

FY 2025

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, \$24,367,000, 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 2026, \$6,000,000, to remain available until expended.

Note.--A full-year 2024 appropriation for this account was not enacted at the time the Budget was prepared; therefore, the Budget assumes this account is operating under the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2024 and Other Extensions Act (Division A of Public Law 118-15, as amended). The amounts included for 2024 reflect the annualized level provided by the continuing resolution.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

AMOUNTS AVAILABLE FOR OBLIGATION						
(Dollars in Thousands)						
	FY 2023 Enacted		FY 2024 Estimate		FY 2025 Request	
	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount	FTE	Amount
A. Appropriation	13	\$36,031	13	\$22,890	13	\$24,367
Sequestration Reduction Pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985	0	-\$287	0	\$0	0	\$0
Unobligated Balance Carried Forward from Prior Year	0	\$11,547	0	\$15,569	0	\$9,092
First Quarter Advance Appropriation, Prior Year	0	\$11,000	0	\$10,250	0	\$7,000
B. Gross Budget Authority	13	\$58,291	13	\$48,709	13	\$40,459
Unobligated Balance Carried Forward from Prior Year	0	-\$11,547	0	-\$15,569	0	-\$9,092
First Quarter Advance Appropriation, Prior Year	0	-\$11,000	0	-\$10,250	0	-\$7,000
C. Budget Authority	13	\$35,744	13	\$22,890	13	\$24,367
Unobligated Balance Carried Forward from Prior Year	0	\$11,547	0	\$15,569	0	\$9,092
First Quarter Advance Appropriation, Prior Year	0	\$11,000	0	\$10,250	0	\$7,000
D. Total Budgetary Resources	13	\$58,291	13	\$48,709	13	\$40,459
Unobligated Balances	0	-\$15,569	0	-\$9,092	0	-\$4,480
E. Total, Estimated Obligations	13	\$42,722	13	\$39,617	13	\$35,979

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

(Dollars in Thousands)

	FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 Request	Net Change
Obligational Authority			
Benefit Payments	\$28,000	\$26,200	-\$1,800
Administrative	\$5,140	\$5,167	+\$27
Total Obligational Authority	\$33,140	\$31,367	-\$1,773
 Full Time Equivalents			
Operating Activities	13	13	0
Total	13	13	0

Explanation of Change	FY 2025 Change							
	FY 2024 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	\$1,381	0	\$0	0	\$19	0	\$19
Personnel benefits	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Employee health benefits	0	\$544	0	\$0	0	\$8	0	\$8
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	\$439	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Other Federal sources (DHS Charges)	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Other goods and services from Federal sources	0	\$2,117	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

FY 2025 Change

Explanation of Change	FY 2024 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	+\$5,140	0	\$0	0	+\$27	0	+\$27
B. Programs:								
Programs Subtotal			0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Total Increase	13	+\$5,140	0	\$0	0	+\$27	0	+\$27
Decreases:								
A. Built-Ins:								
To Provide For:								
Built-Ins Subtotal	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
B. Programs:								
Benefits	0	\$28,000	0	\$0	0	-\$1,800	0	-\$1,800
Programs Subtotal			0	\$0	0	-\$1,800	0	-\$1,800
Total Decrease	0	+\$28,000	0	\$0	0	-\$1,800	0	-\$1,800
Total Change	13	+\$33,140	0	\$0	0	-\$1,773	0	-\$1,773

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

BUDGET AUTHORITY BY OBJECT CLASS¹					
(Dollars in Thousands)					
		FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 Request	Diff. FY25 Request / FY24 Estimate
	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	\$84,459	\$87,753	\$89,508	\$1,755
11.1	Full-time permanent	1,295	1,355	1,374	19
11.3	Other than full-time permanent	0	0	0	0
11.5	Other personnel compensation	26	26	26	0
11.9	Total personnel compensation	1,321	1,381	1,400	19
12.1	Civilian personnel benefits	521	544	552	8
13.0	Benefits for former personnel	0	0	0	0
21.0	Travel and transportation of persons	0	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	0	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/	2,243	2,556	2,556	0
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	659	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	28,000	26,200	-1,800
	Total	46,744	33,140	31,367	-1,773
	1/Other goods and services from Federal sources				
	Working Capital Fund	459	439	439	0
	Services by DOL Agencies	1,784	2,117	2,117	0

¹ The FY 2023 level reflects the post-sequestration amount pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

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
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...3/	\$29,890		\$29,890		13
2025					
Base Appropriation	\$30,367				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.

^{3/} The full-year FY 2024 appropriation was not enacted at the time the budget was prepared.

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 COMMITTEE²				
(Dollars in Thousands)				
	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 Request	Diff. FY25 Agency / FY24 Estimate
Benefit Payments	42,000	28,000	26,200	-1,800
Administration	4,744	5,140	5,167	27
Total Budget Authority for the Fiscal Year	46,744	33,140	31,367	-1,773
Less Funds Advanced in Prior Year	-11,000	-10,250	-7,000	3,250
Current Request for the Fiscal Year	35,744	22,890	24,367	1,477
New Advances 1st Quarter Next FY	10,250	7,000	6,000	-1,000
Activity Appropriation	45,994	29,890	30,367	477
FTE	13	13	13	0

NOTE: FY 2023 reflects actual FTE. Authorized FTE for FY 2023 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. Since Part B covers only claims filed before 1974, the number of beneficiaries declines each year. 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 2025 Budget continues to provide the necessary funding to ensure that beneficiaries and eligible dependents will continue to receive all promised benefits.

² The FY 2023 administration level reflects the post-sequestration amount pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

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)
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	\$58,681	\$43,112	\$15,569
2024	\$48,709	\$39,617	\$9,092
2025	\$40,459	\$35,979	\$4,480

Fiscal Year	Beneficiaries	Benefit Payments (\$ in '000s)
2019	7,975	\$65,635
2020	6,906	\$58,310
2021	5,912	\$50,596
2022	4,986	\$43,541
2023	4,247	\$38,131
2024	3,638	\$34,477
2025	3,189	\$30,812

Note: Figures for 2019-2023 are end-of-fiscal year totals. Figures for 2024-2025 are end-of-fiscal year estimates based on OWCP's projections.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

Five-Year Budget Activity History

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS PART B				
(Dollars in Thousands)				
Fiscal Year^{2/}	Total Appropriation^{1/}	Benefits^{1/}	Salaries and Expenses	FTE
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
2024	\$0	\$0	\$0	13

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

^{2/}A full-year 2024 appropriation for this account was not enacted at the time the budget was prepared.

FY 2025

The FY 2025 request level for SBDCM is \$31,367,000, including \$5,167,000 and 13 FTE for program administration. The request for administrative funding includes a built-in increase of \$27,000 for inflationary costs of pay and benefits. Of the \$26,200,000 for benefits, \$7,000,000 is an advance appropriation that was requested in FY 2024. In addition, an advance appropriation of \$6,000,000 is requested for the first quarter of FY 2026 to ensure continuity of benefit payments during the transition between fiscal year appropriations. The amount requested for FY 2025 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 2024

Figures for FY 2024 are an estimate. Discretionary amounts shown for FY 2024 reflect an annualized Continuing Resolution (Division A of P.L. 118-15, as amended), as a full-year appropriation had not been enacted at the time the budget was produced. Mandatory amounts are equal to the FY 2024 President's Budget and do not reflect sequestration.

FY 2023

The FY 2023 Revised Enacted level for SBDCM was \$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 was an advance appropriation that was requested in FY 2022. In addition, there was 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 requested

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

for FY 2023 was sufficient to cover expected benefits expenditures while reducing the carryover balance.

With this funding SBDCM managed and supported the critical systems, processes, and functions which provided the foundation for OWCP's Part B benefits maintenance activities and financial management protocols. These foundational resources at FY 2023 FTE levels were 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.

SPECIAL BENEFITS FOR DISABLED COAL MINERS

WORKLOAD AND PERFORMANCE SUMMARY				
	FY 2023 Enacted		FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 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 1	Number of Part B Beneficiaries Requiring Benefit Maintenance		4,313[e]	4,247
			3,638[e]	3,122[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 2025, OWCP expects to begin the fiscal year servicing an estimated 3,638 Part B beneficiaries and eligible dependents and will end the fiscal year servicing an estimated 3,122 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 2025

(Dollars in Thousands)

Activity Changes

Built-In

To Provide For:

Costs of pay adjustments	\$19
Personnel benefits	0
Employee health benefits	8
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	0
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 **\$27**

Net Program **\$0**

Direct FTE **0**

	Estimate	FTE
Base	\$5,167	13
Program Increase	\$0	0
Program Decrease	\$0	0