



NASA'S FY2015 BUDGET REQUEST

Introduction

President Obama's FY2015 Request for NASA. For FY2015, President Obama is requesting \$17.461 billion for NASA, \$186 million less than the \$17.647 billion it received from Congress for FY2014.

The \$17.461 billion request is referred to as NASA's "base budget" to differentiate it from additional funds the President is requesting as part of his "Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative" (OGSI). NASA's portion of the OGSI is \$885.5 million, but the OGSI is considered to have very little chance of passage.

This fact sheet has four tables:

- Table 1 compares what Congress appropriated for FY2014, the FY2015 base budget request, and the House-passed amounts in the FY2015 Commerce-Justice-Science (CJS) appropriations bill (H.R. 4660).
- Table 2 shows the OGSI request for NASA.
- Table 3 shows NASA's funding for its "Asteroid Initiative," which includes the Asteroid Redirect Mission (ARM). Those activities are not grouped together in NASA's budget documents and are spread across several NASA Headquarters organizations. This table brings it all together.
- Table 4 consolidates the funding for the Space Launch System (SLS), which is spread across three subaccounts.

Status of Congressional Action. The House passed the FY2015 Commerce-Justice-Science (CJS) appropriations bill (H.R. 4660) very early on May 30, approving a \$435 million increase for NASA above the President's request. The Senate Appropriations Committee approved its version of the bill on June 5, increasing the request by \$439 million. Details are in Table 1.

President Obama's Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative (OGSI)

The FY2015 request for NASA's base budget adheres to budget caps President Obama and Congress agreed to in December 2013 as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA). However, the President is requesting an additional \$56 billion for FY2015 spread across the government as

an “Opportunity, Growth, and Security Initiative” (OGSI). NASA would receive \$885.5 million of those funds. Table 2 below shows how much each of NASA’s budget accounts would receive. Because the request is outside of the budget cap, the likelihood of Congress adopting it is quite small. The chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Rep. Hal Rogers (R-KY) [made that very clear](#) the day the request was released. Nonetheless, some NASA officials talk about the money in the OGSI as though they are depending on it to meet requirements. Congress always could use the OGSI as guidance if it chooses to augment NASA’s budget for specific purposes regardless of the fate of the overall package.

NASA FY2015 Appropriations Bill

Funding for the many federal government departments and agencies is split into 12 regular appropriations bills that group agencies and activities together. NASA is in the Commerce-Justice-Science (CJS) bill, which includes the Department of Commerce (of which NOAA is part), the Department of Justice, NASA, the National Science Foundation, and related agencies such as the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP).

The House Appropriations Committee [marked up](#) the FY2015 CJS bill (H.R. 4660) on May 8, 2014 and reported it on May 15 ([H. Rept. 113-448](#)) approving the action by its CJS subcommittee [on April 30, 2014](#). The House passed the bill at 1:15 am EDT on May 30, 2014.

The bill increases NASA’s FY2015 budget request by \$435 million, to \$17.896 billion from the requested level of \$17.461 billion. The net increase is composed of added funding for some programs (including science, the Space Launch System and Orion spacecraft, and aeronautics) and reduced funding for others (including commercial crew and space technology).

Several amendments were offered during floor debate to take money from NASA and spend it on other activities in the CJS bill, but all were defeated. One amendment was adopted to shift \$7 million from Space Operations to Space Technology, and another prohibits spending any funds on the Advanced Food Technology program that is developing food for humans travelling to Mars. A May 30, 2014 SpacePolicyOnline.com [article](#) summarizes the House action.

The Senate Appropriations CJS subcommittee held a [hearing](#) on NASA’s request on May 1, 2014. Subcommittee markup took place on June 3 and full committee markup on June 5. The Senate bill increases the request by \$439 million, very close to the House addition, although how it is allocated with the NASA budget accounts is quite different in some cases (see Table 1).

NASA Authorization Bill

(Not sure of the difference between an appropriation and an authorization? See our [“What’s a Markup”](#) Fact Sheet.)

Action in Calendar Year 2013. Congress considered, but did not pass, a new authorization bill for NASA in 2013. The 2010 NASA Authorization Act (P.L. 111-267) provided funding

recommendations for three years (through FY2013), so they have now expired. The policy provisions of that law remain in force, however, until repealed or replaced by subsequent law.

The House Science, Space and Technology (SS&T) Committee and the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, which authorize NASA activities, [acted on separate and very different versions](#) of a new NASA authorization bill in 2013, but neither bill was reported out of committee. A major difference was the amount of funding, with the Senate recommending \$18.1 billion compared to \$16.9 billion in the House bill.

The disparity was the result of vastly different federal spending caps included in Budget Resolutions passed by each chamber. In December 2013, the two chambers reached agreement on the total amount of federal spending allowed for both FY2014 and FY2015 in the “[Ryan-Murray](#)” budget agreement. Now that both chambers and the President have agreed on the total amount of money available, agreement may be more easily reached on a new NASA authorization bill. Since the FY2014 funding amounts in the bills considered in CY2013 are no longer relevant, they are not included in Table 1. For reference purposes, they are in the [FY2014 version of this fact sheet](#).

Action in Calendar Year 2014. The House SS&T Committee approved a completely new NASA authorization bill (H.R. 4412) on April 29, 2014. The bill was approved quickly on a bipartisan basis, starkly different from the partisan rancor of last year.

The only funding recommendations are for FY2014, which is already in progress, not for FY2015 or beyond so they are not included in Table 1 below. The policy provisions of the House committee bill are summarized in an April 29, 2014 SpacePolicyOnline.com [article](#).

Table 1: NASA's FY2015 Base Budget Request and Congressional Action
(in \$ millions, see notes below)

Account	2014 Enacted	2015 Req	Authorization <small>(see note 5)</small>			Appropriation		
			House	Senate	Final	House-passed	Senate Cmte	Final
Science	5,151.2	4,972.0				5,193.0	5,200.0	
<i>Earth Science</i>	<i>1,826.0</i>	<i>1,770.3</i>				<i>1,750.0</i>	<i>1,831.9</i>	
<i>Planetary Science</i>	<i>1,345.0</i>	<i>1,280.3</i>				<i>1,450.0</i>	<i>1,301.7</i>	
<i>Astrophysics</i>	<i>668.0</i>	<i>607.3</i>				<i>680.0</i>	<i>707.8</i>	
<i>JWST</i>	<i>658.2</i>	<i>645.4</i>				<i>645.0</i>	<i>645.4</i>	
<i>Heliophysics</i>	<i>654.0</i>	<i>668.9</i>				<i>668.0</i>	<i>671.2</i>	
<i>Education</i> <small>see note 8</small>	<i>NA</i>	<i>NA</i>				<i>NA</i>	<i>42.0</i>	
Aeronautics	566.0	551.1				666.0	551.1	
Space Technology <small>see note 7</small>	576.0	705.5				<small>note 7</small> 627.0	580.2	
Exploration	4,113.2	3,976.0				4,167.0	4,367.7	
<i>Expl Sys Dev</i>	<i>3,115.2</i>	<i>2,784.4</i>				<i>3,055.0</i>	<i>3,251.1</i>	
<i>(Orion)</i>	<i>(1,197.0)</i>	<i>(1,052.8)</i>				<i>(1,140.0)</i>	<i>(1,200.0)</i>	
<i>(SLS)</i>	<i>(1,600.0)</i>	<i>(1,380.3)</i>				<i>(1,600.0)</i>	<i>(1,700.0)</i>	
<i>(Expl Ground Sys)</i>	<i>(318.2)</i>	<i>(351.3)</i>				<i>(315.0)</i>	<i>(351.3)</i>	
<i>Commercial Spflt</i>	<i>696.0</i>	<i>848.3</i>				<i>785.0</i>	<i>805.0</i>	
<i>Expl R&D</i>	<i>302.2</i>	<i>343.4</i>				<i>327.0</i>	<i>311.4</i>	
Space Operations <small>see note 7</small>	3,778.0	3,905.4				<small>note 7</small> 3,878.0	3,830.8	
<i>ISS</i>	<i>not specified</i>	<i>3,050.8</i>				<small>note 7</small> <i>3,040.0</i>	<i>3,012.8</i>	
<i>Space & Flt Support</i>	<i>not specified</i>	<i>854.6</i>				<small>note 7</small> <i>845.0</i>	<i>818.0</i>	
Education	116.6	88.9				106.0	108.0	
Cross Agency Support <small>see note 6</small>	2,793.0	2,778.6				2,779.0	2,778.6	
CECR	515.0	446.1				446.0	446.1	
Inspector General	37.5	37.0				34.0	37.5	
TOTAL	17,646.5	17,460.6				17,896.0	17,900.0	

Notes: (1) Columns may not add due to rounding. Text and numbers in *italics* are subtotals. Text and numbers in (*italics in parentheses*) are sub-subtotals. Figures for NASA’s FY2014 appropriations and FY2015 budget request are from NASA materials on its budget website [<http://www.nasa.gov/budget>] and do not reflect changes that occurred later and are shown in NASA’s FY2014 operating plan, a condensed version of which is also posted at NASA’s budget website.

(2) CECR = Construction, Environmental Compliance and Restoration. CoF = Construction of Facilities. NA = not applicable.

(3) The Asteroid Initiative is not specifically identified in NASA’s budget documents. The “initiative” consists of the Asteroid Redirect Mission (ARM) plus funding for the Asteroid Grand Challenge and additional funding for searching for asteroids. Funding is spread through the Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate, the Space Technology Mission Directorate, the Science Mission Directorate, and the Office of Chief Technologist. See table 3.

(4) The Space Launch System (SLS) is funded in three different accounts. For convenience, table 4 delineates that funding.

(5) In 2013, the House and Senate committees that authorize NASA activities approved (but did not report out) separate versions of a new NASA authorization bill. Debate is expected to continue this year, but the funding situation has changed sufficiently that the figures each side adopted last year may not be relevant. Therefore they are not included here. For reference, they are in [the FY2014 version of this fact sheet](#). The House committee approved a new and different NASA authorization bill on April 29, 2014, but it includes funding recommendations only for FY2014 (already in progress) not FY2015 or beyond.

(6) The House Appropriations Committee designates this account as “Safety, Security and Mission Services” instead of Cross Agency Support.

(7) The House passed an amendment during floor debate that shifts \$7 million from Space Operations to Space Technology. That shift is reflected in this table, but it is not clear what part of Space Operations will be reduced by the \$7 million. Therefore the subtotals for ISS and Space and Flight Support remain in this table as they were in the committee’s report. Consequently they do not add up to the total for the Space Operations account.

(8) The Senate Appropriations Committee broke out spending for the Science Mission Directorate’s education activities in a separate line. In the NASA request, \$15 million for education was included in the request for the astrophysics division, which is managing education activities for the entire Mission Directorate. The Senate Appropriations Committee adds another \$27 million, for a total of \$42 million, which it says is level with FY2014. The committee says it placed this funding in a separate line item to increase transparency, but supports having the astrophysics division manage all of it.

**Table 2: President Obama’s FY2015 Opportunity, Growth and Security Initiative Request for NASA
(in \$ millions)**

Account	FY2015 Request
Science	187.3
Aeronautics	43.9
Space Technology	100.0
Exploration	350.0
Space Operations	100.6
Education	10.0
Construction, Environmental Compliance and Restoration (CECR)	93.7
TOTAL	885.5

Source: NASA FY2015 [budget estimates](#) (page OGS1-1). <http://www.nasa.gov/budget>. The NASA budget estimate book provides detailed information on how the money would be spent in each of these areas.

**Table 3: Funding for the Asteroid Initiative, Including the Asteroid Redirect Mission
(in \$ millions)**

Purpose	FY2014 Enacted (note 3)	FY2015 Request	Congressional Action
Augmented Funding for Asteroid Detection in Science Mission Directorate (note 2)	20	20	
Asteroid Grand Challenge & related activities in Office of Chief Technologist	7	7	
Asteroid Redirect Mission	78	133	
<i>Solar Electric Propulsion in Space Technology Mission Directorate</i>	38	93	
<i>Studies in Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate</i>	40	40	
TOTAL	105	160	

Source: NASA budget briefing by Chief Financial Officer Beth Robinson, March 4, 2014.

Notes: (1) Text and numbers in italics are subsets.

(2) Amounts for asteroid detection as part of the Asteroid Initiative are in addition to base funding for this activity in the Science Mission Directorate. The base activity is about \$20 million/year and is not included in this table. The Asteroid Initiative essentially doubles the amount of funding available.

(3) The FY2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act did not specify funding for the Asteroid Initiative. The figures here are what NASA said it requested. How much it actually plans to spend hopefully will be available if and when its FY2014 operating plan is made public. The Act did not prohibit NASA from spending these funds as NASA proposed, but the accompanying explanatory statement [warned](#) the agency that it had much more work to do to convince Congress this is the best path forward and it was not yet making a “long term commitment to this mission concept.”

**Table 4: Funding for the Space Launch System
(in \$ millions)**

Account: Subaccount	FY2014 Enacted	FY2015 Request	Congressional Action
Exploration: Exploration Systems Development/ SLS	1,600.0	1,380.3	
Exploration: Exploration Systems Development/ Exploration Ground Systems	318.2	351.3	
CECR: Exploration Construction of Facilities	*142.0	52.3	
TOTAL	2,060.2	1,783.9	

Notes: CECR = Construction, Environmental Compliance and Restoration.

* The \$142 million figure for FY2014 is from the joint explanatory statement that accompanied the FY2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act (page 43). NASA's FY2015 budget request, however, does not specify the enacted level for this or any of the CECR subaccounts. A footnote to NASA's table states that amounts not specified in the FY2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act or the explanatory statement are not included in its list. However, the \$142 million for Exploration CoF is, indeed, identified there.