The Senate Appropriations Committee approved its FY 2020 Transportation-HUD spending bill yesterday morning, advancing to the floor legislation that largely maintains current spending levels. Meanwhile, the House approved a short-term spending bill that seeks to avoid a government shutdown when the fiscal year ends on September 30.

As expected, the Senate T-HUD bill is not as robust as the House bill, though it does maintain current spending levels for nearly every HUD program, with a couple of exceptions. Included is a key victory that NAHRO fought for more than a year to achieve: an industry-drafted legislative pause to HUD's attempt to amend the ACC contract. Similar language was also in the House T-HUD bill, an indicator that it is likely to be included in a final bill.

Overall spending disagreements between the House and the Senate delayed the regular appropriations process. The House took an early lead, writing bills this spring at an overall spending level that was $88 billion more than current levels, which resulted in higher funding for HUD programs. The Senate elected not to begin appropriations work until an agreement was reached immediately prior to the August recess.

While the Senate T-HUD allocation is $3.2 billion higher than current funding levels, the additional funding was consumed entirely by increased costs of the rental assistance programs and a downturn in FHA contributions to the bill. The allocation allowed Senate appropriators to maintain funding for most programs but did not allow for the large increases seen in the House bill. The Senate allocation is $1.5 billion lower than the House allocation.

Unfortunately, half of the $1.5 billion difference between the House and Senate bills was made up through the community development programs. While the House proposed a combined $800 million increase for the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG) and HOME, the Senate maintains current spending levels. The bulk of rest of the difference between the bills was rectified through the Public Housing Operating Fund and the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.

One highlight of the Senate bill, however, is the Section 8 Ongoing Administrative fees, which received a $101 million increase compared to current levels and $62 million increase compared to the House. NAHRO is deeply appreciative of the Senate T-HUD Subcommittee and its staff for recognizing the importance of admin fees.

- **Public Housing Capital Fund**: $2.855 billion, same as House, $80 million increase over FY19
- **Public Housing Operating Fund**: $4.65 billion, $103 million less than House, $3 million less than FY19
- **Choice Neighborhoods**: $100 million, $200 million less than House, $150 less than FY19
- **Section 8 Housing Assistance Payment Renewals**: $21.502 billion, $102 million more than House, $1.189 billion more than FY19
- **Ongoing Administrative Fees**: $1.957 billion, $62 million more than House, $101 million more than FY19
- **Family Self-Sufficiency**: $80 million, $20 million less than House, equal to FY19
- **Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance**: $12.56 billion, $30 million less than House, $813 million more than FY19
- **Community Development Block Grant**: $3.3 billion, $300 less than House, equal to FY19
- **HOME Investment Partnerships**: $1.25 billion, $500 million less than House, equal to FY19
- **Housing Opportunity for Persons with AIDS**: $330 million, $80 million less than House, $63 million less than FY19
- **Homeless Assistance Grants**: $2.761 billion, $39 million less than House, $125 million more than FY19

While the progress made on T-HUD is promising, appropriations work will not be completed by the end of the fiscal year on September 30. The House has approved a seven-week continuing resolution (CR) that will carry forward current spending levels until Thursday, November 21. The Senate will now consider the CR.

Finalizing appropriations work by November 21 will be an uphill battle. Though an agreement was reached on overall spending levels, there are stark disagreements between Democrats and Republicans on how the funding should be allocated. Consensus will have to be reached on allocations to allow appropriators to begin the work of conferencing the Senate and House versions of the spending bills. At this point, the path forward beyond the CR is not clear.