

The Episcopal Church and the Federal Budget

“Affirm the support for and improvement of the federal network of programs to reduce the numbers of those living in poverty, support workers’ efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and ensure continuing benefits for those who require a safety net to feed their families” –The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, March 2002

What’s the Federal Budget?

The federal budget is a financial blueprint detailing the values and priorities of the U.S. government. This budget determines spending caps for, mandatory and discretionary or ‘appropriated’ programs including those addressing poverty, refugees, international assistance, diplomacy engagement, defense, environment, health care, and housing. These programs directly impact our families and neighbors, national infrastructure, natural ecology, and economy.

Why Does the Episcopal Church Care?

The federal budget not only demonstrates our government’s priorities, but also serves as a powerful tool to put these goals into action. Our budget should reflect a government that works to secure hope, opportunity, and a place at the table for all, especially for people struggling at the margins of society. The appropriations process offers Episcopal advocates the opportunity to champion these values to their representatives and ensure that critical human needs and environmental programs are funded each fiscal year.

How Does the Appropriations Process Work?

After Congress passes a budget resolution setting the top-line spending level, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees take this spending level, known as a *302-b allocation*, and divide it among [twelve subcommittees](#) which craft specific bills to fund federal programs under their jurisdiction. Once the House and Senate have reconciled their separate bills into a single piece of legislation, Congress must pass this spending bill (or bills) before the President can sign it into law.

Read More

- “A Brief Guide to the Budget and the Appropriations Process”
<http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Pages/A-Brief-Guide-to-the-Federal-Budget-and-Appropriations-Process.aspx>
- Coalition on Human Needs Description of Various Programs Funded Through Appropriations Process: <http://www.chn.org/issues/budget-and-appropriations/>
- “Policy Basics: Introduction to the Federal Budget Process”:
<http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=155>

