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## **Summary and Analysis of Final Agreement on H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act**

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**March 20, 2009**

On February 17, President Barack Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the economic stimulus package). This legislation includes significant investment in research, infrastructure, and education programs at multiple agencies. In addition, there are resources for universities in other areas of the federal government. Below is some information on funding available for universities. This information is in addition to the agency report submitted in February by Lewis-Burke Associates LLC.

In some cases, Congressional direction and agency preparations provide good information on how the federal government is likely to implement the bill; in other cases, the agencies are still absorbing the details or waiting on the arrival of new leadership. In general, all agency plans are provisional, until approved by the Office of Management and Budget.

## **DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

### **Economic Development Administration (EDA)**

EDA received \$150 million, with \$50 million for economic adjustment assistance. Funding is available for municipalities, states, or non-profit organizations. Partnerships with the state or regional economic development commissions are encouraged. *Proposals are accepted on a competitive and continuing basis and the solicitation is already available.*

Priority consideration is given to areas that experienced sudden and severe economic dislocation and job loss due to corporate restructuring. Distress criteria include an unemployment rate that is at least one percentage point greater than national average unemployment rate; per capita income that is 80 percent or less of the national average per capita income; or a special need, as determined by EDA.

Some reports have indicated that funds may be used for university/business incubators; however, there may be a disproportionate share of funding available for rural entities given the priority consideration factors.

## **DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

### **Federal Emergency Management Agency – Port Security**

While the majority of DHS funding is available for DHS facilities and federal agency administration, FEMA received \$150 million to provide funding for the protection of critical port infrastructure from terrorism, including risk management capabilities, domain awareness, training and exercises, and capabilities to prevent, detect, respond to, and recover from attacks involving improvised explosive devices and other non-conventional weapons.

The funding is expected to be awarded on a competitive basis. Universities are not directly eligible; however they may participate within a consortium of stakeholders. *Details are expected shortly.*

## **DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE – Energy Efficiency**

The Defense Department did receive \$300 million in funding which could be externally awarded to universities. The funding is broken down as follows: Army: \$75,000,000; Navy: \$75,000,000; Air Force: \$75,000,000; Defense Wide: \$75,000,000.

The primary purpose of the funding is to provide funding for the funding of research, development, test and evaluation projects, including pilot projects, demonstration projects and energy efficient manufacturing enhancements. Funds are for improvements in energy generation and efficiency, transmission, regulation, storage and for use on military installations and within operational forces, to include research and development of energy from fuel cells, wind, solar, and other renewable energy sources to include biofuels and bioenergy. *DoD has already begun to formulate spending plans for this funding.*

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

### **Brownfields**

Universities are not expected to participate in much of the funding awarded to EPA. However, \$100 million was provided for *State and Tribal Assistance Grants for Brownfields Projects*.

The funds are expected to be awarded through cooperative agreements from the Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization and universities are eligible. In addition the standard 20 percent cost share requirement has been waived.

Brownfields project grants must be used for training, research, and technical assistance to individuals and organizations, to facilitate the inventory of brownfields properties, site assessments, cleanup of brownfields properties, community involvement, or site preparation.

### **Diesel Emission Reduction grants**

In addition \$300 million is provided for Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) grants. This funding is to supplement existing funding for projects and activities authorized under DERA.

## **DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

*Detailed guidance has already been issued to the states and workforce investment boards.*

### **Employment and Training Administration – Training and Employment Services**

A total of \$3.95 billion was provided for ETA to administer special activities under the Workforce Investment Act. Primarily this funding will flow through the states to the local workforce investment boards. A local board may award a contract to an institution of higher education if the local board determines that it would facilitate the training of multiple individuals in high-demand occupations, if such contract does not limit customer choice.

### **Adult Employment and Training**

Within this amount, \$500 million was provided for adult employment and training activities, including supportive services and needs-related payments. This is formula funding for the states and workforce investment boards with universities as a possible subcontractor. Priority use of the funds is for services to individuals on public assistance and other low-income individuals

### **Dislocated Worker Grants**

In addition, \$1.25 billion was provided for employment and training programs for eligible workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own or have received an official layoff notice. Similar formula funding and partnerships apply (as noted above).

### **Youth Grants**

\$1.2 billion is provided for youth training and employment activities, including summer employment, occupational skills, counseling, mentoring, and supportive services. Similar formula funding would apply.

### **National Emergency Grants**

\$200 million was provided for competitive funding to states and workforce investment boards to expand service capacity at the State and local levels in response to significant events that cannot reasonably be expected within the formula-funded program.

### **High-Growth Industry Training and Placement**

\$750 million was provided for a program for worker training and placement in high growth and emerging industry sectors. Within this amount \$500 million is for green jobs for careers in the energy efficiency and renewable energy. Of the remaining \$250 million, priority employment training categories include:

- health care
- broadband deployment
- advanced manufacturing

## **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

### **Byrne Competitive Grants**

Universities as non-profit organizations are eligible to compete for \$225 million provided for broad-based public safety prevention, intervention, and suppression activities; law enforcement personnel; community-policing; prosecution and court programs; corrections and community corrections programs; drug treatment and enforcement; planning and evaluation; technology improvements; crime victim and witness programs, etc.

## **DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

### **Lead Hazard Reduction Program**

\$100 million was provided to abate lead-based hazards in eligible privately owned rental or owner-occupied housing, with various targeting factors by program. Universities are eligible

recipients but only if they applied and were not funded by a grant under the Fiscal Year 2008 Lead Hazard Reduction Program NOFA or plan to apply to the new FY 2009 regular solicitation. Recipients must expend at least 50 percent of funds within 2 years of funding award, and 100 percent within 3 years.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

The final bill authorizes, but does not fund, research and education programs related to health information technology (IT) and health care information enterprise integration.

### *Research*

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), in consultation with NSF, is authorized to establish a grants program to institutions of higher education to establish Centers for Health Care Information Enterprise Integration. The centers would conduct research on the systems challenges to healthcare delivery and support the development and use of health IT and other complementary fields. The centers would promote multidisciplinary collaborations, technology transfer activities, and education and training of researchers and other professionals. Research areas would include: human-computer interfaces; software that improves interoperability; software dependability; measurement of the impact of information technologies on the quality and productivity of health care; health IT security and integrity; health information enterprise management; and health IT to reduce medical errors. There are no specific funding levels for this program provided in the legislation. However, the Department of Health and Human Services is directed to transfer \$20 million to NIST for work in health IT; it is not clear if those funds will be used for NIST's intramural or extramural activities in this area.

### *Education*

The Department of Health and Human Services, in consultation with NSF, is authorized to establish a grant program to institutions of higher education to establish or expand medical health informatics education programs, including certification and undergraduate and master's degree programs for both health care and information technology students to ensure the rapid and effective utilization and development of health IT in the U.S. Activities that may be supported by the grants include: curricula development and revision; student recruitment and retention; equipment purchases; and bridge programs between community colleges and universities. Preference is to be given to grants for existing education and training programs and programs designed to be completed in less than six months. Again, no funding is explicitly provided for this program by the legislation.

### **Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT)**

In addition, \$2 billion is provided for the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology to oversee the development and implementation of a nationwide health information technology (HIT) infrastructure.

ONCHIT can provide financial assistance to consumer advocacy groups and nonprofits that work in the public interest on the Federal adoption of privately developed standards

### **Funding to Strengthen HIT Infrastructure**

ONCHIT, HRSA, AHRQ, CMS, CDC, and other federal agencies will make a determination as to the appropriate level of funding to allocate to support: (1) HIT architecture for nationwide electronic exchange and use of health information; (2) development and adoption of appropriate certified EHRs; (3) training and dissemination of information on best practices to integrate HIT, including EHR, into providers' delivery of care; (4) infrastructure and tools for the promotion of telemedicine; (5) promotion of interoperability of clinical data repositories or registries; (6) promotion of technologies and best practices to enhance the protection of health information; and (7) improvement and expansion public health departments' use of HIT.

### **HIT Implementation Assistance- HIT Regional Extension Centers**

Future funding to be determined for this program to provide regional technical assistance and disseminate best practices to support and accelerate efforts to adopt, implement, and effectively utilize HIT. The HHS Secretary is required to publish a draft description of the program and the procedures for application for U.S.-based nonprofit institutions or organizations.

### **Demonstration Program to Integrate Information Technology into Clinical Education**

Future funding is to be allocated to develop academic curricula integrating certified EHR technology in the clinical education of health professionals. The funding would be through competitive grants awarded by HHS to schools of medicine, osteopathic medicine, dentistry, or pharmacy, graduate programs in behavioral or mental health, or any other graduate health professions school, a graduate school of nursing or physician assistant studies, a consortium of schools, or an institute with a graduate medical education program in medicine, osteopathic medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing, or physician assistance studies.

The entity must submit a strategic plan for integrating certified EHR technology in the clinical education of health. The entity also must provide for the collection of data regarding the demonstration project's effectiveness in improving the safety of patients, the efficiency of health care delivery, and increasing the likelihood that graduates will adopt and incorporate certified EHR technology in the delivery of health services.

Entities must use grant funds in collaboration with two or more disciplines and integrate certified EHR technology into community-based clinical education. An eligible entity shall not use amounts received under a grant to purchase hardware, software, or services.

## **BROADBAND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **(National Telecommunications and Information Administration)**

#### **Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (TOP)**

##### Background on the Program

- The stimulus bill includes \$4.35 billion for a new Wireless and Broadband Deployment Grant Program at NTIA.
- The main purpose of the program is to provide broadband access to unserved consumers and provide improved broadband access to underserved consumers.

- However, of interest to universities, one of the other purposes is to “provide broadband education, awareness, training, access, equipment, and support to schools, libraries, medical and healthcare providers, community colleges and other institutions of higher education, and other community support organizations and entities to facilitate greater use of broadband service by or through these organizations.”
- Eligible grantees include states, non-profits, and companies. NTIA will award no less than one grant to each state.
- In addition to this large program, there are some smaller new programs, including \$250 million for competitive grants for innovative programs to encourage sustainable broadband adoption, \$200 million for competitive grants for expanding public computer center capacity, and up to \$350 million for the development and maintenance of statewide broadband inventory maps.
- The stimulus bill also includes \$2.5 billion to the Rural Utilities Service within USDA for a program that provides grants, loans and loan guarantees for broadband infrastructure.

### Timing

- NTIA intends to administer three rounds of solicitations for broadband grants. It is expected that roughly the same amount of funding will be available for grants in each of the three rounds.
- The first solicitation is expected to be announced between April and June of this year.
- The second solicitation is expected to be announced between September and December of this year.
- The third solicitation is expected to be announced between April and June of 2010.
- All grants must be awarded by September 30, 2010.
- NTIA must report to Congress regarding the status of the new grant programs every three months.

### Future Meetings

- Bernadette McGuire-Rivera, the Associate Administrator of NTIA, stressed that new NTIA grant programs were still being refined and that the upcoming public meetings will help define and formulate grant terms, guidelines and rules.
- Future meetings will focus on more specific elements of the broadband initiatives (i.e. defining “underserved” and “unserved” communities for the purpose of grant applications) and are scheduled to take place in Washington, DC on March 16, 19, 23, and 24.
- The majority of attendees at the first public meeting were from broadband providers, state agencies, and consumer groups. Most matters raised during the public comment portion of the meeting were thus framed in the context of state and industry participation in the new grant programs.