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Contents:

H.J.Res. 72—Making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2008 (*Obey, D-WI*)

Order of Business: H.J.Res. 72 is scheduled to be considered on Wednesday, December 19, 2007, under a rule that the Rules Committee is scheduled to report out this morning.

Summary: H.J.Res. 72 extends the current continuing resolution (CR), which funds the federal agencies and programs in appropriations bills not yet signed into law, through December 31st, 2007. This continued funding would be made pursuant to Public Law 110-92, the first continuing resolution that (as amended by Public Law 110-116 and Public Law 110-137) is set to expire on December 21, 2007.

In addition to an extension of the current CR, H.J.Res. 72 appropriates $165,200 to the heirs of Julia Carson, which is the traditional payment (equivalent to one year's salary) to close relatives of Members of Congress. H.J.Res. 72 also extends through September 30, 2008, a provision that provides burial benefits to veterans under certain circumstances.

Additional Background: Public Law 110-92, as amended by the Defense Appropriations bill Conference Report (Public Law 110-116), authorizes funding under the CR at FY 2007 non-emergency spending levels, with some exceptions. This formula **does not provide any funding for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan**. The CR modifies the FY 2007 funding level for some programs as follows:

- Provides the Census Bureau, Periodic Censuses and Programs, an operating rate of $1 billion, which is $300 million above the FY 2007 enacted level;

- Increases the operating rate for the Department of Veterans Affairs by $2.9 billion compared to the FY 2007 enacted level;

- Provides an annualized spending level of $5.6 billion for the Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) to reflect the FY 2007 supplemental spending (Public Law 110-28);

- Provides an annualized level of level of spending for the Diplomatic and Consular Programs at $4.4 billion. The FY 2008 House-passed version of the State-Foreign Operations Appropriations bill includes $4.8 billion, and the President's budget requested $4.9 billion.

- Extends the State Children's Health Insurance Program (S-CHIP) with a funding level for FY 2008 of $5 billion on an annualized basis, which is the same level as FY 2007. This includes funding for the 50 states and DC, and $40 million for Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa.

The CR also extends a number of provisions in current law that are set to expire—so-called "anomalies." These include the adjusted gross income requirement from the 2002 farm bill, expiring provisions from previous Defense Authorization bills (such as the Commanders' Emergency Response Program), and an extension of the authorization for both the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Delta Regional Authority. The bill also extends the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and the excise taxes that finance the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, as well as the contract authority for the airport grant program.

In addition, the CR extends liability protection to air carriers from claims resulting from terrorist acts through the date of the CR and extends the authority of the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board to expend money for foreign market development.

Possible Conservative Concerns: Although the CR provides funding for the domestic portion of the federal government at FY 2007 levels, it does not similarly provide continued funding for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Some conservatives may believe that a CR that does not contain such funding is not really a CR.

Committee Action: H.J.Res. 72 was introduced on December 18, 2007. It was not considered by the Appropriations Committee.

Cost to Taxpayers: A CBO cost estimate is not available.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

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