

FY 2024

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

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SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

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SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

APPROPRIATION LANGUAGE

For carrying out title IV of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, as amended by Public Law 107–275, [\$36,031,000] \$22,890,000, to remain available until expended.

For making after July 31 of the current fiscal year, benefit payments to individuals under title IV of such Act, for costs incurred in the current fiscal year, such amounts as may be necessary.

For making benefit payments under title IV for the first quarter of fiscal year [2024, \$10,250,000] 2025, \$7,000,000, to remain available until expended. (*Department of Labor Appropriations Act, 2023.*)

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

AMOUNTS AVAILABLE FOR OBLIGATION						
(Dollars in Thousands)						
	FY 2022 Revised Enacted		FY 2023 Revised Enacted		FY 2024 Request	
	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount
A. Appropriation	13	\$32,970	13	\$36,031	13	\$22,890
Sequestration Reduction Pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985	0	-\$283	0	-\$287	0	\$0
Unobligated Balance Carried Forward from Prior Year	0	\$12,575	0	\$11,547	0	\$14,062
First Quarter Advance Appropriation, Prior Year	0	\$14,000	0	\$11,000	0	\$10,250
B. Gross Budget Authority	13	\$59,262	13	\$58,291	13	\$47,202
Unobligated Balance Carried Forward from Prior Year	0	-\$12,575	0	-\$11,547	0	-\$14,062
First Quarter Advance Appropriation, Prior Year	0	-\$14,000	0	-\$11,000	0	-\$10,250
C. Budget Authority	13	\$32,687	13	\$35,744	13	\$22,890
Unobligated Balance Carried Forward from Prior Year	0	\$12,575	0	\$11,547	0	\$14,062
First Quarter Advance Appropriation, Prior Year	0	\$14,000	0	\$11,000	0	\$10,250
D. Total Budgetary Resources	13	\$59,262	13	\$58,291	13	\$47,202
Unobligated Balances	0	-\$11,547	0	-\$14,062	0	-\$6,538
E. Total, Estimated Obligations	13	\$47,715	13	\$44,229	13	\$40,664

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY 2023 Revised Enacted	FY 2024 Request	Net Change
Obligational Authority			
Benefit Payments	\$42,000	\$28,000	-\$14,000
Administrative	\$4,744	\$5,140	+\$396
Total Obligational Authority	\$46,744	\$33,140	-\$13,604
 Full Time Equivalents			
Operating Activities	13	13	0
Total	13	13	0

Explanation of Change	FY 2024 Change							
	FY 2023 Base		Trust Funds		General Funds		Total	
	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount
Increases:								
A. Built-Ins:								
To Provide For:								
Costs of pay adjustments	13	\$1,321	0	\$0	0	\$60	0	\$60
Personnel benefits	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Employee health benefits	0	\$521	0	\$0	0	\$23	0	\$23
Moving allowance	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA)	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Benefits for former personnel	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Travel and transportation of persons	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Transportation of things	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Rental payments to GSA	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Communications, utilities, and miscellaneous charges	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Printing and reproduction	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Advisory and assistance services	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Other services from non-Federal sources	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Working Capital Fund	0	\$459	0	\$0	0	\$26	0	\$26
Other Federal sources (DHS Charges)	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Other goods and services from Federal sources	0	\$1,784	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Research & Development Contracts	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Operation and maintenance of facilities	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Operation and maintenance of equipment	0	\$659	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Supplies and materials	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Equipment	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

Explanation of Change	FY 2024 Change							
	FY 2023 Base		Trust Funds		General Funds		Total	
	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount
Grants, subsidies, and contributions	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Insurance claims and indemnities	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Built-Ins Subtotal	13	+\$4,744	0	\$0	0	+\$109	0	+\$109
B. Programs:								
Processing of SBDCM Mandatory Workload	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$287	0	\$287
Programs Subtotal			0	\$0	0	+\$287	0	+\$287
Total Increase	13	+\$4,744	0	\$0	0	+\$396	0	+\$396
Decreases:								
A. Built-Ins:								
To Provide For:								
Built-Ins Subtotal	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
B. Programs:								
Benefits	0	\$42,000	0	\$0	0	-\$14,000	0	-\$14,000
Programs Subtotal			0	\$0	0	-\$14,000	0	-\$14,000
Total Decrease	0	+\$42,000	0	\$0	0	-\$14,000	0	-\$14,000
Total Change	13	+\$46,744	0	\$0	0	-\$13,604	0	-\$13,604

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

BUDGET AUTHORITY BY OBJECT CLASS¹					
(Dollars in Thousands)					
		FY 2022 Revised Enacted	FY 2023 Revised Enacted	FY 2024 Request	Diff. FY24 Request / FY23 Revised Enacted
	Full-Time Equivalent				
	Full-time Permanent	13	13	13	0
	Total	13	13	13	0
	Average ES Salary	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Average GM/GS Grade	12	12	12	0
	Average GM/GS Salary	\$81,642	\$84,459	\$87,753	\$3,294
11.1	Full-time permanent	1,200	1,295	1,355	60
11.3	Other than full-time permanent	0	0	0	0
11.5	Other personnel compensation	23	26	26	0
11.9	Total personnel compensation	1,223	1,321	1,381	60
12.1	Civilian personnel benefits	464	521	544	23
13.0	Benefits for former personnel	0	0	0	0
21.0	Travel and transportation of persons	3	0	0	0
22.0	Transportation of things	0	0	0	0
23.1	Rental payments to GSA	0	0	0	0
23.3	Communications, utilities, and miscellaneous charges	1	0	0	0
24.0	Printing and reproduction	0	0	0	0
25.1	Advisory and assistance services	0	0	0	0
25.2	Other services from non-Federal sources	0	0	0	0
25.3	Other goods and services from Federal sources 1/	1,326	2,243	2,556	313
25.4	Operation and maintenance of facilities	0	0	0	0
25.5	Research and development contracts	0	0	0	0
25.7	Operation and maintenance of equipment	1,670	659	659	0
26.0	Supplies and materials	0	0	0	0
31.0	Equipment	0	0	0	0
41.0	Grants, subsidies, and contributions	0	0	0	0
42.0	Insurance claims and indemnities	42,000	42,000	28,000	-14,000
	Total	46,687	46,744	33,140	-13,604
	1/Other goods and services from Federal sources				
	Working Capital Fund	412	459	485	26
	Services by DOL Agencies	914	1,784	2,071	287

¹ The 2022 level reflects the post-sequestration amount. The FY 2023 and FY 2024 levels reflect the pre-sequestration amounts.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

AUTHORIZING STATUTES

Public Law / Act	Legislation	Statute No. / US Code	Expiration Date
PUB. L. 91-173	Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969, (now called Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977), as amended.	30 U.S.C. 901, et seq.	N/A
PUB. L. 107-275	Black Lung Consolidation of Administrative Responsibility Act, as amended.	30 U.S.C. 801 note	N/A

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

APPROPRIATION HISTORY					
(Dollars in Thousands)					
	Budget Estimates to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriations	FTE
2014					
Base Appropriation				\$121,716	15
2015					
Base Appropriation				\$102,756	16
2016					
Base Appropriation	\$88,302	\$88,302	\$88,302	\$92,882	16
2017					
Base Appropriation	\$77,319			\$76,952	16
2018					
Base Appropriation	\$69,319	\$69,319		\$68,968	16
2019					
Base Appropriation...1/	\$24,319		\$24,319	\$23,989	16
2020					
Base Appropriation...2/	\$34,970	\$34,970		\$34,677	13
2021					
Base Appropriation	\$54,970			\$54,687	13
2022					
Base Appropriation	\$43,970	\$43,970		\$43,687	13
2023					
Base Appropriation	\$46,281			\$46,744	13
2024					
Base Appropriation	\$29,890				13

^{1/} This bill was passed by the Senate. It was passed out of the House Subcommittee but was not reported out of the House Committee or by the full House.

^{2/} This bill was passed by the House. It was not taken up by the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee or full Senate Appropriations Committee.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

OVERVIEW

The Black Lung Benefits Act authorizes monetary benefits to coal miners who are totally disabled by pneumoconiosis arising out of coal mine employment, as well as eligible survivors of coal miners. Historically, administration of the Black Lung Benefits Act was split between the Social Security Administration (SSA) and the Department of Labor (DOL). Claims filed on or before December 31, 1973, were covered by Part B of the Act and most were administered by SSA (Part B claims filed between July 1 and December 31, 1973, were administered by DOL); claims filed after December 31, 1973, were covered by Part C of the Act and were administered by DOL. Congress transferred responsibility for all Part B claims to DOL, effective October 1, 2003. DOL now administers both Part B and Part C, resulting in fiscal and operational efficiencies and improved service delivery. This account, Special Benefits for Disabled Coal Miners (SBDCM), funds the administration and payment of Part B claims.

The primary activities of the program under Part B are to ensure accurate and timely benefit payments. Service to these beneficiaries focuses on monitoring dependent eligibility and processing changes to the miner's or survivor's entitlement promptly. The program must also validate representative payee requests and accounting reports, as well as implement new Federal financial management requirements, minimize erroneous payments, and increase administrative efficiencies.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

BUDGET AUTHORITY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE				
(Dollars in Thousands)				
	FY 2022 Revised Enacted	FY 2023 Revised Enacted	FY 2024 Request	Diff. FY 2024 Request / FY 2023 Revised Enacted
Benefit Payments	42,000	42,000	28,000	-14,000
Administration	4,687	4,744	5,140	396
Total Budget Authority for the Fiscal Year	46,687	46,744	33,140	-13,604
Less Funds Advanced in Prior Year	-14,000	-11,000	-10,250	750
Current Request for the Fiscal Year	32,687	35,744	22,890	-12,854
New Advances 1st Quarter Next FY	11,000	10,250	7,000	-3,250
Activity Appropriation	43,687	45,994	29,890	-16,104
FTE	13	13	13	0

NOTE: FY 2022 reflects actual FTE. Authorized FTE for FY 2022 was 13.

Introduction

The Special Benefits for Disabled Coal Miners (SBDCM) program implements Part B of the Black Lung Benefits Act. Part B provides benefits for coal miners totally disabled by pneumoconiosis, as well as for eligible survivors of coal miners, who filed claims on or before December 31, 1973. Part B benefits are paid from General Funds for claims filed before July 1, 1973. (Special payment rules apply to claims filed between July 1, 1973 and December 31, 1973). Service to these beneficiaries focuses on monitoring dependent eligibility and promptly processing changes to the miner's (or eligible survivor's) entitlement.

Over the last few years, requests for the SBDCM benefits appropriation have been adjusted to increase use of unobligated balances to pay for program obligations. These adjustments do not disrupt the ability of the program to ensure all beneficiaries and eligible dependents receive promised benefits while maintaining a reasonable unobligated balance at the end of the fiscal year. The FY 2024 Budget continues to provide the necessary funding to ensure that beneficiaries and eligible dependents will continue to receive all promised benefits.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

The following exhibits reflect recent efforts to manage end of year balances.

Fiscal Year	Budgetary Resources	Obligations	Balance available End-of-Year
	(\$ in '000s)	(\$ in '000s)	(\$ in '000s)
2018	\$163,661	\$78,276	\$85,385
2019	\$110,399	\$69,977	\$40,422
2020	\$75,110	\$62,589	\$12,521
2021	\$67,450	\$54,877	\$12,573
2022	\$59,443	\$47,866	\$11,547
2023	\$58,291	\$44,299	\$14,062
2024	\$47,202	\$40,644	\$6,538

Fiscal Year	Beneficiaries	Benefit Payments (\$ in '000s)
2018	9,260	\$74,607
2019	7,975	\$65,635
2020	6,906	\$58,310
2021	5,912	\$50,596
2022	4,986	\$42,983
2023	4,313	\$39,485
2024	3,745	\$35,524

Note: Figures for 2018-2022 are end-of-fiscal year totals. Figures for 2023-2024 are end-of-fiscal year estimates based on OWCP's projections.

Five-Year Budget Activity History

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS PART B (Dollars in Thousands)				
Fiscal Year	Total Appropriation ^{1/}	Benefits ^{1/}	Salaries and Expenses	FTE
2019	\$24,989	\$20,000	\$4,989	16
2020	\$34,677	\$30,000	\$4,677	13
2021	\$54,687	\$50,000	\$4,687	13
2022	\$46,687	\$42,000	\$4,687	13
2023	\$46,744	\$42,000	\$4,744	13

^{1/}Includes the Advance Appropriation requested in the prior fiscal year and excludes Advance Appropriation for the next Fiscal Year.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

FY 2024

The FY 2024 Budget level for SBDCM is \$33,140,000, including \$5,140,000 and 13 FTE for program administration. The request for administrative funding includes a built-in increase of \$109,000 for inflationary costs of pay, benefits, and Working Capital Fund. Of the \$28,000,000 for benefits, \$10,250,000 is an advance appropriation that was requested in FY 2023. In addition, an advance appropriation of \$7,000,000 is requested for the first quarter of FY 2025 to ensure continuity of benefit payments during the transition between fiscal year appropriations. The amount requested for FY 2024 will be sufficient to cover expected benefits expenditures while reducing the unobligated balance carryover.

With this funding SBDCM will manage and support the critical systems, processes, and functions, which provide the foundation for OWCP's Part B benefits maintenance activities and financial management protocols. These foundational resources at current FTE levels are necessary to support OWCP's core mission of timely and accurate processing of benefits for claimants and their families, and represent the minimum required to support program integrity efforts and minimize improper payments.

FY 2023

The FY 2023 Revised Enacted level for SBDCM is \$46,744,000, including a post-sequester total of \$4,744,000 and 13 FTE for program administration. Of the \$42,000,000 for benefits, \$11,000,000 is an advance appropriation that was requested in FY 2022. In addition, there is an advance appropriation of \$10,250,000 for the first quarter of FY 2024 to ensure continuity of benefit payments during the transition between fiscal year appropriations. The amount for FY 2023 will be sufficient to cover expected benefits expenditures while reducing the carryover balance.

With this funding SBDCM will manage and support the critical systems, processes, and functions which provide the foundation for OWCP's Part B benefits maintenance activities and financial management protocols. These foundational resources at current FTE levels are necessary to support OWCP's core mission of timely and accurate processing of benefits for claimants and their families, and represent the minimum required to support program integrity efforts and minimize improper payments.

FY 2022

The FY 2022 Revised Enacted level for SBDCM was \$46,687,000, including a post-sequester total of \$4,687,000 and 13 FTE for program administration. Of the \$42,000,000 for benefits, \$14,000,000 was an advance appropriation that was requested in FY 2021. In addition, there was an advance appropriation of \$11,000,000 for the first quarter of FY 2023 to ensure continuity of benefit payments during the transition between fiscal year appropriations. The amount requested for FY 2022 was sufficient to cover expected benefits expenditures.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

WORKLOAD AND PERFORMANCE SUMMARY				
	FY 2022 Revised Enacted		FY 2023 Revised Enacted	FY 2024 Request
	Target	Result	Target	Target
Special Benefits for Disabled Coal Miners				
Strategic Goal 3 - Improve Administration of and Strengthen Worker Safety Net Programs				
Strategic Objective 3.1 - Ensure timely and accurate income support when work is unavailable by strengthening benefits programs and program administration.				
SBDCM WL Number of Part B Beneficiaries Requiring Benefit Maintenance 1	5,326[e]	4,986	4,827[e]	4,384[e]

Legend: (r) Revised (e) Estimate (base) Baseline -- Not Applicable TBD - To Be Determined [p] - Projection

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

Workload and Performance Narrative

In FY 2024, OWCP expects to begin the fiscal year servicing an estimated 4,313 Part B beneficiaries and eligible dependents and will end the fiscal year servicing an estimated 3,745 Part B beneficiaries and eligible dependents. This work includes maintaining and supporting the staff and critical systems, processes, and functions, which provide the foundation of OWCP's Part B benefits maintenance activities, including covering pay raises, contract increases, and inflationary costs. These activities support the program's core mission of processing benefits for claimants. Program activities include payment of benefits, monitoring of beneficiary status for the suspension/termination of benefits, reinstatement of benefits, addition/deletion of dependents, conversion of benefits to survivors upon death of miners, resolution of over/under payments, and representative payee determinations. OWCP will also continue efforts to meet new and evolving financial management requirements.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

CHANGES IN FY 2024

(Dollars in Thousands)

Activity Changes

Built-In

To Provide For:

Costs of pay adjustments	\$60
Personnel benefits	0
Employee health benefits	23
Moving allowance	0
Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA)	0
Benefits for former personnel	0
Travel and transportation of persons	0
Transportation of things	0
Rental payments to GSA	0
Communications, utilities, and miscellaneous charges	0
Printing and reproduction	0
Advisory and assistance services	0
Other services from non-Federal sources	0
Working Capital Fund	26
Other Federal sources (DHS Charges)	0
Other goods and services from Federal sources	0
Research & Development Contracts	0
Operation and maintenance of facilities	0
Operation and maintenance of equipment	0
Supplies and materials	0
Equipment	0
Grants, subsidies, and contributions	0
Insurance claims and indemnities	0

Built-Ins Subtotal **\$109**

Net Program **\$287**

Direct FTE **0**

	Estimate	FTE
Base	\$4,853	13
Program Increase	\$287	0
Program Decrease	\$0	0