

Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act Key Elements for Graduate Education

December 15, 2020

On December 14, a bipartisan group of lawmakers introduced the latest package addressing COVID-19, the Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act. In total, the legislation provides \$748 billion in economic relief. This bipartisan, bicameral proposal is anticipated to be the best opportunity to pass another supplemental funding measure aimed at addressing COVID-19, following the CARES Act ([P.L. 116-136](#)).

Higher Education Funding
What funding is included in the Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act?
<p>The Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act provides \$82 billion for the existing Education Stabilization Fund, with \$20 billion (24%) reserved for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF). The bill requires at least 50% of an IHE's allocations be spent on student financial support, which may include students exclusively enrolled in distance education.</p> <p><u>The formula for allocations for each IHE proportions the amount by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 37.5% FTE Pell Grant recipients not exclusively enrolled in online courses prior to COVID-19• 37.5% total number of Pell Grant recipients not exclusively enrolled in online courses prior to COVID-19• 12.5% FTE non-Pell students not exclusively enrolled in online courses prior to COVID-19• 12.5% total number of non-Pell students not exclusively enrolled in online courses prior to COVID-19 <p>Institutions that were required to remit payment to the IRS for the excise tax based on investment income for tax year 2019 or 2020 will have their allocation reduced by 50%.</p> <p>\$7.5 billion is reserved for the Governor's fund and \$54 billion is dedicated to K-12 education.</p>
How does this compare with CARES?
<p>The CARES Act established the Education Stabilization Fund totaling \$30.75 billion for education and allocating \$13.9 billion (46%) to HEERF.</p> <p>The funding required at least 50% of each IHEs funds to go toward direct student financial support.</p> <p><u>Formula:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 75% based on FTE Pell grant recipients not enrolled exclusively online• 25% based on FTE non-Pell Grant recipients not enrolled exclusively online <p>The CARES Act reserved \$1.05 billion for HBCUs and MSIs.</p>
What has CGS requested?
<p>CGS has joined the higher education community on several requests and has most recently advocated for at least \$120 billion for colleges and universities. On December 2, CGS also joined the community in</p>

demonstrating the dramatic challenges institutions are facing when considering enrollment, student financial need, auxillary revenues, and new expenditures related to responding to COVID-19.

Student Loan Provisions

What provisions are included in the Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act?

The Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act extends the suspension of loan repayment and interest accrual included in the CARES Act to April 1, 2021.

How does this compare with CARES?

The CARES Act established a suspension on borrower payments on Federal Direct Loans and the suspension of interest accrual through September 30, 2020.

What has CGS requested?

CGS has most recently [requested](#) the administration continue the zero-interest deferred payments for borrowers and the suspension of collection activities for borrowers who have defaulted on any type of federal loan provided under the CARES Act and the administration's August extension. The request includes relief for borrowers until December 31, 2021, or until the federal government formally declares an end to the pandemic, whichever occurs first. CGS has also [requested](#) Congress provide similar extensions.

Research Provisions

What provisions are included in the Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act?

The Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act provides **\$700 million for the National Institutes of Health** for research related to COVID-19 and **\$25 million for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Operations, Research, and Facilities** to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

However, **the Emergency Coronavirus Relief Act neglects to include other agencies**, including the National Science Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

How does this compare with CARES funding?

NIH: \$945.5 million
National Science Foundation: \$76 million
NEA: \$75 million

NEH: \$75 million

NASA: \$60 million

Department of Energy, Office of Science: \$99.5 million

What has CGS requested?

Most recently, CGS has been working to secure support for two research related bills which would provide support the research enterprise in light of COVID-19. CGS launched a campaign reaching out to over 170 House and Senate members requesting co-sponsorship on the Research Investment to Spark the Economy (RISE) Act, H.R.7308/S.4286, and the Supporting Early-Career Reserarchers Act, H.R.8044.

On September 25, CGS [endorsed](#) the Senate’s RISE Act, S.4286, which would provide **\$26 billion in additional support for federal research**. The funding support is accompanied by additional flexibilities provided to extend training programs or employment for researchers. CGS previously [endorsed](#) the original House legislation July 10. There are currently 145 co-sponsors on the House legislation.

On September 30, CGS [endorsed](#) the Supporting Early-Career Researchers Act, which would provide the National Science Foundation funding to provide postdoctoral fellowships for early-career researchers whose employment prospects may have been impacted by COVID-19. There are currently 25 co-sponsors.