

Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies: FY2017 Appropriations

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Summary

The Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill includes funding for most of the Department of the Interior (DOI) and for agencies within other departments—including the Forest Service within the Department of Agriculture and the Indian Health Service within the Department of Health and Human Services. It also provides funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), arts and cultural agencies, and numerous other entities.

For FY2017, the President requested \$33.13 billion for the approximately 30 agencies and entities typically funded in the annual Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations law. For the 10 major DOI agencies in Title I of the bill, the request was \$12.24 billion, or 36.9% of the total requested. For EPA, funded by Title II of the bill, the request was \$8.27 billion, or 25.0% of the total. For the 20 agencies and other entities funded in Title III of the bill, the request was \$12.62 billion, or 38.1% of the total.

The President's request of \$33.13 billion would be an increase of \$907.6 million (2.8%) compared to the total FY2016 enacted appropriations of \$32.23 billion in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114-113), Division G. The FY2016 total included \$452.0 million for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, which compensates counties and local governments for nontaxable lands within their jurisdictions. The FY2017 request did not include funding for PILT because the President proposed to fund this program through mandatory appropriations. In addition, the President's request included a proposal for a new adjustment to the discretionary spending limits in law that would provide an additional \$1.15 billion for wildfire suppression for FY2017. FY2016 enacted appropriations did not include such a discretionary cap adjustment.

Under the President's proposal, the total for each of the three titles of the bill would increase by varying amounts over FY2016 enacted appropriations. DOI agencies would receive an increase of \$225.8 million (1.9%), funding for EPA would increase by \$127.3 million (1.6%), and the total for all Related Agencies in Title III would increase by \$554.5 million (4.6%).

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Introduction

This report focuses on FY2017 appropriations for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies. It first presents a brief overview of the agencies in the bill. It then provides a description of the appropriations requested by the President for FY2017. Next, it compares the President's request for FY2017 with appropriations enacted for FY2016.

Appropriations are complex. Budget justifications for requests for some agencies are large, generally several hundred pages long and containing numerous funding, programmatic, and legislative changes for congressional consideration. Further, appropriations laws provide funds for numerous accounts, activities, and sub-activities, and the accompanying explanatory statements provide additional directives and other important information. This report does not provide information at the account and sub-account levels, nor does it detail budgetary reorganizations or legislative changes enacted in law or proposed by the President. For information on a particular agency or individual accounts, programs, or activities administered by a particular agency, contact the key policy staff listed at the end of this report. In addition, for selected reports related to appropriations for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, such as individual agencies (e.g., National Park Service) or cross-cutting programs (e.g., Wildland Fire Management), see the Congressional Research Service (CRS) website at http://www.crs.gov/Cli/SubIssue?cliid=2346.

Overview of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations

The annual Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill¹ includes funding for agencies and programs in three separate federal departments as well as for numerous related agencies.² The Interior bill typically contains three primary titles. Title I provides funding for most Department of the Interior (DOI) agencies,³ many of which manage land and other natural resource or regulatory programs. Title II contains appropriations for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Title III funds 20 agencies in other departments, such as the Forest Service in the Department of Agriculture and the Indian Health Service in the Department of Health and Human Services; arts and cultural agencies, such as the Smithsonian Institution; and various other entities. Title III of the bill is referred to as "Related Agencies." Selected major agencies in the Interior bill are briefly described below.

Title I. Department of the Interior

DOI's mission is to protect and manage the nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provide scientific and other information about those resources; and exercise trust responsibilities

¹ Hereinafter, the annual Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill is sometimes referred to as the Interior bill.

² Many of the agencies that receive discretionary appropriations through the Interior bill also receive mandatory appropriations under various authorizing statutes. This report does not address mandatory appropriations.

³ The exceptions are the Bureau of Reclamation and the Central Utah Project, which receive appropriations through Energy and Water Development appropriations laws. For information on FY2016 appropriations for these entities, see CRS Report R43966, *Energy and Water Development: FY2016 Appropriations*, by Mark Holt.

and other commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities.⁴ DOI agencies funded in the Interior bill⁵ that carry out this mission include the following:

- The *Bureau of Land Management* administers about 246 million acres of public land, mostly in the West, for diverse uses such as energy and mineral development, livestock grazing, recreation, and preservation. The agency is also responsible for about 700 million acres of federal onshore subsurface mineral estate throughout the nation and supervises the mineral operations on about 56 million acres of Indian Trust lands.
- The Fish and Wildlife Service administers 91 million acres of federal land⁶ within the National Wildlife Refuge System and other areas, including 77 million acres in Alaska. It also manages several large marine refuges and marine national monuments, sometimes jointly with other federal agencies. In addition, the Fish and Wildlife Service is the primary agency responsible for implementing the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. §§1531 et seq.) through listing of species; consulting with other federal agencies; collaborating with private entities and state, tribal, and local governments; and other measures. It is also the primary agency responsible for promoting wildlife habitat; enforcing federal wildlife laws; supporting wildlife and ecosystem science; conserving migratory birds; administering grants to aid state fish and wildlife programs; and coordinating with state, international, and other federal agencies on fish and wildlife issues.
- The National Park Service administers 80 million acres of federal land within the National Park System, which includes 410 diverse units in the 50 states, District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. Roughly two-thirds of the system's lands are in Alaska. The National Park Service has a dual mission—to preserve unique resources and to provide for their enjoyment by the public. The agency also supports and promotes some resource conservation activities outside the Park System through grant and technical assistance programs and cooperation with partners.
- The *U.S. Geological Survey* is a science agency that provides physical and biological information related to geological resources; climate change; and energy, mineral, water, and biological sciences and resources. In addition, it is the federal government's principal civilian mapping agency and a primary source of data on the quality of the nation's water resources.
- The *Bureau of Ocean Energy Management* manages development of the nation's offshore conventional and renewable energy resources in the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Arctic. These resources are in areas covering

⁴ This statement is taken from the Department of the Interior (DOI) website at http://www.doi.gov/whoweare/mission-statement.cfm.

⁵ In addition, Interior appropriations bills provide funding within two broad DOI accounts covering diverse programs. The Departmental Offices account funds the Office of the Secretary (including the Office of Natural Resources Revenue), Insular Affairs, Office of the Solicitor, Office of Inspector General, and Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians. Discretionary appropriations for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program are also shown within this account. The Department-Wide Programs account funds DOI Wildland Fire Management, the Central Hazardous Materials Fund, the Natural Resource Damage Assessment Fund, and the Working Capital Fund.

⁶ This is the acreage over which the Fish and Wildlife Service has primary jurisdiction, excluding acreage in marine national monuments.

- approximately 1.7 billion acres located beyond state waters, mostly in the Alaska region (more than 1 billion acres) but also off all coastal states.
- The *Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement* provides regulatory and safety oversight for resource development in the outer continental shelf. Among its responsibilities are oil and gas permitting, facility inspections, environmental compliance, and oil spill response planning.
- The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement works with states and tribes to reclaim abandoned coal mines. The agency also regulates active coal mines to minimize environmental impacts during mining and to reclaim affected lands and waters after mining.
- Indian Affairs agencies provide and fund a variety of services to federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes and their members. Historically, these agencies have taken the lead in federal dealings with tribes. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is responsible for programs that include government operations, courts, law enforcement, fire protection, social programs, roads, economic development, employment assistance, housing repair, irrigation, dams, Indian rights protection, implementation of land and water settlements, and management of trust assets (real estate and natural resources). The Bureau of Indian Education funds an elementary and secondary school system, institutions of higher education, and other educational programs.

Title II. Environmental Protection Agency

EPA's mission is to protect human health and the environment. Primary responsibilities include the implementation of federal statutes regulating air quality, water quality, pesticides, toxic substances, management and disposal of solid and hazardous wastes, and cleanup of environmental contamination. EPA also awards grants to assist states and local governments in implementing federal law and complying with federal requirements to control pollution.

Title III. Related Agencies

Among the Related Agencies funded in the Interior bill, roughly 95% of the funding is typically provided to the following agencies and organizations:

- The *Forest Service* in the Department of Agriculture manages 193 million acres of the National Forest System—consisting of national forests, national grasslands, and other areas—in 43 states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. It also provides technical and financial assistance to states, tribes, and private forest landowners and conducts research on sustaining forest resources for future generations.
- The *Indian Health Service* in the Department of Health and Human Services provides medical and environmental health services for more than 2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives. Health care is provided through a system of facilities and programs operated by the agency, tribes and tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations. The agency operates 28 hospitals, 62 health centers, and 25 health stations. Tribes and tribal organizations, through Indian Health Service contracts and compacts, operate another 18 hospitals, 282 health

- centers, 80 health stations, and 150 Alaska Native village clinics. Urban Indian organizations operate 33 ambulatory or referral programs.⁷
- The *Smithsonian Institution* is a museum and research complex consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoo, and 9 research facilities throughout the United States and around the world. Established by federal legislation in 1846 with the acceptance of a trust donation by the institution's namesake benefactor, the Smithsonian is funded by both federal appropriations and a private trust, with nearly \$1.36 billion in total revenue from all sources of funding for FY2014.
- The National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities make up the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities. The National Endowment for the Arts is a major federal source of support for all arts disciplines. Since 1965, it has awarded more than 145,000 grants, which have been distributed to all states. The National Endowment for the Humanities generally supports grants for humanities education, research, preservation, and public humanities programs; creation of regional humanities centers; and development of humanities programs under the jurisdiction of state humanities councils. Since 1965, it has awarded approximately 63,000 grants. It also supports a Challenge Grant program to stimulate and match private donations in support of humanities institutions.

FY2017 Appropriations

Components of the President's Request

For FY2017, the President requested \$33.13 billion for the approximately 30 agencies and entities typically funded in the annual Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. For the 10 major DOI agencies in Title I of the bill, the request was \$12.24 billion, or 36.9% of the total requested. For EPA, funded in Title II of the bill, the request was \$8.27 billion, or 25.0% of the total. For the 20 agencies and other entities funded in Title III of the bill, the request was \$12.62 billion, or 38.1% of the total.

The President's request included a proposal for a new adjustment to the discretionary spending limits in law that would provide an additional \$1.15 billion for wildfire suppression for FY2017. Of the total proposed adjustment for FY2017, \$290.0 million was for DOI Wildland Fire Management and \$864.1 million was for Forest Service Wildland Fire Management.

⁷ Department of Health and Human Services, Indian Health Service, "IHS Year 2015 Profile," December 2015, at http://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/factsheets/ihsyear2015profile/. For additional information on the agency, see CRS Report R43330, *The Indian Health Service (IHS): An Overview*, by Elayne J. Heisler.

⁸ Except for the revenue figure, these statistics are from the Smithsonian Institution's website at http://www.si.edu/About. The revenue figure is from Smithsonian Institution, *Today. Tomorrow. Forever. 2014 Annual Report*, p. 48, at http://www.si.edu/Content/Pdf/About/2014-Smithsonian-Annual-Report.pdf. The 2014 report is the most recent available.

⁹ Budget authority designated for certain purposes would cause the limits to be adjusted, making such authority effectively not subject to the limits. The President sought a new cap adjustment for some of the costs of wildland fire management. For additional information on discretionary spending limits, cap adjustments, and proposals for a cap adjustment related to wildland fire management, see CRS Report R44082, *Wildfire Spending: Background, Issues, and Legislation in the 114th Congress*, by Katie Hoover et al.

Appropriations for agencies vary widely for reasons relating to the number, breadth, and complexity of agency responsibilities; alternative sources of funding (e.g., mandatory appropriations); and Administration and congressional priorities, among other factors. Thus, although the President's FY2017 request covered approximately 30 agencies, funding for a small subset of these agencies accounted for most of the total. For example, the requested appropriations for three agencies—EPA, Forest Service, and Indian Health Service—were nearly three-fifths (57.9%) of the total request. Further, more than three-quarters (76.1%) of the request was for these three agencies and two others, National Park Service and Indian Affairs.

For DOI agencies, the FY2017 requests ranged from \$80.2 million for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to \$3.10 billion for the National Park Service. The requests for 6 of the 10 agencies exceeded \$1 billion. Nearly half (49.3%) of the \$12.24 billion requested for DOI agencies was for two agencies—Indian Affairs (\$2.93 billion) and the National Park Service.

For Related Agencies in Title III, the requested funding levels exhibited even more variation. The President sought amounts ranging from \$1.4 million for grants under National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs to \$5.74 billion for the Forest Service. The Indian Health Service would be the only other agency to receive more than \$5 billion. The next-largest request was for the Smithsonian Institution, at \$922.2 million. By contrast, 14 agencies would receive less than \$80 million each, including 6 with appropriations of less than \$10 million each.

Figure 1 identifies the share of the President's request for particular agencies in the Interior bill. **Table 1** contains the amount requested by the President for FY2017 for each agency, FY2016 enacted appropriations for each agency, and the percentage change between FY2016 enacted appropriations and the President's request for FY2017.

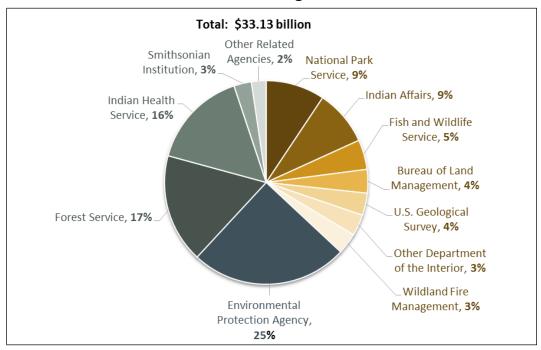


Figure 1. Components of the President's FY2017 Request for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies

Source: Prepared by CRS with data from the House Appropriations Committee.

Notes: Agencies shown in shades of brown and yellow are in the Department of the Interior, Title I of the bill. The Environmental Protection Agency, shown in blue, is Title II of the bill. Agencies shown in shades of green are Related Agencies, Title III of the bill.

FY2017 President's Request Compared with FY2016 Enacted Appropriations

The President's request of \$33.13 billion for FY2017 would be an increase of \$907.6 million (2.8%) over the total FY2016 enacted appropriations of \$32.23 billion. The FY2016 appropriations included \$452.0 million for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, whereas the President did not seek discretionary funding for PILT for FY2017. Instead, the President supported mandatory funding for PILT for FY2017, which would require a change in law. Unlike the President's FY2017 request, the FY2016 enacted appropriations did not include a cap adjustment to discretionary spending limits in law (for Wildland Fire Management).

Under the President's proposal, the total for each of the three titles of the bill would increase by varying amounts. DOI agencies would receive an increase of \$225.8 million (1.9%), funding for EPA would increase by \$127.3 million (1.6%), and the total for all Related Agencies in Title III would increase by \$554.5 million (4.6%).

With regard to DOI, the President proposed increases above FY2016 enacted levels for 8 of the 10 agencies. The increases varied in dollar amount and percentage of appropriations, with the lowest dollar increase of \$6.0 million (8.0%) for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and the highest of \$250.2 million (8.8%) for the National Park Service. Some of the National Park Service increase was intended to enhance park units in light of the agency's 2016 centennial. Activities receiving additional funds would include repair, rehabilitation, and maintenance of facilities; line item construction; visitor services for young people and families; historic preservation; and the Centennial Challenge program (a federal matching program to leverage donations for park units).

In addition to the National Park Service, three other DOI agencies would receive increases of more than \$100.0 million under the President's request. Proposed increases are as follows: Department-Wide Programs, \$170.3 million (15.8%); Indian Affairs, \$137.6 million (4.9%); and U.S. Geological Survey, \$106.8 million (10.1%). Under Department-Wide Programs, Wildland Fire Management on DOI lands would receive the largest increase. The second-largest increase would be for the Working Capital Fund, primarily for cybersecurity and DOI compliance with the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 (DATA Act, P.L. 113-101). For Indian Affairs, the President requested increases for many activities, among them education, natural resource management, and social services. For the U.S. Geological Survey, the President requested additional funds across agency activities, including ecosystems, climate and land use change, natural hazards, water resources, and facilities.

Two DOI agencies, Departmental Offices and the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, would receive decreased appropriations under the President's FY2017 request. For Departmental Offices, the decrease was primarily because the President did not seek discretionary funding under this account for PILT, as noted. For the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, the decrease was primarily because the President did not request to continue the FY2016 appropriation of \$90.0 million for grants to three states for reclamation of abandoned mine lands, together with economic and community development activities.

Within the overall increase for EPA, the President sought additional funds for each of the agency's accounts except State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STAG). The \$239.2 million (9.2%)

¹⁰ See CRS Report RL31392, *PILT (Payments in Lieu of Taxes): Somewhat Simplified*, by M. Lynne Corn, for additional information on PILT.

increase for the Environmental Programs and Management account was the largest overall dollar increase proposed for EPA accounts. This account funds a broad array of activities supporting EPA's development and enforcement of pollution-control regulations and standards, technical assistance, and administrative and operational expenses. The \$40.2 million (3.7%) increase for the Hazardous Substance Superfund account was the second-largest overall dollar increase for EPA accounts. This account supports the assessment and cleanup of sites contaminated from the release of hazardous substances. EPA administers these activities under the Superfund program, as authorized in the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA; 42 U.S.C. §§9601 et seq.). The overall decrease from FY2016 enacted levels proposed for STAG (\$237.8 million, or 6.8%) includes both decreases and increases for programs within the account. For instance, grants to states for wastewater infrastructure projects through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund would decline by \$414.4 million (29.7%), whereas funding for drinking water infrastructure grants to states through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund would increase by \$157.3 million (18.2%).

Fourteen of the 20 Title III agencies would receive increases over FY2016 enacted levels under the President's FY2017 proposal, and the 3 largest agencies would receive the biggest dollar increases. Specifically, the President sought an additional \$377.4 million (7.9%) for the Indian Health Service, \$82.0 million (9.8%) for the Smithsonian Institution, and \$76.1 million (1.3%) for the Forest Service. The Indian Health Service would receive increases for many programs and activities, including hospitals and health clinics, mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, contract support costs, and construction of health care and other facilities. The Smithsonian Institution's additional funds would be directed to facilities maintenance, operations, security, and construction, among other purposes. The Forest Service increase would be used primarily for suppressing wildland fires and other wildland fire management activities. By contrast, two Title III agencies would receive level funding and four agencies would receive decreases.¹²

Table 1. Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies: FY2017 Appropriations Requested by the President Compared with FY2016 Enacted Appropriations (\$ in thousands)

Bureau or Agency	FY2016 Enacted Approps.	FY2017 Requested Approps.	Percentage Change
Title I: Department of the Interior			
Bureau of Land Management	\$1,236,735	\$1,245,185	0.7
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	1,508,368	1,562,899	3.6
National Park Service	2,851,245	3,101,450	8.8
U.S. Geological Survey	1,062,000	1,168,803	10.1
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	74,235	80,194	8.0

¹¹ The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA; 42 U.S.C. §§9601 et seq.) requires responsible parties to pay for the cleanup of environmental contamination and authorizes the cleanup of sites where the responsible parties cannot pay or cannot be found.

¹² Agencies that would receive level appropriations are the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. Agencies that would receive decreases are the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs, National Capital Planning Commission, and Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

	FY2016 Enacted	FY2017 Requested	Percentage
Bureau or Agency	Approps.	Approps.	Change
Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement	88,464	96,337	8.9
Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement	240,556	157,925	-34.4
Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education	2,796,120	2,933,715	4.9
Departmental Offices	1,080,086ª	646,831	-40.I
Office of the Secretary	721,769ª	278,376	-61.4
Insular Affairs	103,441	102,717	-0.7
Office of the Solicitor	65,800	69,448	5.5
Office of Inspector General	50,047	55,911	11.7
Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians	139,029	140,379	1.0
Department-Wide Programs	1,078,622	1,248,890	15.8
Wildland Fire Management	993,745	1,114,624	12.2
Central Hazardous Materials Fund	10,010	13,513	35.0
Natural Resource Damage Assessment Fund	7,767	9,229	18.8
Working Capital Fund	67,100	111,524	66.2
Subtotal, Title I: Department of the Interior	12,016,4312	12,242,229	1.9
Subtotal, Title II: Environmental Protection Agency	8,139, 887	8,267,199	1.6
Title III: Related Agencies			
Forest Service	5,664,346	5,740,428	1.3
Indian Health Service	4,807,589	5,185,015	7.9
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences	77,349	77,349	0
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry	74,691	74,691	0
Council on Environmental Quality and Office of Environmental Quality	3,000	3,015	0.5
Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board	11,000	12,436	13.1
Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation	15,000	15,431	2.9
Institute of American Indian and Alaska Native Culture and Arts Development	11,619	11,835	1.9
Smithsonian Institution	840,243	922,224	9.8
National Gallery of Art	147,552	158,401	7.4
John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts	36,400	35,260	-3.1
Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars	10,500	10,400	-1.0
National Endowment for the Arts	147,949	149,849	1.3
National Endowment for the Humanities	147,942	149,848	1.3
Commission of Fine Arts	2,653	2,762	4.1
National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs	2,000	1,400	-30.0
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	6,080	6,493	6.8

Bureau or Agency	FY2016 Enacted Approps.	FY2017 Requested Approps.	Percentage Change
National Capital Planning Commission	8,348	8,099	-3.0
U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum	54,000	57,000	5.6
Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission	1,000	1,800	80.0
Subtotal, Title III: Related Agencies	12,069,261	12,623,736	4.6
Total: Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies ^c	32,225,579	33,133,164	2.8

Source: Prepared by CRS with data from the House Appropriations Committee.

- a. This figure includes \$452.0 million for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes program.
- b. For additional information on appropriations enacted for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for FY2016, see CRS Report R44208, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): FY2016 Appropriations, by Robert Esworthy and David M. Bearden. For information on appropriations requested for EPA for FY2017, see CRS In Focus IF10383, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): FY2017 President's Budget Request, by Robert Esworthy and David M. Bearden.
- c. The FY2016 appropriations figure reflects appropriations in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114-113), Division G, of \$32.29 billion and rescissions of \$68.0 million. The FY2017 request reflects appropriations of \$32.01 billion, a proposed discretionary cap adjustment of \$1.15 billion, and rescissions of \$30.0 million.

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