

Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Fiscal Year 2020 Highlights

(Note: Numbers are nationwide program funding levels.)

Investing in Research and Technology

- **NOAA Climate Research:** \$169.5 million is included in the legislation, including \$6 million requested by Senator Murkowski specifically for Arctic research.
- **Tsunami Warning Center:** Maintains funding from FY19 and includes language that will require a report addressing issues that arose with the Anchorage warning following the November 2018 earthquake, as well as making sure warning systems function in regions with limited cell phone/broadband coverage.
- **National Data Buoy Center (NDBC):** Includes language to provide sufficient funds for at least 80 percent data availability for the NDBC, which designs, operates, and maintains a network of data collecting buoys and coastal stations. This language prioritizes funding to support maintenance and operability for tsunami monitoring buoys across the Pacific, and directs NOAA to include a schedule for restoring existing data buoy operability, and its strategy to minimize outages.
- **National Weather Service (NWS):** Provides \$1.06 billion for the NWS as well as report language highlighting continued concern about staffing in Alaska and directing the NWS to consult with communities before executing any staffing decreases at Alaska weather service offices.
- **National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST):** Provides \$1 billion for NIST, as well as a \$1 million increase from FY19 for Forensic Science Research.
- **NASA:** NASA is provided \$22.6 billion. Space Grant is funded at \$48 million and NASA EPSCoR is funded at \$24 million. These programs support research and education initiatives at the University of Alaska.
- **National Science Foundation (NSF):** The NSF is funded at \$8.27 billion, an increase over FY19. NSF EPSCoR is funded at \$190 million, which will provide continued support for research efforts at the University of Alaska. Language is included directing the NSF, as it undertakes its broad interdisciplinary study of the Arctic, to consider the impact of the opening of the two transarctic sea routes and their proximity to deep U.S. ports.
- **USArray:** Includes an increase of \$1.2 million for the National Mesonet Program (NMP) a multi-faceted observational weather network, and directs NMP to evaluate opportunities for it to adopt instruments in under-instrumented areas in order to facilitate adoption of USArray monitoring sites in Alaska by NMP.

- **IOOS Regional Observations:** Funded at \$39 million, with language prioritizing completion of the High Frequency Radar Network to acquire the speed and direction of ocean surface currents in near real time.
- **Hydrographic Survey Priorities & Contracts:** Provides \$32 million as well as language directing NOAA to accelerate acquisition of survey data to complement its own internal data and expedite comprehensive charting, especially in backlogged regions like the Arctic. NOAA is directed to utilize contractors to speed up charting efforts.

Creating a Safer Alaska

- **Victims of Crime Act Fund Tribal Set-aside:** Senator Murkowski supported the strongest possible VOCA set-aside for Tribes and Native Communities who disproportionately face violence and often have extremely limited access to services. The bill includes a 5 percent set-aside of the Victims of Crime Act Fund (VOCA), specifically for tribal use.
- **Violence Against Women Prevention and Prosecution Programs:** Provides \$502.5 million for grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, and other assistance for the prevention and prosecution of violence against women.
- **Research on Violence Against Indian Women:** Building on her efforts to address the ongoing crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, Senator Murkowski helped secure \$1 million and language directing the Department of Justice to improve coordination—including training and technical assistance, data sharing, and other resources—with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to better address violent crime in Indian country.
- **Tribal Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction:** The bill maintains \$4 million to provide grants to tribal governments to help Tribes exercise “special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction” over non-Indian offenders who commit violence crimes in Indian country.
- **State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance/Tribal Assistance:** To improve justice among Tribal communities, the bill includes \$38 million.
- **Juvenile Justice, Tribal Youth Program:** \$5 million is included to help the Office of Justice Programs to empower tribal governments to care for and respond to justice-involved youth and to help prevent juvenile delinquency.
- **Community Oriented Policing Services Program, COPS Hiring Program:** \$235 million is included to increase the number of law enforcement officers and to improve training opportunities to support crime prevention efforts.

- **COPS Tribal Resources Grant Program:** Senator Murkowski helped secure \$27 million in support of this program, with an additional \$3 million specifically for the Tribal Access Program.

Sustaining Alaska's Fisheries

- **Pacific Salmon Treaty:** Funded at \$35.5 million, an increase from the 2019 enacted level. The bill also includes language directing NOAA to provide a spending plan before any of the funds may be spent. NOAA is directed to reflect the recommendations of the Treaty Commissioners in its spending plan, and encouraged to minimize, to the extent practicable, any withholdings for administrative funds. Senator Murkowski secured additional funding for the Pacific Salmon Treaty in the spending bills for the State Department and the Department of Interior.
- **Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF):** Funding is maintained at \$65 million for the PCSRF, a program established in 2000 to help reverse declining steelhead and Pacific Salmon stocks in Alaska, California, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.
- **Stock Assessments:** Increased funding of \$173.7 million, an increase from 2019, is provided for surveys and stock assessments, as well as report language reminding the National Marine Fisheries Service that the reduction of fishery surveys is unacceptable, especially in areas where fish distribution is changing due to climate change. An amendment added by Senator Murkowski directs NOAA to utilize \$2 million of this funding increase to maintain historic survey coverage in Alaska and the Pacific.
- **Regional Councils and Fisheries Commissions:** Provides increased funding for Regional Fishery Management Councils, which oversee and ensure conservation and management of fisheries within their region.
- **Electronic Monitoring and Reports:** Directs the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to prioritize Electronic Monitoring and Electronic Reporting (EM/ER) implementation in FY20, and to expedite to the fullest extent practicable the transition to full EM/ER. Level funding of \$3.5 million is available for collaborative partnerships.
- **National Marine Fisheries Service – Alaska Region:** Report language directs NMFS to proactively staff personnel in the regions they serve, supporting Senator Murkowski's long-term priority of bringing NOAA assets and personnel to Alaska.
- **Saltonstall-Kennedy Grants:** Ensures that funding is available to support competitive grants to promote and develop U.S. fisheries through the Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program.
- **Aleutian Island Pollock Allocation:** Directs the Agency to continue its efforts to evaluate and support opportunities for a pollock fishery in the Aleutian Islands through an Exempted Fishing Permit for the Aleutian Island Pollock.

- **Fisheries Finance Program:** Authorizes Individual Fishing Quota loans at \$24 million and general loans up to \$100 million.

Keeping Alaska's Oceans and Shorelines Healthy

- **Coastal Survey Data:** Includes language directing the National Ocean Service to submit a plan to conduct comprehensive coastal survey work in Alaska, including information gaps and estimated costs.
- **North Pacific Observer Program:** Provides \$7 million, increased funding from FY19, for NOAA's efforts to monitor and report bycatch in Alaska's fisheries.
- **Fairweather Homeporting:** The bill includes funding for procurement and construction under the NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations, and allows these funds to be used for costs associated with *Fairweather* homeporting in Ketchikan.
- **National Estuarine Research Reserve System:** Granted \$27.5 million, despite the President's budget calling for its elimination. Allows the Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve to continue advancing its important research and education missions, supporting the health of estuaries that provide essential ecosystems services along Alaska's coastlines.
- **National Sea Grant Program:** Previously proposed to be eliminated by the administration, \$74 million is included for the National Sea Grant Program, a \$6 million increase from FY19, for outreach activities, education, and research that will support the growing coastal community utilization of key Sea Grant services within their numerous focus areas.
- **Marine Mammal Commission:** The bill includes \$3.6 million to help maintain and restore the ocean's mammal populations and support subsistence and co-management in Alaska.
- **Marine Debris:** Language is included to give consideration to remote and rural communities with great difficulty undertaking cleanup of marine debris and with little infrastructure.
- **Integrated Ocean Acidification:** Building on Senator Murkowski's previous efforts, \$14 million is included in the funding bill to help understand the growing impacts of ocean acidification on our ocean resources and coastal communities.

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