



Introduction to Federal Grants & Congressionally Directed Spending

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SENATOR
Andy Kim
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Grants Work



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Federal Grants Overview

Who is eligible?

- Federal Grants are often primarily available for state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and other entities

Who administers Federal Grants?

- **“Pass through” grants** – federal grant funds that are first awarded to state and local governments who then administer the program funding
- **Discretionary grants** – administered by the federal agency without a pass-through.
 - Typically reviewed in a competitive process overseen by the awarding federal agency

How to identify funding opportunities?

- **SAM.Gov** – public platform providing Assistance Listings, a database describing over 2,200 federal assistance programs, including 1,800 federal grant programs.
 - Does not display grant program opportunities in “real time”
- **Grants.Gov** – lists federal Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs)
 - Opportunities can be searched by keyword, eligibility, category, agency, and more.

How to Get in Touch



Subscribe to the Grants Newsletter

kim.senate.gov/subscribe/



Specific Questions

amy_oliver@kim.senate.gov



General Grant Inquiries

grants@kim.senate.gov



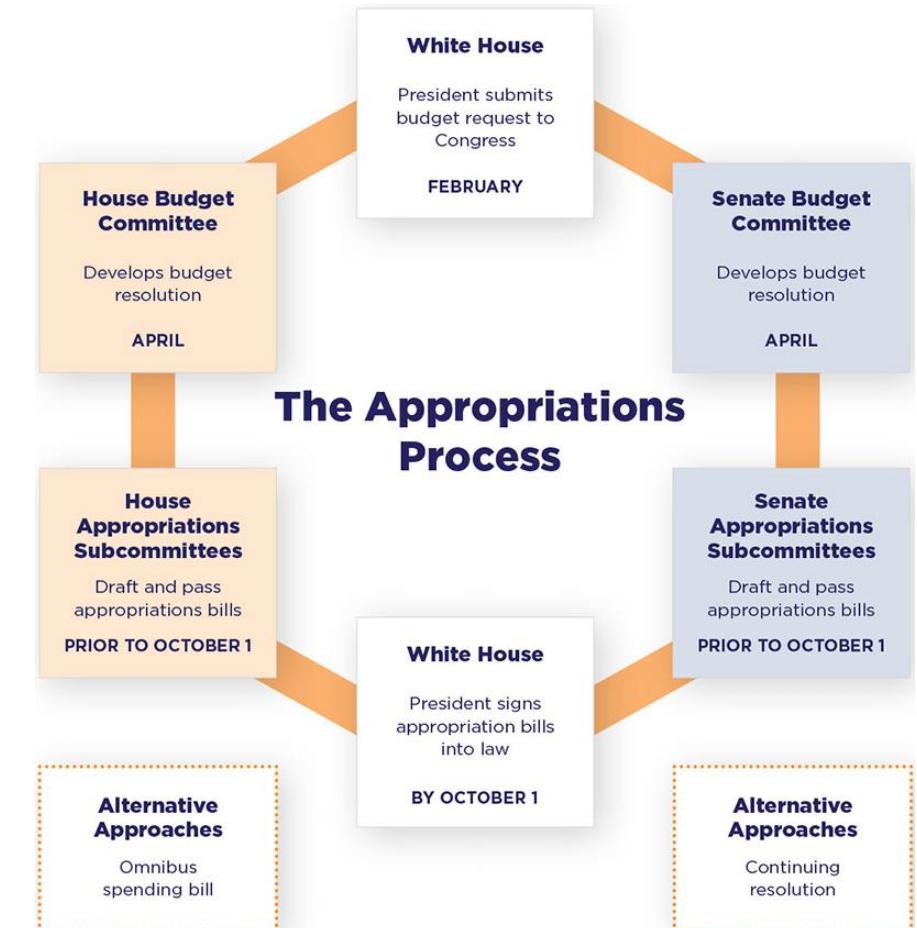
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Introduction to the Federal Appropriations Process

- Article I of the U.S. Constitution states that, "No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by law."
- Every year, Congress conducts an appropriations process to fund the government, a timeline which **generally** looks like:
 - The President introducing their proposed budget for the upcoming federal fiscal year (October 1st – September 30th).
 - Members of Congress providing input on their priorities to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees.
 - Each of the 12 subcommittees drafting and voting on their respective appropriation bills that are ultimately voted in the House and Senate.
 - After resolving differences between the House and Senate-passed versions, both chambers will send the bill to the President for signature.



Introduction to the Federal Appropriations Process

- How Our Office Plays a Role
 - First: supporting appropriation letters that either request a certain level of funding for a federal program or request specific language be included in within the appropriation bill.
 - Second: requesting funding for certain projects, referred to as Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) projects in the Senate or Community Project Funding (CPF) projects in the House of Representatives.
 - These projects can promote economic development, infrastructure, public safety, education, health care initiatives, and other worthy investments in communities across the country.
 - Compared to a traditional grant, the CDS/CPF funding designation prioritizes the project in that specific grant program.
 - Applicants must still go through an application process and meet traditional components such as a benefit-cost analysis and environmental reviews.

Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS)

- Since the "earmark" process was reintroduced in 2022, we have seen changes from year to year on which entities were eligible or what accounts were open for CDS/CPF projects.
 - We likely won't receive guidance on what or if the FY27 CDS process will look like until February or March.
- Eligible Projects for FY26 CDS:
 - Commerce, Justice, Science: upgrading emergency response centers and first responder equipment and purchasing and installing security cameras.
 - Interior/Environment: replacing lead service lines, upgrading stormwater management infrastructure, and installing living shorelines.
 - Labor, Health and Human Services, Education: constructing health care facilities and expanding youth engagement and workforce development programs.



[See the full list of CDS projects Senator Kim submitted for Fiscal Year 2026](#)



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Initial Intake

Posting of Committee Guidance

- The Appropriation Subcommittees will release general guidance on the parameters of an eligible project. We will provide this information on our website

Opening of Application Portal

- Our office will provide a link where you can register for the application system. All documents supporting the application will be entered using this portal

Closing of Application Period

- Depending on deadlines set by the committees, our office will close our portal to allow enough time for review of applications.
- **No applications will be considered after this deadline.**

Components of a Strong Application

- Clear Project Title & Description
- Detailed Budget detailing use of appropriated money & outside sources of funding
- **TWO** letters of support or evidence of community support
- Submitted to both Senator Kim **AND** your House Member
- If required, supplemental information required by committee
- Incomplete applications **will not** be submitted

Preparing for Committee Review

- We will contact you with clarifying questions or if we need additional information
- Certain committees set limits on how many projects a member can submit. We will do our best to accommodate all submissions.
- Our team will be available to answer questions during this entire process, however we **cannot** accommodate individual meetings for every application

Five Tips for a Successful CDS

1	Use this time to prepare for the upcoming CDS process. Please keep a close eye on our website and newsletters for updates—this process can be fast and furious.
2	Identify projects that are sustainable in the long-term, realistic in the short-term and ready to be started.
3	Review last year's submissions and projects to get a better understanding of a potential project.
4	Begin to cultivate community support for project applications.
5	If your project requires materials outside of your organization, begin that process sooner than later.

Life Cycle of an FY26 CDS Project



Intake
March-April 2026



Review
April-May 2026



Committee Process
July 2025 – Ongoing



Congressional Passage
November 2025 – Ongoing



Agency Funding
TBD

QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION

Thank you for joining!