.3</i>				<i>1,750.0</i>	<i>1,831.9</i>	<i>1,772.5</i>
<i>Planetary Science</i>	<i>1,345.0</i>	<i>1,280.3</i>				<i>1,450.0</i>	<i>1,301.7</i>	<i>1,437.8</i>
<i>Astrophysics</i>	<i>668.0</i>	<i>607.3</i>				<i>680.0</i>	<i>707.8</i>	<i>684.8</i>
<i>JWST</i>	<i>658.2</i>	<i>645.4</i>				<i>645.0</i>	<i>645.4</i>	<i>645.4</i>
<i>Heliophysics</i>	<i>654.0</i>	<i>668.9</i>				<i>668.0</i>	<i>671.2</i>	<i>662.2</i>
<i>Education</i> ^{see note 8}	<i>NA</i>	<i>NA</i>				<i>NA</i>	<i>42.0</i>	<i>42.0</i>
Aeronautics	566.0	551.1				666.0	551.1	651.0
Space Technology ^{see note 7}	576.0	705.5				^{note 7} 627.0	580.2	596.0
Exploration	4,113.2	3,976.0				4,167.0	4,367.7	4,356.7
<i>Expl Sys Dev</i>	<i>3,115.2</i>	<i>2,784.4</i>				<i>3,055.0</i>	<i>3,251.1</i>	<i>3,245.3</i>
<i>(Orion)</i>	<i>(1,197.0)</i>	<i>(1,052.8)</i>				<i>(1,140.0)</i>	<i>(1,200.0)</i>	<i>(1,194.0)</i>
<i>(SLS)</i>	<i>(1,600.0)</i>	<i>(1,380.3)</i>				<i>(1,600.0)</i>	<i>(1,700.0)</i>	<i>(1,700.0)</i>
<i>(Expl Ground Sys)</i>	<i>(318.2)</i>	<i>(351.3)</i>				<i>(315.0)</i>	<i>(351.3)</i>	<i>(351.3)</i>
<i>Commercial Spfl</i>	<i>696.0</i>	<i>848.3</i>				<i>785.0</i>	<i>805.0</i>	<i>805.0</i>
<i>Expl R&D</i>	<i>302.2</i>	<i>343.4</i>				<i>327.0</i>	<i>311.4</i>	<i>306.4</i>
Space Operations ^{see note 7}	3,778.0	3,905.4				^{note 7} 3,878.0	3,830.8	3,827.8
<i>ISS</i>	<i>not specified</i>	<i>3,050.8</i>				^{note 7} <i>3,040.0</i>	<i>3,012.8</i>	<i>not specified</i>
<i>Space & Flt Support</i>	<i>not specified</i>	<i>854.6</i>				^{note 7} <i>845.0</i>	<i>818.0</i>	<i>not specified</i>
Education	116.6	88.9				106.0	108.0	119.0
Cross Agency Support ^{see note 6}	2,793.0	2,778.6				2,779.0	2,778.6	2,758.9
CECR	515.0	446.1				446.0	446.1	419.1
Inspector General	37.5	37.0				34.0	37.5	37.0
TOTAL	17,646.5	17,460.6				17,896.0	17,900.0	18,010.2

Notes: (1) Columns may not add due to rounding. Text and numbers in *italics* are subtotals. Text and numbers in (*italics in parentheses*) are sub-subtotals. Figures for NASA's FY2014 appropriations and FY2015 budget request are from NASA materials on its budget website [<http://www.nasa.gov/budget>] and do not reflect changes that occurred later and are shown in NASA's FY2014 operating plan, a condensed version of which is also posted at NASA's budget website.

(2) CECR = Construction, Environmental Compliance and Restoration. CoF = Construction of Facilities. NA = not applicable.

(3) The Asteroid Initiative is not specifically identified in NASA's budget documents. The "initiative" consists of the Asteroid Redirect Mission (ARM) plus funding for the Asteroid Grand Challenge and additional funding for searching for asteroids. Funding is spread through the Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate, the Space Technology Mission Directorate, the Science Mission Directorate, and the Office of Chief Technologist. See table 3.

(4) The Space Launch System (SLS) is funded in three different accounts. For convenience, table 4 delineates that funding.

(5) In 2013, the House and Senate committees that authorize NASA activities approved (but did not report out) separate versions of a new NASA authorization bill. Debate is expected to continue this year, but the funding situation has changed sufficiently that the figures each side adopted last year may not be relevant. Therefore they are not included here. For reference, they are in [the FY2014 version of this fact sheet](#). The House committee approved a new and different NASA authorization bill on April 29, 2014, but it includes funding recommendations only for FY2014 (already in progress) not FY2015 or beyond.

(6) The House Appropriations Committee designates this account as "Safety, Security and Mission Services" instead of Cross Agency Support. That name was adopted in the final FY2015 appropriations bill.

(7) The House passed an amendment during floor debate that shifts \$7 million from Space Operations to Space Technology. That shift is reflected in this table, but it is not clear what part of Space Operations would be reduced by the \$7 million. Therefore the subtotals for ISS and Space and Flight Support remain in this table as they were in the committee's report and consequently they do not add up to the total for the Space Operations account.

(8) The Senate Appropriations Committee broke out spending for the Science Mission Directorate's education activities in a separate line. In the NASA request, \$15 million for education was included in the request for the astrophysics division, which is managing education activities for the entire Mission Directorate. The Senate Appropriations Committee adds another \$27 million, for a total of \$42 million, which it says is level with FY2014. The committee says it placed this funding in a separate line item to increase transparency, but supports having the astrophysics division manage all of it.

(9) The Senate never passed a FY2015 CJS appropriations bill, but the version reported from the Senate Appropriations Committee was used in negotiations with the House over the final figures included in the FY2015 Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 – the "CRomnibus" – as explained in the text of this report. The bill number used for the CRomnibus is H.R. 83.

**Table 2: President Obama’s FY2015 Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative Request for NASA
(in \$ millions)**

Account	FY2015 Request
Science	187.3
Aeronautics	43.9
Space Technology	100.0
Exploration	350.0
Space Operations	100.6
Education	10.0
Construction, Environmental Compliance and Restoration (CECR)	93.7
TOTAL	885.5

Source: NASA FY2015 [budget estimates](#) (page OGS1-1). <http://www.nasa.gov/budget>. The NASA budget estimate book provides detailed information on how the money would be spent in each of these areas.

**Table 3: Funding for the Asteroid Initiative, Including the Asteroid Redirect Mission
(in \$ millions)**

Purpose	FY2014 Enacted (note 3)	FY2015 Request	Congressional Action not specified (see note 3)
Augmented Funding for Asteroid Detection in Science Mission Directorate (note 2)	20	20	
Asteroid Grand Challenge & related activities in Office of Chief Technologist	7	7	
Asteroid Redirect Mission	78	133	
<i>Solar Electric Propulsion in Space Technology Mission Directorate</i>	38	93	
<i>Studies in Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate</i>	40	40	
TOTAL	105	160	

Source: NASA budget briefing by Chief Financial Officer Beth Robinson, March 4, 2014.

Notes: (1) Text and numbers in italics are subsets.

(2) Amounts for asteroid detection as part of the Asteroid Initiative are in addition to base funding for this activity in the Science Mission Directorate. The base activity is about \$20 million/year and is not included in this table. The Asteroid Initiative essentially doubles the amount of funding available.

(3) The FY2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act and the FY2015 Consolidated and Continuing Appropriations Act (the CROmnibus) do not specify funding for the Asteroid Initiative. The figures in the FY2014 column is what NASA said it requested and the FY2014 act did not prohibit NASA from spending it. If further information is made available about FY2015 spending, it will be added to this table.

**Table 4: Funding for the Space Launch System
(in \$ millions)**

Account: Subaccount	FY2014 Enacted	FY2015 Request	House Appropriations (passed)	Senate Appropriations (committee)	Final
Exploration: Exploration Systems Development/ SLS	1,600.0	1,380.3	1,600.0	1,700.0	1,700.0
Exploration: Exploration Systems Development/ Exploration Ground Systems	318.2	351.3	315.0	351.3	351.3
CECR: Exploration Construction of Facilities	*142.0	52.3	52.3	**52.3	not specified
TOTAL	2,060.2	1,783.9	1,967.3	2,103.6	

Notes: CECR = Construction, Environmental Compliance and Restoration.

* The \$142 million figure for FY2014 is from the joint explanatory statement that accompanied the FY2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act (page 43). NASA's FY2015 budget request, however, does not specify the enacted level for this or any of the CECR subaccounts. A footnote to NASA's table states that amounts not specified in the FY2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act or the explanatory statement are not included in its list. However, the \$142 million for Exploration CoF is, indeed, identified there.

** The Senate committee report, S. Rept, 113-181, does not break down the spending in the CECR account, but says that it is the same as the request, so this table shows the requested amount.