

House Subcommittee Slashes OSHA, MSHA Budgets; Bill Heads to Full Committee

Article By:

Bradford T. Hammock

Henry Chajet

A House of Representatives appropriations subcommittee has rejected President Barack Obama's requests to hike the fiscal year 2016 budgets of two Labor Department regulatory agencies, while turning aside the Administration's request to cut funds for the federal health and safety research institute, proposing a sharp increase instead.

The White House has sought a 7.1-percent increase for the *Occupational Safety and Health Administration*, which would bring that agency's budget to \$592 million. He also has asked for a 5.1-percent boost, to \$394.9 million, for the Mine Safety and Health Administration.

However, the House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee had other ideas. Instead of giving both agencies more money, the subcommittee has proposed slashing OSHA's appropriation by 3.2 percent, which would shrink its current budget of \$553 million to \$535 million. MSHA's appropriation would drop to \$371 million, a 1.3 percent decline from this year's \$375.9 million.

The situation is reversed for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. NIOSH's 2015 budget is \$334.9 million, but the executive branch wants to cut it to \$283 million next year. House appropriators had other ideas, giving \$58 million more to NIOSH. While the lawmakers' draft budget does not go into detail, the proposed \$341 million allocation should be enough to fund the Institute's Education and Research Centers and the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing Program. The White House has sought to cut both programs for years, but each year Congress has restored the funding.

The subcommittee approved its draft appropriations bill on June 17 and sent it to the full Appropriations which is scheduled to consider the legislation soon.

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