

**Department of Education**  
**REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH**  
**Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Request**

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## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

For carrying out, to the extent not otherwise provided, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, and the Helen Keller National Center Act, [\$3,506,861,000: *Provided*, That for purposes of determining whether a State may administer the Centers for Independent Living program under section 723 of the Rehabilitation Act, for fiscal year 2010, the Secretary shall exclude American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funds awarded in fiscal year 2009 from the calculation of Federal funding allotted under section 721(c) and (d) of the Rehabilitation Act:<sup>1</sup> *Provided further*, That \$5,095,000 shall be used for the projects, and in the amounts, specified under the heading "Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research" in the statement of the managers on the conference report accompanying this Act]<sup>2</sup> \$3,565,326,000: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Education may allocate to States, in accordance with a formula determined by the Secretary, up to \$56,282,000 of the funds provided for the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program:<sup>3</sup> *Provided further*, That section 302(g)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act shall not apply to funds provided under section 302 of such Act:<sup>4</sup> *Provided further*, That of the amount provided for Grants for Independent Living under Part B of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, the Secretary of Education shall reserve no more than 1.46 percent for training and technical assistance activities:<sup>5</sup> *Provided further*, That of the amount provided for Grants for Independent Living under part B of title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, no State or Outlying Area shall receive less than the combined amount it received under parts B and C of title VII of such Act for fiscal year 2010, provided that the State or Outlying Area matches, in cash or in kind, the equivalent of one dollar for each nine dollars in Federal funds it received for fiscal year 2010 under part B of title VII of such Act:<sup>6</sup> *Provided further*, That each State or Outlying

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Area shall reserve 5 percent of its allocation for Grants for Independent Living to support the operation of a Statewide Independent Living Council, as authorized under section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act:<sup>7</sup> *Provided further,* That each State or Outlying Area shall award no less than 90 percent of its allocation to centers for independent living that meet the standards and assurances in section 725 of the Rehabilitation Act:<sup>8</sup> *Provided further,* That such allocation of funds among centers for independent living shall be based on an approved State Plan for Independent Living that is developed in accordance with section 704 of the Rehabilitation Act and makes independent living services available in all counties within the State or Outlying Area:<sup>9</sup> *Provided further,* That, of the amounts provided under this heading, \$30,000,000 shall be available under Title II of the Rehabilitation Act to the Secretary of Education in cooperation with the Secretary of Labor and, as appropriate, other heads of departments and agencies, to identify and validate innovative strategies for improving program delivery and outcomes for program beneficiaries.<sup>10</sup> (*Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2010.*)

### NOTE

Each language provision that is followed by a footnote reference is explained in the Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes document which follows the appropriation language.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p><sup>1</sup> <u>[Provided, That for purposes of determining whether a State may administer the Centers for Independent Living program under section 723 of the Rehabilitation Act, for fiscal year 2010, the Secretary shall exclude American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funds awarded in fiscal year 2009 from the calculation of Federal funding allotted under section 721(c) and (d) of the Rehabilitation Act:]</u></p>	<p>This language, which exempts the Recovery Act funds from the calculation of whether State independent living funds exceed Federal Grants for Independent Living funds, is deleted because it is no longer needed.</p>
<p><sup>2</sup> <u>[Provided further, That \$5,095,000 shall be used for the projects, and in the amounts, specified under the heading "Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research" in the statement of the managers on the conference report accompanying this Act.]</u></p>	<p>This language, which earmarks funds for specified projects under Demonstration and Training programs, is deleted because no funding is proposed for these projects in fiscal year 2011.</p>
<p><sup>3</sup> <u>Provided, That the Secretary of Education may allocate to States, in accordance with a formula determined by the Secretary, up to \$56,282,000 of the funds provided for the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program:</u></p>	<p>This language would allow the Secretary to allocate the funds made available from program consolidations in a manner that ensures that States do not receive less than they would have received from the formula distributions of program funds that are proposed for consolidation.</p>
<p><sup>4</sup> <u>Provided further, That section 302(g)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act shall not apply to funds provided under section 302 of such Act:</u></p>	<p>This language overrides the requirement that 15 percent of the Training program must be spent for in-service training of agency personnel. These funds are being consolidated with the VR State grants program.</p>
<p><sup>5</sup> <u>Provided further, That of the amount provided for Grants for Independent Living under Part B of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, the Secretary of Education shall reserve no more than 1.46 percent for training and technical assistance activities:</u></p>	<p>This language sets aside a maximum of 1.46 percent of funds from the proposed Grants for Independent Living program for the Department to use for training and technical assistance targeting the program's grant recipients and subgrant-recipients.</p>

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p><sup>6</sup> <u>Provided further, That of the amount provided for Grants for Independent Living under part B of title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, no State or Outlying Area shall receive less than the combined amount it received under parts B and C of title VII of such Act for fiscal year 2010, provided that the State or Outlying Area matches, in cash or in-kind, the equivalent of one dollar for each nine dollars in Federal funds it received for fiscal year 2010 under part B of title VII of such Act:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language, which sets a minimum amount that States can receive from Grants for Independent Living, is added to ensure that States do not receive less in fiscal year 2011 under the Grants for Independent Living program than they did in fiscal year 2010 under the combined allocations from Independent Living State Grants and the Centers for Independent Living programs.</p>
<p><sup>7</sup> <u>Provided further, That each State or Outlying Area shall reserve 5 percent of its allocation for Grants for Independent Living to support the operation of a Statewide Independent Living Council, as authorized under section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language requires each State to reserve 5 percent of their allocation under the Grants for Independent Living program for the State's Statewide Independent Living Council.</p>
<p><sup>8</sup> <u>Provided further, That each State or Outlying Area shall award no less than 90 percent of its allocation to centers for independent living that meet the standards and assurances in section 725 of the Rehabilitation Act:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language requires States to subgrant at least 90 percent of their Grants for Independent Living funds to qualified centers for independent living.</p>
<p><sup>9</sup> <u>Provided further, That such allocation of funds among centers for independent living shall be based on an approved State Plan for Independent Living that is developed in accordance with section 704 of the Rehabilitation Act and makes independent living services available in all counties within the State or Outlying Area.</u></p>	<p>This proposed language requires States to distribute subgrants to centers for independent living according to a published State Plan for Independent Living and requires that independent living services be made available in all counties.</p>
<p><sup>10</sup> <u>Provided further, That, of the amounts provided under this heading, \$30,000,000 shall be available under Title II of the Rehabilitation Act to the Secretary of Education in cooperation with the Secretary of Labor and, as appropriate, other heads of departments and agencies, to identify and validate innovative strategies for improving program delivery and outcomes for program beneficiaries.</u></p>	<p>This proposed language earmarks \$30 million for a new workforce innovation fund for improving services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities. This appropriation will be part of a larger fund, drawn from several programs under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), that would support projects focused on identifying and validating innovative strategies of service delivery.</p>

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Amounts Available for Obligation (\$000s)

	2009	2010	2011
Discretionary appropriation:			
Appropriation	\$413,127	\$422,165	\$480,630
Recovery Act supplemental (P.L. 111-5)	<u>680,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal, adjusted discretionary appropriation	1,093,127	422,165	480,630
Mandatory appropriation	<u>2,974,635</u>	<u>3,084,696</u>	<u>3,084,696</u>
Subtotal, discretionary and mandatory appropriation	4,067,762	3,506,861	3,565,326
Recovery Act unobligated balance, start of year	0	89,202	0
Recovery Act unobligated balance, end of year	<u>-89,202</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal, obligations	3,387,762	3,506,861	3,565,326
Subtotal, Recovery Act obligations	<u>590,798</u>	<u>89,202</u>	<u>0</u>
Total, direct obligations	3,978,560	3,596,063	3,565,326

**REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH**

**Obligations by Object Classification**  
(\$000s)

	2009	2010	2011
<b>Contractual services and supplies:</b>			
Advisory and assistance services .....	\$8,845	\$7,581	\$7,861
Peer review .....	1,054	815	1,025
Peer review, Recovery Act .....	0	90	0
Purchases of goods and services .....	<u>308</u>	<u>326</u>	<u>325</u>
Subtotal.....	10,207	8,812	9,211
Grants, subsidies, and contributions .....	3,377,555	3,498,139	3,556,115
Grants, Recovery Act .....	<u>590,798</u>	<u>89,112</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal, grants.....	3,968,353	3,587,251	3,556,115
Subtotal, obligations.....	3,387,762	3,506,861	3,565,326
Subtotal, Recovery Act obligations.....	<u>590,798</u>	<u>89,202</u>	<u>0</u>
Total obligations.....	3,978,560	3,596,063	3,565,326

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Summary of Changes (\$000s)

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2010 .....	\$3,506,861
2011 .....	<u>3,565,326</u>
Net change .....	+58,465

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	<u>2010 base</u>	<u>Change from base</u>
<b>Increases:</b>		
<u>Program:</u>		
Increase in funding for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State grants is from small programs proposed for consolidation.	\$3,047,247	+\$56,282
Increase in funding for Grant to Indians.	37,449	+551
Proposed funding for a new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program to replace three other programs (Demonstration and Training programs, Program Improvement, and Evaluation).	0	+6,472
Proposed funding for a new Supported Employment Extended Services for Youth with Significant Disabilities program.	0	+25,000
Proposed funding for a new Independent Living grants program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate two IL State grants and Centers for Independent Living.	0	+110,000
Increased funding for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research to conduct research related to vocational rehabilitation and evaluations of programs and activities authorized under the Rehabilitation Act.	109,241	+2,678

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Summary of Changes (\$000s)

	<u>2010 base</u>	<u>Change from base</u>
<b>Increases:</b>		
<u>Program:</u>		
Proposed funding for a new Workforce Innovation Fund for improving services and outcomes for individuals with Disabilities.	0	<u>+\$30,000</u>
Subtotal, increases		+230,983
 <b>Decreases:</b>		
<u>Program:</u>		
Eliminates funding for the Supported Employment State grants program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the VR State grants program.	\$29,181	-29,181
Eliminates funding for the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the VR State grants program.	2,239	-2,239
Eliminates funding for the Projects with Industry program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the VR State grants program.	19,197	-19,197
Net decrease in funding for the Training program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate In-Service Training with the VR State grants program and to consolidate Parent Information and Training and Braille Training, funded under the Demonstration and Training programs, with the Training program.	37,776	-4,515
Eliminates funding for the Demonstration and Training programs consistent with the Administration's proposal to replace this program with the new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program. This decrease also includes \$5,095,000 in funding for earmarked projects.	11,601	-11,601

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Summary of Changes (\$000s)

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	<u>2010 base</u>	<u>Change from base</u>
<b>Decreases:</b>		
<u>Program:</u>		
Eliminates funding for the Program Improvement program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.	\$852	-\$852
Eliminates funding for the Evaluation program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.	1,217	-1,217
Eliminates funding for the Independent Living (IL) State grants program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the new IL grants program.	23,450	-23,450
Eliminates funding for the Centers for Independent Living (IL) program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the new IL grants program.	80,266	<u>-80,266</u>
Subtotal, decreases		-172,518
Net change		+58,465

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**REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH**

**Authorizing Legislation  
(\$000s)**

Activity	2010 Authorized	2010 Estimate	2011 Authorized	2011 Request
Vocational rehabilitation State grants:				
Grants to States (RA-I A, B-110 and 111)	0 <sup>1,2</sup>	\$3,047,247	To be determined <sup>1,3</sup>	\$3,103,529
Grants for Indians (RA-I-C)	--- <sup>2,4</sup>	37,449	--- <sup>3,4</sup>	38,000
Client assistance State grants (RA-I-112)	0 <sup>1</sup>	12,288	To be determined <sup>1</sup>	12,288
Supported employment State grants (RA-VI-B)	0 <sup>5</sup>	29,181	0 <sup>5</sup>	0
Migrant and seasonal farmworkers (RA-III-304)	0 <sup>5</sup>	2,239	0 <sup>5</sup>	0
Projects with industry (RA-VI-A)	0 <sup>5</sup>	19,197	0 <sup>5</sup>	0
Training (RA-III-302(a)-(g)(2), (h)-(i)), 303(c)-(d))	0 <sup>1</sup>	37,766	To be determined <sup>1</sup>	33,251
National activities to improve rehabilitation services (RA-III-303)	0	0	To be determined <sup>6</sup>	6,472
Demonstration and training programs (RA-III-303(b))	0 <sup>5</sup>	11,601	0 <sup>5</sup>	0
Program improvement (RA-12(a))	0 <sup>5</sup>	852	0 <sup>5</sup>	0
Evaluation (RA-14)	0 <sup>5</sup>	1,217	0 <sup>5</sup>	0
Supported employment extended services for youth with significant disabilities (RA-III-303)	0	0	To be determined <sup>6</sup>	25,000
Independent living:				
Independent living grants (RA-VII-1-B)	0	0	To be determined <sup>6</sup>	110,000
State grants (RA-VII-1-B)	0 <sup>1</sup>	23,450	0 <sup>5</sup>	0
Centers (RA-VII-1-C)	0 <sup>1</sup>	80,266	0 <sup>5</sup>	0
Services for older blind individuals (RA-VII-2)	0 <sup>1</sup>	34,151	To be determined <sup>1</sup>	34,151
Protection and advocacy of individual rights (RA-V-509)	0 <sup>1</sup>	18,101	To be determined <sup>1</sup>	18,101
Recreational programs (RA-III-305)	0 <sup>1</sup>	2,474	To be determined <sup>1</sup>	2,474
National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation				
Research (RA-II)	0 <sup>1</sup>	109,241	To be determined <sup>1</sup>	111,919
Workforce innovation fund (RA II)	0	0	To be determined <sup>6</sup>	30,000
Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNCA)	0 <sup>1</sup>	9,181	To be determined <sup>1</sup>	9,181

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**REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH**

**Authorizing Legislation—continued**  
(\$000s)

Activity	2010 Authorized	2010 Estimate	2011 Authorized	2011 Request
Assistive technology: (ATA)				
Assistive technology programs (ATA-4,5, and 6)	Indefinite <sup>7</sup>	\$30,960	Indefinite <sup>7,8</sup>	\$30,960
<u>Unfunded authorizations:</u>				
Demonstration projects to increase client choice (RA-III-303(a))	<u>0<sup>9</sup></u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0<sup>9</sup></u>	<u>0</u>
Total definite authorization				
Total appropriation		3,506,861		3,565,326
Portion of the request not authorized .....				3,534,366

<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The President's FY 2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

<sup>2</sup> The authorizing legislation mandates funding for VR State grants at least at the level of \$3,084,696 thousand, which is the 2009 appropriation adjusted by the 12-month change in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPIU) published in October 2008.

<sup>3</sup> The authorizing statute specifies that the amount to be appropriated for a fiscal year be at least the level of the prior fiscal year increased by the 12-month percentage change from October to October in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPIU). In FY 2011, this amount is \$3,084,696 thousand, the same as the FY 2010 level, because the data published in November of 2009 did not show an increase in the CPIU. The requested increase in FY2011 reflects the Administration's proposal to consolidate several smaller program in to the VR State grants program.

<sup>4</sup> The Rehabilitation Act requires that 1.0 percent to 1.5 percent of the appropriation for Vocational Rehabilitation State grants be set aside for Grants for Indians.

<sup>5</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The Administration is not proposing appropriations language for FY 2011, nor seeking reauthorizing legislation.

<sup>6</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The President's FY 2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Such sums as are necessary are authorized, however up to \$1,235 thousand may be used for section 6 National Activities, unless the amount available for section 4 AT State grants exceeds \$20,953,534, in which case up to \$1,900 thousand may be used for section 6.

<sup>8</sup> The GEPA extension applies through September 30, 2011.

<sup>9</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The Administration is not proposing appropriations language for FY 2011, nor seeking reauthorizing legislation.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Appropriations History (\$000s)

	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2002	\$2,930,117	\$2,942,117	\$2,932,617	\$2,945,813
2003	3,001,840	2,956,676	2,959,838	2,953,633
Transfer	0	0	0	-587
Technical correction	0	0	0	+487
2004	3,002,913	2,999,165	3,004,360	3,011,270
2005	3,047,197	3,054,587	3,077,328	3,074,574
2006	3,059,298	3,128,638	3,133,638	3,125,544
2007	3,180,414	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	3,242,512
2008	3,184,263	3,279,743	3,286,942	3,276,768
2009	3,218,264	3,387,443 <sup>2</sup>	3,379,109 <sup>2</sup>	3,387,762
Recovery Act Supplemental (PL 111-5)	0	700,000	610,000	680,000
2010	3,500,735	3,504,305	3,507,322 <sup>3</sup>	3,506,861
2011	3,565,326			

<sup>1</sup> This account operated under a full-year continuing resolution (P.L. 110-5). House and Senate Allowance amounts are shown as N/A (Not Available) because neither body passed a separate appropriations bill.

<sup>2</sup> The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2009 appropriation bill, which proceeded in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress only through the House Subcommittee and the Senate Committee.

<sup>3</sup> The level for the Senate allowance reflects Committee action only.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FISCAL YEAR 2011 PRESIDENT'S REQUEST

(in thousands of dollars)		Office, Account, Program and Activity				Change from	
Category Code	2009 Appropriation	2010 Appropriation	2011 President's Budget	2010 Appropriation Amount	Percent	2010 Appropriation Amount	Percent
<b>Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research</b>							
1. Vocational rehabilitation State grants:							
	(a) Grants to States (RA Title I-A, sections 110 and 111)	2,938,522	3,047,247	3,103,529	56,282	1.8%	1.9%
	(b) Grants to Indians (RA Title I-C)	36,113	37,449	38,000	551	1.5%	1.5%
	Subtotal	2,974,635	3,084,696	3,141,529	56,833	1.8%	1.8%
	Discretionary	0	0	56,833	56,833	—	—
	Mandatory baseline	2,974,635	3,084,696	3,084,696	0	0.0%	0.0%
2. Client assistance State grants (RA section 112)							
	3. Supported employment State grants (RA VI-B)	11,576	12,288	12,288	0	0.0%	0.0%
	4. Migrant and seasonal farm workers (RA section 304)	29,181	29,181	0	(29,181)	-100.0%	-100.0%
	5. Projects with industry (RA VI-A)	2,239	2,239	0	(2,239)	-100.0%	-100.0%
	6. Training (RA section 302(a)-(g)(2), (h)-(i), 303(c)-(d))	19,197	19,197	0	(19,197)	-100.0%	-100.0%
	7. National activities to improve rehabilitation services (RA section 303)	37,766	37,766	33,251	(4,515)	-12.0%	-12.0%
	8. Demonstration and training programs (RA section 303)	0	0	6,472	6,472	---	---
	9. Program improvement (RA section 12(a))	9,594	11,601	0	(11,601)	-100.0%	-100.0%
	10. Evaluation (RA section 14)	622	652	0	(652)	-100.0%	-100.0%
	11. Supported employment extended services for youth with significant disabilities (RA section 303)	1,447	1,217	0	(1,217)	-100.0%	-100.0%
	12. Independent living (RA VII):	0	0	25,000	25,000	---	---
	(a) Grants for independent living (Chapter 1, Part B)	0	0	110,000	110,000	---	---
	(b) State grants (Chapter 1, Part B)	23,450	23,450	0	(23,450)	-100.0%	-100.0%
	(c) Centers (Chapter 1, Part C)	77,266	80,266	0	(80,266)	-100.0%	-100.0%
	(d) Services for older blind individuals (Chapter 2)	34,151	34,151	34,151	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Subtotal	134,867	137,867	144,151	6,284	4.6%	4.6%
13. Protection and advocacy of individual rights (RA section 509)							
	14. Recreational programs (RA section 305)	17,101	18,101	18,101	0	0.0%	0.0%
	15. National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (RA II)	2,474	2,474	2,474	0	0.0%	0.0%
	16. Workforce innovation fund (RA II)	107,741	109,241	111,919	2,678	2.5%	2.5%
	17. Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNC)	0	0	30,000	30,000	---	---
	18. Assistive technology programs (ATA, sections 4, 5, and 6)	8,362	9,181	9,181	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Subtotal	30,960	30,960	30,960	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Subtotal	413,127	422,165	423,797	1,632	0.4%	0.4%
	Total	3,387,762	3,506,861	3,565,326	58,465	1.7%	1.7%
	Discretionary	413,127	422,165	480,630	58,465	13.8%	13.8%
	Mandatory baseline	2,974,635	3,084,696	3,084,696	0	0.0%	0.0%
	Outlays, Total	3,163,000	3,646,000	3,568,000	(78,000)	-2.1%	-2.1%
	Discretionary	397,000	660,000	488,000	(172,000)	-26.1%	-26.1%
	Mandatory baseline	2,766,000	2,986,000	3,080,000	94,000	3.1%	3.1%

NOTE: Category Codes are as follows: D = discretionary program; M = mandatory program.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FISCAL YEAR 2011 PRESIDENT'S REQUEST

(in thousands of dollars)

Office, Account, Program and Activity	Category Code	2009 Appropriation	2010 Appropriation	2011 President's Budget	Change from 2010 Appropriation Amount	Percent
<b>Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research, Recovery Act</b>						
1. Vocational rehabilitation State grants:						
(a) Grants to States (RA Title I-A, sections 110 and 111)	D	540,000	0	0	0	---
(b) Grants to Indians (RA I-C)	D	0	0	0	0	---
2. Independent living (RA VII):						
(a) State grants (Chapter 1, Part B)	D	18,200	0	0	0	---
(b) Centers (Chapter 1, Part C)	D	87,500	0	0	0	---
(c) Services for older blind individuals (Chapter 2)	D	34,300	0	0	0	---
<b>Total</b>	D	<b>680,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>---</b>
<b>Outlays</b>	D	<b>23,000</b>	<b>357,000</b>	<b>263,000</b>	<b>(84,000)</b>	<b>-26.3%</b>

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Summary of Request

The Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research account supports formula grants to States for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services and a variety of smaller research, demonstration, and service programs, including the programs authorized under the Helen Keller National Center Act and the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (the AT Act). The purpose of the programs in this account is to develop and implement, through research, training, and direct services, comprehensive and coordinated programs of vocational rehabilitation and independent living services for individuals with disabilities.

For Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research, the Budget provides \$3.6 billion to support comprehensive and coordinated vocational rehabilitation and independent living services for individuals with disabilities through research, training, demonstration, technical assistance, evaluation, and direct service programs. As part of a proposal to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), the Administration's 2011 request includes proposals for consolidating several programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act) that would reduce duplication and would improve program management and the provision of rehabilitation and independent living services. The Budget includes proposals that would consolidate vocational rehabilitation programs, independent living programs, and programs that support activities to improve program performance and the delivery of services.

The \$3.1 billion request for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program reflects the Administration's proposal to consolidate the funds of the smaller VR-related programs under the Rehabilitation Act in order to reduce duplication of effort and administrative costs, streamline program administration at the Federal and local level, and improve accountability. An additional \$56.3 million would be made available to the VR State Grants program from the consolidation of employment-related programs. Proposed for consolidation are the Supported Employment State Grants, Projects with Industry, and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers programs, as well as funds currently provided to State VR agencies to support in-service training for agency personnel under section 302(g)(3) of the Training program.

The Budget provides \$110 million for a new Grants for Independent Living program that replaces the Independent Living State Grants and Centers for Independent Living programs and would provide formula grants to States to support the provision of independent living services through centers for independent living. The request represents a \$6.3 million increase over the 2010 levels for the programs being consolidated and would provide additional funding for States with significant unmet needs.

The request includes \$6.5 million for a new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program that would replace Demonstration and Training programs and consolidate the resources used to support technical assistance and projects designed to improve program performance and the delivery of vocational rehabilitation and independent living services under the Evaluation and Program Improvement programs.

The Budget also includes \$30 million for a proposed Workforce Innovation Fund to develop innovative strategies for improving the delivery of services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities participating in programs authorized by the Workforce Investment Act.

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### Summary of Request

To assist States in expanding supported employment opportunities for youth with significant disabilities as they transition from school to the workforce, the Budget includes \$25 million to support a new Supported Employment Extended Services for Youth with Significant Disabilities program. The limited availability of resources for extended services is a major barrier to increasing supported employment opportunities for youth with significant disabilities transitioning from secondary education to employment who require ongoing support in order to work in the competitive labor market. Under this new program, State and local agencies would be required to work together to develop and implement innovative methods of expanding the availability of extended supported employment services for youth with significant disabilities.

An increase of \$2.7 million is requested for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research to conduct research related to vocational rehabilitation and rigorous evaluations of programs and activities authorized under the Rehabilitation Act.

The Administration requests \$33.3 million for the Training program in fiscal year 2011, a reduction of \$4.5 million from the fiscal year 2010 appropriation. The requested level reflects two changes to the program: the consolidation of \$5.7 million for the In-Service Training program with the VR State grants program and consolidation of \$1.2 million for two small training activities (Braille Training and Parent Information and Training Centers) currently supported under the Demonstration and Training programs.

All other programs in the Rehabilitation account would be maintained at the 2010 level.

The Rehabilitation Act requires that 1 percent of the aggregate funds appropriated for programs authorized in Titles II, III, VI, and VII be used for minority outreach activities. In fiscal year 2011, this amount would total \$3.5 million, and to the extent possible, the requirement will be implemented by reserving 1 percent of the funds provided for each of the specified programs.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Vocational rehabilitation State grants

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title I, Parts A, B (Sections 110 and 111), and C)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined <sup>1,2</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
State grants	\$3,047,247	\$3,103,529	+\$56,282
Indian set-aside	<u>37,449</u>	<u>38,000</u>	<u>+ 551</u>
Total	3,084,696	3,141,529	+56,833

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The President's FY 2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY2011.

<sup>2</sup> The authorizing statute specifies that the amount to be appropriated for a fiscal year be at least the level of the prior fiscal year increased by the 12-month percentage change from October to October in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPIU). In FY 2011, this amount is \$3,084,696 thousand, the same as the FY 2010 level, because the data published in November of 2009 did not show an increase in the CPIU. The authorizing statute also requires that not less than 1.0 percent and not more than 1.5 percent of the appropriation for each fiscal year for Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants be set aside for Grants for American Indians.

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program supports VR services through formula grants to State VR agencies. These agencies provide a wide range of services designed to help persons with disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment to the extent of their capabilities. Individuals with a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment who can benefit in terms of an employment outcome and require VR services are eligible for assistance. The VR State Grants program is a required partner in the one-stop service delivery systems under section 121 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

Program services are tailored to the specific needs of the individual through an individualized plan for employment (IPE). An eligible individual, or as appropriate, the individual's representative, may develop all or part of the IPE with or without assistance from a qualified rehabilitation counselor, or with technical assistance from other outside resources. The IPE must be agreed to by the individual and approved and signed by a qualified rehabilitation counselor employed by the State VR agency. The program may provide a variety of services, such as vocational evaluation, counseling, mental and physical restoration, education, vocational training, job placement, rehabilitation technology, and supported employment services. Priority is given to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities.

This is a current-funded formula grant program that provides financial assistance to States to cover the cost of direct services and program administration. The authorizing legislation requires the program to be funded at least at the prior year level, and increased by the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers (CPIU) over the past year. States

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### **Vocational rehabilitation State grants**

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may carry over unobligated Federal funds for an additional year, if a State has met all matching requirements for the fiscal year in which funds were appropriated.

An allotment formula that takes into account population and per capita income is used to distribute funds among the States. The fiscal year 2009 allotments were based on the July 1, 2007 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2007. The fiscal year 2010 State allotments are based on the July 1, 2008 estimates published in December 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2009 estimates released on December 23, 2009. Per capita income averages for fiscal year 2009 were based on Bureau of Economic Analysis revised estimates for calendar years 2003, 2004, and 2005 as reported by the Department of Commerce on September 26, 2006. Per capita income averages for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 are based on Bureau of Economic Analysis revised estimates for calendar years 2005, 2006, and 2007 as reported by the Department of Commerce on September 18, 2008.

Grant funds are administered by VR agencies designated by each State. There are currently a total of 80 State VR agencies. Thirty-two (32) States operate a “combined” agency serving all disability categories. Twenty-four (24) States operate a separate agency for individuals who are blind or visually impaired and a “general” agency for all other disability categories. The State matching requirement is 21.3 percent, except the State share is 50 percent for the cost of construction of a facility for community rehabilitation program purposes. States are required to maintain the level of State expenditures made under the State plan from non-Federal sources at least at the level spent during the fiscal year 2 years earlier. Each State is also required to reserve and use a portion of the Federal funds received under the VR State Grants program for innovation and expansion activities authorized in section 101(a)(18).

Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act requires the establishment of evaluation standards and performance indicators for the VR program that include outcome and related measures of program performance. Each State VR agency must report program performance data 60 days after the end of each fiscal year that is used to determine if it is in compliance with the evaluation standards and performance indicators. A State agency failing to meet the standards must develop a program improvement plan outlining specific actions to be taken to improve program performance. The Department provides technical assistance to those State agencies that perform below the established evaluation standards to assist them to improve their performance.

Title VIII of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) provided additional funds, \$540 million, for grants to States to carry out the VR Services program. These awards were in addition to the awards received under the regular FY 2009 appropriation for the VR State Grants program. Together, these awards constituted a State’s total FY 2009 allocation for the VR State Grants program. The Recovery Act funds were allocated to State VR agencies under the program’s allotment formula and provided to State VR agencies in two installments. States received 50 percent of their allotted funds in April 2009 and their remaining funds were awarded in September 2009. The Recovery Act funds for the VR State Grants program must be used to carry out the purposes and authorized activities consistent with the program’s statutory and regulatory requirements. The Recovery Act funds remain available for obligation by State VR agencies until September 30, 2011. State VR agencies are not required to match these funds.

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The Rehabilitation Act requires that not less than 1.0 percent or more than 1.5 percent of the funds appropriated for the VR State grants program be set aside for grants under the American Indian VR Services program (section 121 of the Act). Service grants for up to 60 months are awarded to Indian tribes on a competitive basis to help tribes develop the capacity to provide VR services to American Indians with disabilities living on or near reservations.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2006 .....	\$2,720,192
2007 .....	2,837,160
2008 .....	2,874,043
2009 .....	2,974,635
Recovery Act.....	540,000
2010 .....	3,084,696

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$3.142 billion to assist States and tribal governments to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce. The request for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program reflects the Administration's proposal to consolidate the funds of the smaller VR-related programs and eliminate their separate funding authorities under the Rehabilitation Act in order to reduce duplication of effort and administrative costs, streamline program administration at the Federal and local level, and improve accountability. An additional \$56.282 million would be made available to the VR State Grants program from the consolidation of employment-related programs. Programs proposed for consolidation include: Supported Employment State Grants (\$29.181 million), Projects with Industry (PWI) (\$19.197 million), and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers programs (\$2.239 million). In addition, funds currently provided to State VR agencies to support in-service training for agency personnel under section 302(g)(3) of the Training program (\$5.665 million) would be included in this consolidation.

The request does not include an inflationary increase because economic data published by Bureau of Labor Statistics on November 18, 2009, show a decrease (-0.2 percent) in the annual change in the CPIU. However, State VR agencies may use funds from available balances provided under the Recovery Act of 2009 for the VR State Grants program. Based on current expenditure rates, many States are likely to have considerable amounts of Recovery Act funds available for expenditure during FY 2011. As of January 8, 2010, only 11.9 percent of the total Recovery Act funds for the VR State Grants program had been expended. The request would set aside \$38 million for the AIVRS program, 1.2 percent of the total amount requested.

Under its reauthorization proposal to consolidate a number of smaller programs into the VR State Grants program, the Administration intends for every State to receive at least the amount the State received in FY 2010 under the formula grant programs being consolidated. The FY 2011 estimates shown in the State table for this program are illustrative and are subject to change as

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### Vocational rehabilitation State grants

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the Administration develops its reauthorization proposal. The estimates were derived by increasing the State's base amount under the VR formula (currently the State's 1978 award) to include the State's FY 2010 Supported Employment State Grants allocation and its formula allocation under the In-service Training program. In addition, funds made available as a result of the consolidation of the PWI and the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers programs were distributed based on relative State population and added to the State's base amount.

All of the direct service programs proposed for consolidation have the primary purpose of assisting individuals with disabilities to prepare for and obtain employment. Consolidating these programs will reduce administrative costs, paperwork, and other administrative burden, as well as improve efficiency, accountability, and the provision of services. The Administration believes that the benefits of the proposed consolidation outweigh the costs of any short term disruption that may be encountered as a result of this consolidation. All of the individuals receiving services through the employment-related programs proposed for elimination are eligible to receive VR services. In addition, most of these individuals are also currently receiving services through the VR program, including all of the individuals receiving supported employment services with funds provided under the State Supported Employment program. In developing its reauthorization proposal, the Administration is also examining options that will help to ensure that State agencies continue to invest appropriate levels of their resources in providing supported employment services. All States that have significant numbers of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, including States that currently have projects funded under the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program, would be expected to use their VR funds to carry out the strategies and practices that have been found to be effective in reaching out to this population.

In 2008, nearly half of the individuals receiving services through the PWI program were also clients of the State VR Services program. To ensure a smooth transition, PWI projects will be encouraged to refer program participants with significant disabilities to their State VR agency if the individual is not a current participant of the VR program and to refer individuals who do not require the services of the comprehensive VR program to other community resources, such as the local One-Stop Center. In addition, where appropriate, VR State agencies would be encouraged to purchase placement services from those entities that previously provided such services to VR consumers using funds from the PWI grant. Furthermore, State VR agencies would be encouraged to identify and adopt effective practices in developing collaborative relationships with the business community and innovative strategies for job development and placement.

The VR State Grants program is the primary Federal vehicle for assisting individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, to prepare for, obtain, or retain employment. Although many people with disabilities are obtaining jobs and remaining employed, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is still unacceptably high. For example, in its *2007 Annual Disability Status Report* (2008), the Cornell University Rehabilitation and Research Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics reported results from the American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007) indicating that of those aged 21-64 (U.S. working age population), people with sensory, physical, mental, and/or self-care disabilities are much less likely to be employed (either full-time or part-time) than people without such disabilities (36.9 percent versus 79.7 percent respectively) and that only 21.2 percent of working-age individuals with disabilities were working full-time/full-year. In addition, the survey found that

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### **Vocational rehabilitation State grants**

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only 8.4 percent of working-age individuals with disabilities who were not working were actively looking for employment compared to 20.1 percent without such disabilities.

Nationally, there are about 1 million individuals with disabilities in various phases of the vocational rehabilitation process within the VR system, about 93 percent of whom are individuals with significant disabilities. State VR agencies are facing numerous challenges. If a State VR agency cannot serve all eligible persons, it must serve first those individuals with the most significant disabilities under an "order of selection." At the beginning of fiscal year 2010, 40 of the 80 State agencies were operating under an order of selection, four more agencies than in fiscal year 2009. This total includes 59 percent of the general and combined State VR agencies and 29 percent of the State VR agencies serving blind individuals. In fiscal year 2008, the most recent year for which waiting list data is available, there were a total of 92,440 individuals with disabilities on the waiting list at some point during the fiscal year, 86 percent of whom were individuals with significant disabilities. At the end of fiscal year 2008, there were about 35,213 individuals on State agency waiting lists. However, the number of individuals on a waiting list varies considerably among State agencies operating under an order of selection. For example at the end of FY 2008, 15 agencies had 15 or fewer individuals on a waiting list, while 10 agencies had lists that ranged from just over 1,000 to 7,976 individuals. State VR agencies with large waiting lists have been encouraged to use the Recovery Act funds to assist in eliminating or reducing current waiting lists.

State VR agencies also play a major role under the Ticket to Work program administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Under this program, most Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries between the ages of 18 and 64 are offered a "ticket," which they may use to obtain employment services, VR services, and other support services from an employment network of their choice to enable them to enter the workforce. State VR agencies have the option of participating in the Ticket to Work program as an employment network or remaining in the traditional reimbursement system, including the option to elect either payment method on a case-by-case basis. Under the traditional system, the VR program is reimbursed for the costs of services provided to SSDI and SSI beneficiaries with a single payment after the beneficiary performs substantial gainful activity (for 2010, earnings in excess of \$1,000 per month for non-blind disabled beneficiaries and \$1,640 per month for blind beneficiaries) for at least 9 consecutive months. As of December 2, 2009, about 235,236 Ticket-Holders are working with a State VR agency under the traditional reimbursement arrangement and have not assigned their tickets. In addition, about 33 percent of the 38,000 tickets that have been assigned have been assigned to State VR agencies and about 67 percent have been assigned to other employment networks.

### **American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

The Administration requests \$38 million for grants under the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) program, an increase of \$551,000 over the 2010 level. The request would enable the Department to maintain support for about 79 tribal VR projects. These funds assist tribal governments to provide a program of VR services, in a culturally relevant manner, to American Indians with disabilities residing on or near reservations.

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### Vocational rehabilitation State grants

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#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

#### Vocational rehabilitation State grants

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Individuals receiving services <sup>1</sup>	980,000	990,000	1,000,000
Individuals with significant disabilities as a percent of all individuals receiving services	93%	93%	93%
Total number of cases closed	487,000	492,000	500,000
Individuals whose cases were closed and received VR services	335,000	340,900	348,000
Individuals achieving an employment outcome <sup>2</sup>	190,000	195,000	200,000
Individuals with significant disabilities as a percent of all individuals achieving an employment outcome	92%	92%	92%

Note: Data for fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011 are projections based on actual data for fiscal years 2007 and 2008 and preliminary data for fiscal year 2009 from the RSA Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report (RSA-113).

Note: Projections for fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011 reflect the combination of the program's regular appropriations and the appropriation received under the Recovery Act.

<sup>1</sup> Includes all eligible individuals who received VR services during the fiscal year.

<sup>2</sup> Number of individuals who exited the program after receiving services and achieved an employment outcome.

#### American Indian vocational rehabilitation services

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Project funding:			
New project funding	\$ 6,526	\$13,000	\$3,400
Continuation funding	\$29,518 <sup>1</sup>	\$24,379	\$34,565
Peer review of new award applications	\$69	\$70	\$35
Number of projects:			
New projects	16	25	6
Continuation	<u>63</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>73</u>
Total projects	79	79	79

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<sup>1</sup> About \$473,875 of these funds will be used to support FY 2010 continuation costs.

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### Vocational rehabilitation State grants

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#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

##### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2011 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Fiscal year 2009 data for the VR State Grants and the American Indian VR Services programs will be available in April of 2010.

##### VR State Grants

**Goal: Individuals with disabilities served by the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program will achieve high quality employment.**

**Objective:** *Ensure that individuals with disabilities who are served by the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program achieve employment consistent with their particular strengths, resources, abilities, capabilities, and interests.*

**Measure:** Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that assist at least 55.8 percent of individuals receiving services to achieve employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	70	82
2007	71	82
2008	76	79
2009	78	
2010	80	
2011	82	

**Measure:** Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that assist at least 68.9 percent of individuals receiving services to achieve employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	70	63
2007	65	63
2008	66	67
2009	66	
2010	67	
2011	67	

**Assessment of progress:** This measure assesses the performance of State VR agencies in meeting program performance indicator 1.2 established in program regulations pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act. Indicator 1.2 measures the percentage of individuals who

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the State VR agency determines to have achieved an employment outcome out of all the individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services. In order to pass indicator 1.2, a general or combined agency must achieve an employment outcome rate of 55.8 percent, while an agency for the blind must achieve a rate of 68.9 percent.

In FY 2008, both general and combined State VR agencies and State VR agencies for individuals who are blind met their performance targets. However, two fewer general and combined State VR agencies passed indicator 1.2, while one additional State VR agency for individuals who are blind passed as compared to FY 2007. In 2008, 44 of the 56 general and combined agencies (79 percent) and 16 of the 24 agencies for the blind (67percent) met their respective performance criteria. However, there were changes in performance among State agencies.

<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that assist at least 85 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
2006	96	96
2007	96	96
2008	96	96
2009	97	
2010	97	
2011	97	

<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that assist at least 65 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
2006	71	79
2007	75	79
2008	79	79
2009	79	
2010	80	
2011	80	

**Assessment of progress:** This measure is derived from Section 106 performance indicator 1.3, which measures the percentage of individuals who achieve competitive employment of all individuals who achieve employment. Competitive employment is defined under the State VR program as work in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated setting, and for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled. In order to pass indicator 1.3, a general or combined agency must achieve a rate of 72.6 percent, while an agency for the blind must achieve a rate of 35.4 percent. In fiscal year 2006, all of the general and combined agencies (with the exception of two of the territories) and 96 percent of the agencies for the blind passed this indicator.

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The GPRA measure is more ambitious and has a higher performance criterion as compared to the State VR agency performance indicator 1.3. Under this measure, general and combined agencies must assist at least 85 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment, and agencies for the blind must assist at least 65 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment. Although on a national level the total number of employment outcomes has been slowly declining, States have sustained the percentage of competitive employment outcomes and exceeded or met performance targets for the past 4 fiscal years. In FY 2008, only 2 of the 56 general and combined agencies did not meet the performance criterion, including 1 combined State agency and 1 of the territories. The percentage of individuals with employment outcomes who achieved competitive employment reported by general and combined agencies in 2008 ranged from 57 percent to 100 percent with a median of 98 percent. Excluding one agency with a rate of 30 percent, the percentage of individuals with employment outcomes who achieved competitive employment reported by agencies for the blind ranged from 56 percent to 100 percent in 2008 with a median of 88 percent.

<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies for which at least 80 percent of the individuals achieving competitive employment have significant disabilities.		
Year	Target	Actual
2006	88	86
2007	89	82
2008	90	88
2009	89	
2010	89	
2011	89	

<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind for which at least 90 percent of the individuals achieving competitive employment have significant disabilities.		
Year	Target	Actual
2006	96	100
2007	100	100
2008	100	100
2009	100	
2010	100	
2011	100	

**Assessment of progress:** This measure is derived from the Section 106 performance indicator 1.4, which measures the percentage of individuals achieving competitive employment who have significant disabilities. In order for a general or combined agency to pass this indicator, at least 62 percent of individuals achieving competitive employment must have a significant disability. The GPRA measure for general and combined agencies is more ambitious and has a higher performance criterion as compared to performance indicator 1.4. Under this measure, at least 80 percent of individuals achieving competitive employment must have a significant disability.

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For an agency for the blind to pass indicator 1.4, at least 89 percent of individuals achieving competitive employment must have a significant disability. The performance criterion for agencies for the blind on the GPRA measure performance is only slightly higher, 90 percent compared to 89 percent. In fiscal year 2008, 88 percent of general and combined agencies met the 80 percent criterion, an increase over the past 2 years, but the GPRA target of 90 percent was not met. All of the agencies for the blind met the 90 percent performance criterion and the 100 percent GPRA target was met as well.

#### Efficiency Measures

**Objective:** *Ensure that State VR agencies demonstrate effective fiscal management.*

The Department has established three efficiency measures to ensure that State VR agencies demonstrate effective fiscal management. These include cost per employment outcome, cost per participant, and a consumer expenditure rate.

<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate an average cost per employment outcome between \$6,000 and \$16,500.		
Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set baseline	66
2007	73	64
2008	70	68
2009	70	
2010	70	
2011	70	

<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that demonstrate an average cost per employment outcome of no more than \$38,000.		
Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set baseline	71
2007	71	63
2008	71	54
2009	71	
2010	71	
2011	71	

**Assessment of progress:** At the national aggregate level, the cost per employment outcome can be calculated by dividing the total appropriation (minus the set-aside for Grants to Indians) by the total number of individuals who achieved an employment outcome. The sources of data for this measure are State agency data from the RSA-113 Caseload Report and RSA final State agency allocation tables. In fiscal year 2008, the average annual cost per employment outcome was \$13,848. However, there is significant difference in the cost per employment outcome between general and combined State VR agencies and agencies serving the blind. The average cost per employment outcome for general and combined State VR agencies was \$13,188 compared with \$33,474 for agencies for the blind. In FY 2008, 38 of the 56 (68 percent) general and combined State VR agencies had an average cost per employment outcome between

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\$6,000 and \$16,500 – two more agencies than in FY 2007. Sixteen agencies had an average cost per employment outcome above \$16,500 and two agencies had an average cost per employment outcome of less than \$6,000. Of the 24 agencies for the blind, 13 (54 percent) had an average cost per employment outcome of no more than \$38,000 – 2 fewer agencies than in FY 2007. There is wide variation in the cost per employment outcome across these agencies. The cost per employment outcome for general and combined State VR agencies (excluding the outlying areas) ranged from about \$5,107 to \$30,104. The cost per employment outcome for agencies for the blind ranged from \$12,541 to \$94,355.

The *Study of Variables Related to State VR Agency Performance* (October 2004) indicated that whatever measure of cost efficiency is used, large differences are evident by agency type (blind, combined, general). For example, agencies for the blind are much smaller and still must maintain the same core administrative infrastructure. They also do not benefit from economies of scale available to larger agencies. In addition, on average, blind consumers spend more time in the program and the average cost of purchased services tends to be higher.

The Department is using the cost per employment outcome measure in monitoring State VR agency performance. In general, agencies with very high costs can be compared with agencies of similar size to evaluate the impact of agency operating decisions. If two agencies receive grant awards of similar size, and one assists more individuals at a lower cost than the other, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) can examine the organizational structure, resource allocation, and service delivery decisions that make this agency more efficient. RSA also uses this information to further examine State agencies whose performance on the efficiency measures falls outside the specified range, including variables such as the percentage of the grant award spent on direct services compared to the percentage spent on administrative costs.

This measure can also be used in monitoring the provision of services to individuals with the most significant disabilities and the requirement to provide all needed services based on the VR needs and informed choice of the individual. Individuals with the most significant disabilities generally need more services and more expensive services. RSA examines agencies with unusually low costs per outcome to ensure that individuals with the most significant disabilities are given priority for services and to determine if the agency is implementing any inappropriate policies regarding service provision.

**Measure:** Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate an average cost per participant between \$1,200 and \$3,300.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set baseline	64
2007	73	61
2008	73	63
2009	70	
2010	70	
2011	70	

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**Measure:** Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that demonstrate an average cost per participant of no more than \$8,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set baseline	67
2007	69	63
2008	70	63
2009	70	
2010	70	
2011	70	

**Assessment of progress:** A common efficiency measure for job training programs is the cost per participant. At the national aggregate level, the cost per participant is calculated by dividing the total appropriation (minus the set-aside for Grants to Indians) by the total number of eligible individuals who received VR services. The sources of data for this measure are State agency data from the RSA-113 Caseload Report and RSA final State agency allocation tables. For FY 2008, the average annual cost per participant for general and combined State vocational rehabilitation agencies was \$3,186 with a range (excluding the outlying areas) of \$1,160 to \$5,026. For agencies for the blind, the average annual cost per participant ranged from \$3,456 to \$15,317, with an average of \$7,094. In FY 2008, 35 of the 56 (63 percent) general and combined State VR agencies had an average cost per participant between \$1,200 and \$3,300 – one agency more than in FY 2007. Of the 24 agencies for the blind, 15 (63 percent) had an average cost per participant of no more than \$8,000, the same number as in FY 2007.

**Measure:** Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 83 percent.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set Baseline	70
2007	72	73
2008	73	80
2009	74	
2010	74	
2011	75	

**Measure:** Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that demonstrate an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 70 percent.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set Baseline	63
2007	65	58
2008	67	54
2009	65	
2010	65	
2011	65	

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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**Assessment of progress:** The third efficiency measure examines the percentage of State VR agencies whose consumer service expenditure rate is at or above a specified level. Under this measure, the consumer service expenditure rate is calculated by dividing the agency's consumer service expenditures by the agency's total VR program expenditures. The sources of data for this measure are State agency data from the RSA-2 report and RSA final State agency allocation tables. In fiscal year 2008, the target was exceeded with 45 of 56 general and combined VR agencies (80 percent) demonstrating an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 83 percent. The average annual consumer service expenditure rate for all general and combined State vocational rehabilitation agencies was 87 percent with a range (excluding the outlying areas) of 58 percent to almost 100 percent. In 2008, 13 of the 24 agencies for the blind (54 percent) had an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 70 percent. The average annual consumer service expenditure rate for all agencies for the blind ranged from 42 percent to 89 percent, with an average of 73 percent.

### American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services

#### Performance Measures

**Goal: To improve employment outcomes of American Indians with disabilities who live on or near reservations by providing effective tribal vocational rehabilitation services.**

**Objective:** *Ensure that eligible American Indians with disabilities receive vocational rehabilitation services and achieve employment outcomes consistent with their particular strengths, resources, abilities, capabilities, and interests.*

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of individuals who leave the program with employment outcomes, after receiving services under an individualized plan for employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
2006	65	67
2007	65	67
2008	66	66
2009	66	
2010	66	
2011	67	

**Assessment of progress:** The number of American Indians with disabilities served and the number of individuals achieving an employment outcome continue to increase annually along with the number of projects funded under the program. In fiscal year 2008, the projects served 6,413 American Indians with disabilities and assisted 1,598 American Indians with disabilities to achieve an employment outcome. Data for fiscal year 2008, based on 73 of the 74 projects operating in that fiscal year (projects funded with fiscal year 2007 appropriations), show that 66 percent of such individuals achieved an employment outcome, meeting the program's long-term goal. However, these outcomes may be inflated, since some grantees are reluctant to close the service records of individuals who have not obtained an employment outcome. In addition, there is wide variation in the percentage of individuals who achieved an employment outcome reported by these projects. In 2008, the percentage of individuals achieving an employment outcome reported by the 73 projects ranged from 10 percent to 100 percent.

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#### Efficiency Measures

**Objective:** *Ensure that AIVRS projects demonstrate effective fiscal management.*

The Department has established two efficiency measures to ensure that AIVRS projects demonstrate effective fiscal management. These include cost per employment outcome and cost per participant.

**Measure:** The percentage of AIVRS projects that demonstrate an average annual cost per employment outcome of no more than \$35,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set baseline	64
2007	73	73
2008	66	64
2009	68	
2010	70	
2011	70	

**Assessment of progress:** This AIVRS program efficiency measure examines the percentage of AIVRS projects having a cost per employment outcome within a specified range. Fiscal year 2005 and 2006 data were used to establish performance criteria and set performance targets for fiscal years 2007 through 2011. The source of data for this measure is the AIVRS Annual Reporting Form.

At the national level, the average cost per employment outcome for this program is calculated by dividing the amount of the set-aside, excluding peer review costs, by the total number of individuals who achieved an employment outcome. Using this method for the AIVRS program in fiscal year 2008, the overall average cost per employment outcome was approximately \$21,400 with a median of \$24,470. However, the cost per employment outcome varied significantly across projects, ranging from \$4,155 to \$467,494. The target for this measure was not met in FY 2008, with 47 of the 74 AIVRS projects (64 percent) demonstrating an average cost per employment outcome of no more than \$35,000. Performance on this measure decreased primarily because six of the projects reported obtaining employment for only one or two individuals during the reporting period.

**Measure:** The percentage of AIVRS projects that demonstrate an average annual cost per participant of no more than \$10,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2006		72
2007	Set baseline	78
2008	76	78
2009	77	
2010	78	
2011	78	

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**Assessment of progress:** At the national level, the average annual cost per participant for this program is calculated by dividing the amount of the set-aside, excluding peer review costs, by the total number of individuals who received services under an Individualized Plan for Employment. For fiscal year 2008, the overall average annual cost per participant was approximately \$5,330. The average cost per participant ranged from \$1,689 to \$65,671 with a median of \$6,931. In FY 2008, 58 of the 74 AIVRS projects (78 percent) demonstrated an average cost per participant of no more than \$10,000.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Client assistance State grants

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title I, Section 112)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$12,288	\$12,288	0

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The President's FY2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Client Assistance Program (CAP) provides grants to States for services to assist eligible individuals and applicants for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State grants program and other programs, projects, and services funded under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act). Services are provided to help eligible individuals and applicants understand the rehabilitation services and benefits available under the Act, and to advise them of their rights and responsibilities in connection with those benefits. Assistance may also be provided to help eligible individuals and applicants in their relationships with those providing services under the Act, including assistance and advocacy in pursuing legal and administrative remedies to ensure the protection of their rights. State VR agencies must inform VR consumers about the services available from the CAP and how to contact the CAP. States must operate a CAP in order to receive VR State grant funds.

States and outlying areas have adopted different organizational structures for meeting the requirement to establish a CAP in each State. Each Governor designates a public or private agency to operate a CAP. This designated agency must be independent of any agency that provides services under the Act, except in cases where the Act "grandfathered" agencies providing services under the Act. In the event one of these "grandfathered" agencies is restructured, the Act requires the Governor to redesignate the CAP in an agency that does not provide services under the Act.

Current designations include the following:

- 28 of the Governors have designated their State Protection and Advocacy (P&A) system to provide CAP services;
- 12 of the Governors have designated the VR agency to provide services; and
- the remaining 16 Governors have designated other entities to provide CAP services.

Of the 16 CAPs located outside State VR agencies and not within the P&A system, 5 are located in the Governor's Office; 6 are located in another State agency, office, or government-

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sponsored commission or group; 4 are located in legal aid and nonprofit organizations; and 1 is located in a private law firm.

The CAP is a current-funded formula grant program. When appropriations exceed \$7.5 million, funds are distributed on the basis of population, with a minimum allotment of \$100,000 to each of the 50 States, D.C., and Puerto Rico and \$45,000 to each of the outlying areas. When the appropriation increases, the Act also requires the Secretary to increase the minimum allotments for States and outlying areas by a percentage not greater than the percentage increase in the appropriation. The fiscal year 2009 allotments were based on the July 1, 2007 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2007. The fiscal year 2010 allotments are based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates published in December 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State distributions will be based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates released in December 2009.

Grantees may carry over unobligated Federal funds for an additional year.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2006 .....	\$11,782
2007 .....	11,782
2008 .....	11,576
2009 .....	11,576
2010 .....	12,288

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$12.288 million for the Client Assistance program (CAP) in fiscal year 2011, the same as the fiscal year 2010 appropriation. This request will help ensure that individuals with disabilities who are applying for or receiving services funded under the Rehabilitation Act will receive appropriate services and have access to administrative, legal, and other appropriate remedies when needed to protect their rights.

Data collected in fiscal year 2008 show that CAPs nationwide responded to 58,329 requests for information and provided extensive services to 6,716 individuals. In fiscal year 2008, slightly more than 94 percent of those cases in which extensive services were provided involved applicants for, or recipients of, services from the VR State grants program. In 90 percent of all cases, issues related to the delivery of VR services. In 32 percent of the cases closed, CAPs increased individuals' understanding of VR program policies, which enabled these individuals to advocate for themselves; 17 percent of these cases resulted in improved communication between the individuals and other parties; and 21 percent resulted in the development or implementation of an individualized plan for employment. In addition, 65 percent of the cases requiring action by the CAP on behalf of the individual were resolved in the individuals' favor.

CAPs also address numerous systemic issues related to the provision of VR and other services under the Rehabilitation Act. CAPs utilize a variety of methods to achieve changes in policies and practices, including individual advocacy, participation in policymaking process, and

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negotiation with State agencies. In fiscal year 2008, 39 out of the 56 CAPs (70 percent) reported that changes in policy and practice benefiting individuals with disabilities were a result of systemic advocacy. This is an increase from fiscal year 2007, when 34 out of the 56 CAPs (61 percent) reported that systemic advocacy resulted in a change in policy and practice.

Examples of CAP activities during fiscal year 2008 include:

An individual with Down's syndrome began receiving VR services from the Texas Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) while in high school, and wanted to receive training in a food service program in Eastern New Mexico. DRS told the individual that it could not pay for formal training or out of state tuition, and that the family income exceeded the financial needs test. Instead, the individual received supported employment services from DRS and was placed at a pizza restaurant as a bus boy. He worked for a few months earning minimum wage and never achieving an average of more than 7 hours per week. Although the individual desired additional hours, DRS determined that the individual was suitably employed despite the lack of hours or job stability and closed his case. Shortly thereafter, the individual's employment ended. The individual's father and legal guardian requested training again through DRS. DRS informed them that the individual would have to wait at least a year to apply for services because he had achieved employment. The CAP successfully negotiated with DRS on behalf of the individual and the agency assisted him to receive training at the New Mexico program. The individual is now gainfully employed and is working more hours than in his prior employment.

In Ohio, a high school student with autism planned to attend college with a goal of becoming a computer engineer and requested assistance from the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (ORSC). ORSC completed several assessments and determined that education at a four-year college for the individual was inappropriate because he was not ready to work. The individual appealed this decision and the agency's position was upheld at the informal hearing. The Ohio CAP represented the individual, arguing that the standard used for determining whether the student can work at this time was inappropriate because he was a transition-age youth. The CAP negotiated with ORSC for a new counselor and another assessment. The CAP researched possible vendors for an appropriate assessment and advised the student to select a vendor with expertise in autism. The student chose an informed vendor and the assessment supported his vocational goal. ORSC then supported the individual to attend college, with a goal of becoming a computer engineer.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Information inquiries/referrals	58,329	58,329	58,329
Individuals provided case services	6,716	6,716	6,716

Note: Data for fiscal years 2009 through 2011 are projected from actual data collected for fiscal year 2008. Data for fiscal year 2009 will be available in April of 2010.

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### Client assistance State grants

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#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

##### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2011 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

**Goal: To provide assistance and information to help individuals with disabilities secure the benefits available under the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program and other programs funded under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.**

**Objective:** *Accurately identify problem areas requiring systemic change and engage in systemic activity to improve services under the Rehabilitation Act.*

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of CAPs that reported that their systemic advocacy resulted in changes in policy or practice.		
Year	Target	Actual
2006	54	59
2007	60	61
2008	60	70
2009	60	
2010	60	
2011	65	

**Assessment of progress:** CAPs address numerous systemic issues related to the provision of VR and other services under the Act. CAPs utilize a variety of methods to achieve changes in policies and practices, including individual advocacy, participation in the policymaking process, and negotiation with State agencies. Permanent systemic change is very difficult to achieve, and some States undertake activities that may take years to accomplish. All 56 CAPs currently are engaged in work that should ultimately result in systemic change, but this indicator measures only those States that report their activity as complete. Data are compiled from narrative reports submitted by all CAPs. On-site compliance reviews are conducted and random sample of files are cross-checked with reported data to verify the data quality. The grantees input their data into the RSA Management Information System (MIS), which has edit checks to verify the accuracy of the information entered into the data fields.

The baseline was established in fiscal year 1999, when 24 of the 56 CAPs (43 percent) reported changes in practice or policy due to their efforts. In fiscal year 2006, 33 of the 56 CAPs (59 percent) reported success with their efforts, exceeding the target for the fifth successive year. In light of these data the Department raised the targets for fiscal years 2007 through 2010. In fiscal year 2007, 34 of the 56 (61 percent) CAPs reported they were successful, exceeding the revised target. In fiscal year 2008, 39 of the 56 (70 percent) CAPs reported they were

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successful, again exceeding the revised target. Therefore, the Department has established a more ambitious target for fiscal year 2011 of 65 percent. The fiscal year 2009 data will be available in December 2010.

**Objective:** *Resolve cases at lowest possible level.*

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of cases resolved through the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR).		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2006</b>	84	85
<b>2007</b>	84	98
<b>2008</b>	84	98
<b>2009</b>	85	
<b>2010</b>	86	
<b>2011</b>	93	

**Assessment of progress:** The performance targets through fiscal year 2008 were based on fiscal year 2001 data, which showed 84 percent of cases resolved through alternative dispute resolution (ADR). The target was exceeded in fiscal year 2006, when 4,977 of the 5,855 closed cases (85 percent) were resolved through ADR techniques. In fiscal year 2007, 98 percent of the closed cases were resolved through ADR, again exceeding the Department's target for this measure. In fiscal year 2008 the program again performed well above the target, with 98 percent of the cases being resolved through the use of ADR. In 2008 the Department increased the target for 2009 and 2010. The target established for fiscal year 2011 was established by taking the average of actual performance from fiscal years 2006 through 2008. The data for fiscal year 2009 will be available in December 2010.

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### Supported employment State grants

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI, Part B)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
	\$29,181	0	-\$29,181

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The Administration is not proposing appropriations language for FY 2011, nor seeking reauthorizing legislation.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Supported Employment (SE) State Grants program is to assist States in developing collaborative programs with appropriate public and private nonprofit organizations to provide supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Under this formula grant program, State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies receive supplemental funds to assist VR consumers with the most significant disabilities in achieving the employment outcome of supported employment. The term "supported employment" includes both competitive employment and working in an integrated setting toward competitive employment. Individuals in competitive employment must earn at least the minimum wage.

Supported employment placements are achieved by augmenting short-term vocational rehabilitation services (supported employment services) with ongoing support provided by other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations (extended services) for the duration of that employment. State VR agencies provide time-limited services for a period not to exceed 18 months, unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been established in the individualized plan for employment (IPE). The IPE for an individual with a goal of supported employment must specify the expected extended services that will be needed to support the individual in integrated employment and identify the source of extended services at the time the IPE is developed, including the basis for determining that there is a reasonable expectation that those services will become available.

An individual's potential for supported employment must be considered as part of the assessment to determine eligibility for the Title I Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program. The requirements pertaining to individuals with an employment goal of supported employment are the same in both the Title I VR State Grants program and the Title VI-B SE State Grants program. A State VR agency may support an individual's supported employment services solely with VR State Grant funds, or it may fund the cost of SE services in whole or in part with funds under the SE State Grants program. Title VI-B SE funds may only be used to provide supported employment services and are essentially used to supplement Title I funds.

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To be eligible for this current-funded formula grant program, States must submit a supplement to their Title I VR State Grants program plan. Funds are distributed on the basis of population, except that no State receives less than \$300,000, or one-third of 1 percent of the sums appropriated, whichever is greater. The minimum allotment for Territories is one-eighth of 1 percent of the sums appropriated. The fiscal year 2009 allotments were based on the July 1, 2007 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2007. The fiscal year 2010 State allotments are based on the July 1, 2008 estimates published in December 2008. States may carry over unobligated funds to the next fiscal year.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2006.....	\$29,700
2007.....	29,700
2008.....	29,181
2009.....	29,181
2010.....	29,181

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

Funds are not requested for fiscal year 2011 for the Supported Employment (SE) State Grants program. The Administration requests that funding for this program be consolidated with the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program. The Administration recognizes that supported employment can be an effective strategy in assisting individuals with the most significant disabilities to obtain competitive employment in integrated settings. However, because supported employment is now an integral part of the VR State Grants program, the Administration believes that there is no longer a need for a separate funding stream to ensure the provision of such services. The proposed program consolidation will reduce unnecessary administrative burden at the national, State, and local levels and will enhance efforts to assess and improve the provision and effectiveness of supported employment services. The Administration's reauthorization proposal would ensure that each State would receive under the VR State Grants program at least the amount it received in FY 2010 under the separate formula grant programs being consolidated. In developing its reauthorization proposal, the Administration also plans to propose language to help ensure that State agencies continue to invest appropriate levels of their resources in supported employment.

The Supported Employment State Grants program was first authorized under the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 to provide supplemental grants to assist States in developing collaborative programs with public agencies and private nonprofit organizations for training and time limited post-employment services for individuals with the most severe handicaps. At that time, supported employment was a new promising practice in employing individuals who traditionally would not have achieved employment in the integrated labor market. Initially, many rehabilitation professionals were skeptical about its feasibility and concerned about the potential costs. As a supplemental source of dedicated funds, the SE State grant program provided an incentive for State VR agencies to provide supported employment services.

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### Supported employment State grants

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In addition, from 1986 to 1996 the Department of Education supported a number of supported employment discretionary grant projects designed to further develop and expand the provision of supported employment services. These included a total of 54 State-wide systems change grants to 47 States, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands; 2 national scope projects; 2 national technical assistance projects; and a total of 66 community-based supported employment projects. Finally, in fiscal year 1997, the Department awarded a 3-year cooperative agreement to support the Supported Employment Consortium whose purpose was to identify and disseminate replicable policies, models, and supported employment practices appropriate for dissemination and to provide technical assistance.

Data from the FY 2008 RSA 911 Case Service Report show that approximately 39,000 individuals whose cases were closed that year after receiving services had a goal of supported employment on their individualized plan for employment at some time during their participation in the VR program. This number includes individuals who received support for SE services entirely through funds provided under the VR State Grants program and those individuals whose services were, at least in part, supported with funds under the SE State Grants program. On a national level, individuals who had a goal of supported employment represented about 11 percent of the total individuals whose cases were closed in FY 2008 after developing an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). However, information on how State VR agencies use their SE State Grant funds to supplement their VR funds is limited. State agencies report whether any SE funds were used to provide services to an individual with a supported employment goal, but not the amount of SE funds that were expended for such individuals. Because VR agencies may use funds from one or both funding sources to purchase supported employment services, information on the actual cost of providing SE services to an individual with a SE goal, including individuals who did or did not obtain a supported employment outcome is unavailable. Data collected through the RSA 911 report indicate that there is significant variation in SE practices and the use of SE funds among State agencies.

In FY 2009, the Department initiated a study with funds provided under the Evaluation authority to obtain a more in-depth understanding of how State VR agencies provide SE services for their consumers, including how the supplemental SE appropriation is used in conjunction with VR Title I funds to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities to achieve a supported employment outcome. In addition, as a part of a current effort to re-design the VR program data collections, RSA will be identifying SE-related data elements that are needed to better monitor the services, service costs, and the outcomes achieved by individuals with a supported employment goal. The proposed consolidation, in conjunction with the efforts described above, will facilitate the Department's efforts to monitor and assess national and State performance in obtaining supported employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities and in identifying those agencies that need technical assistance.

The SE State Grants program has accomplished its goal. State VR agencies recognize supported employment as an integral part of the VR program and a viable employment option for individuals with the most significant disabilities. State VR agencies continue to spend Title I funds (including State matching funds) to provide supported employment services for those individuals who require such services to participate in the integrated labor market. State VR agencies must also give priority to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities, many of whom may require supported employment services. The Department expects that State VR

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agencies will continue to provide supported employment services in FY 2011 through the consolidated VR State Grants program to at least as many individuals as they did under the two separate authorities.

#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Individuals with a supported employment IPE goal who received services and exited the program.	39,000	39,100	39,200
Employment outcomes: <sup>1</sup>	22,450	22,550	22,650
Supported employment outcomes <sup>2</sup>	15,700	15,800	15,900
Employment without supports in an integrated setting <sup>3</sup>	6,550	6,550	6,550
Other employment outcomes <sup>4</sup>	200	200	200
Minority outreach	\$292	\$292	0

Note: Estimates for FYs 2009, 2010, and 2011 are based on actual 2006, 2007, and 2008 closure data from the RSA-911 Case Service Report for all VR consumers with a supported employment goal identified on their IPE (including consumers who received support for SE services under Title I and/or under Title VI-B).

<sup>1</sup> Includes employment outcomes for VR consumers who had or are estimated to have a supported employment goal.

<sup>2</sup> Of the individuals who had a supported employment goal, the number who were employed in an integrated setting and receiving ongoing support services.

<sup>3</sup> Of the individuals who had a supported employment goal, the number who met the employment outcome criteria for the VR State Grants program but who were not receiving ongoing support services.

<sup>4</sup> Of the individuals who had a supported employment goal, the number who met the employment outcome criteria for the VR State Grants program who were either self-employed, employed in a Business Enterprise Program, a family worker, or a homemaker.

#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

##### Performance Measures

This section presents program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided for this program and the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program in previous years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by these programs. With the exception of the program's efficiency measure, performance on supported employment measures would continue to be assessed in FY 2011 as part of GPRA reporting for the VR State Grants program.

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**Goal:** Individuals with significant disabilities with a goal of supported employment will achieve high quality employment.

**Objective:** *Ensure that individuals with significant disabilities with a supported employment goal achieve high quality employment.*

**Measure:** Of those individuals with significant disabilities who had a supported employment goal and achieved an employment outcome, the percentage who obtained competitive employment, including individuals who receive supported employment services funded under the VR State Grants program and/or the Supported Employment State Grants program.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	93	94
2007	93	94
2008	94	92
2009	94	
2010	95	
2011	96	

**Assessment of progress:** Individuals with a supported employment goal who achieve an employment outcome may be working in competitive employment (employment at least at the minimum wage in an integrated setting) or may be working in an integrated setting toward competitive work (receipt of the minimum wage). In fiscal year 2008, approximately 22,377 individuals, or 57 percent of individuals whose service records were closed after receiving services who had a SE goal, including both consumers who received support for SE services under Title I and under Title VI-B, achieved an employment outcome. Of those who achieved an employment outcome, 92 percent of individuals with a supported employment goal achieved a competitive employment outcome. In FY 2008, performance on this measure decreased slightly from the previous year and it was the first year for which the performance target has not been met or exceeded for this measure. Fiscal year 2008 RSA 911 Case Service Report data also show that 70 percent of the individuals who had a SE goal and achieved an employment outcome obtained a supported employment outcome (employment in the integrated labor market and receiving ongoing supports) and about 91 percent of those obtaining a supported employment outcome were in competitive employment. Data for FY 2009 are expected to be available in April 2010.

**Measure:** Average weekly earnings for individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome.

Year	Target	Actual
2007		197
2008	Set a Baseline	199
2009	201	
2010	203	
2011	203	

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### Supported employment State grants

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**Assessment of progress:** The Department established a new measure in FY 2008 to monitor the average weekly earnings of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome. As previously stated, individuals with significant disabilities in supported employment may be working in competitive employment or may be working in an integrated setting toward the receipt of the minimum wage. Performance data for this measure are calculated by dividing the average weekly earnings for all individuals who obtained a supported employment outcome with earnings by the total number of individuals who obtained a supported employment outcome with earnings. The performance data do not include individuals served by State VR agencies for the Blind. Performance targets were set based on 2007 and 2008 data. For the performance group, the average weekly earnings of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome were \$199 in FY 2008. However, among agencies in the performance group, average weekly earnings ranged from a low of \$95 to a high of \$367, with a median of \$179.

### Efficiency Measure

**Objective:** *Ensure that State VR agencies effectively use Supported Employment Grant funds to achieve supported employment outcomes.*

<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate at least 30 supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 received in SE Grant funds.		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2007</b>		65
<b>2008</b>	Set a baseline	79
<b>2009</b>	75	
<b>2010</b>	77	

**Assessment of progress:** The efficiency measure developed for the Supported Employment State Grants program examines the percentage of State VR agencies for which the number of supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 received in SE Grants funds is within a specified range. For the purpose of this measure, the number of supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 is calculated by dividing the reported number of individuals that achieved a supported employment outcome by the amount of a State agency's SE allocation and multiplying the result by 100,000. The performance range and targets were established based on fiscal year 2007 and 2008 data. The performance data do not include individuals served by State VR agencies for the Blind or the 4 territories because they receive less than \$100,000. For the performance group, the average number of supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 was 71 in 2007 and 73 in 2008. However, among agencies in the performance group, this number ranged from 3 to 222, with a median of 47 supported employment outcomes. A FY 2011 performance target has not been set for the efficiency measure because the Administration is proposing to eliminate the separate funding authority for the SE Grants program and consolidate these supplemental funds with those provided under the larger VR State Grants program.

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### Supported employment State grants

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#### Other Performance Information

The Department recently completed an independent study focusing on the post-program experiences of four subgroups of former VR consumers, including persons with mental illness, mental retardation, persons who received Social Security disability benefits, and transitional youth. These subgroups comprise the greatest percentage of individuals who receive supported employment services. Information from an analysis of the post-program experiences of individuals in the sample who had a goal of supported employment while participating in the VR program is provided in Chapter 6 of the final report submitted in August 2009. A summary of some of the findings are provided below. Please note that the supported employment subsample represents only 25.3 percent of the 2,758 respondents.

The majority of former VR consumers who had a goal of supported employment (SE) had cognitive impairments as their primary disability (55 percent), followed by about 25 percent with psychosocial impairments and about 8 percent with other mental impairments. Individuals in this group were more likely to be male (58 percent) and most were white (70 percent). About a third of the SE group were high school graduates (or had an equivalency certificate), one-third had a special education certificate of completion or attendance, and 15 percent had completed some secondary education but did not have a high school diploma at case closure. In addition, 57 percent of the SE group had received services under an Individualized Education Program while in school. About 60 percent of the SE group had achieved an employment outcome at the time of case closure. Among those with an employment outcome, 64 percent obtained employment with supports in an integrated setting (a supported employment outcome); 34 percent were employed without supports in an integrated setting; and less than 1 percent were self-employed. The average weekly earnings amount at case closure was \$162.24.

At the time of the study interview, an estimated 92 percent of the SE group reported that they had ever worked for pay. About 74 percent had worked in the past 12 months and 77 percent were working at the time of the interview. Among those who were working in the past 12 months, about 69 percent reported that they were working at the same job they had 12 months earlier and about 75 percent worked part-time. On average, the amount of the SE consumer's weekly paycheck (after taxes and other deductions) in the past 12 months was \$228.16, with an average hourly wage rate of \$7.44. However, almost one quarter of those who worked in the past 12 months were not working at the time of the study interview. For slightly less than half of these, the choice was their own to stop working. Just less than one-third of the respondents who were not working at the time of the interview had looked for work within the past 4 weeks. Among those who provided one or more reasons for why they were not working at the time of the study interview, 42 percent stated that they could not find work, 28 percent wanted to keep medical coverage, 26 percent stated they wanted to keep their disability or workers' compensation benefits, 26 percent stated they were without reliable transportation, 31 percent needed accommodations and 24 percent stated they were sick or ill.

Study respondents were asked about the services they sought and received over the past 12 months in their communities. About 30 percent of the SE former VR consumers received services from a State VR agency and 9 percent used a State employment facility or one-stop center. Just over one third were familiar with the Ticket to Work program and about 16 percent had used it. In addition, study respondents reported that in the past 12 months they had received job search assistance (26 percent), job placement assistance (20 percent), and

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Supported employment State grants

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personal assistance services (12 percent). Among those who were employed, 54 percent received on-the-job support and most received accommodations on the job.

When asked to identify their most important source of income, 55 percent cited public support and benefits. Another 23 percent identified personal income, and 21 percent cited support from family and friends. Among the SE respondents, 34 percent said they received SSDI within the past 12 months, and 95 percent of them were receiving SSDI at the time of the interview. Similarly, about 36 percent received SSI within the past 12 months, and 96 percent of them were receiving SSI at the time of the interview. Most (83 percent) reported that they currently had some form of medical or health insurance. About 46 percent said they had Medicare, 61.4 percent had State medical or health insurance, 11 percent had medical insurance from other public sources, and 15 percent had private insurance through other means.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### **Migrant and seasonal farmworkers**

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 304)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): 0 <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$2,239	0	-\$2,239

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The Administration is not proposing appropriations language for FY 2011, nor seeking reauthorizing legislation.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) program makes comprehensive vocational rehabilitation (VR) services available to migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities, with the goal of increasing employment opportunities for them. Projects also develop innovative methods for reaching and serving this population. Emphasis is given in these projects to outreach, specialized bilingual rehabilitation counseling, and coordination of VR services with services from other sources. Projects provide VR services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and to members of their families when such services will contribute to the rehabilitation of the worker with a disability. Discretionary grants are limited to 90 percent of the costs of the projects providing these services. This is a current-funded program.

The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program is administered in coordination with other programs serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers, including programs under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act, the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, and the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000)
2006 .....	\$2,279
2007 .....	2,279
2008 .....	2,239
2009 .....	2,239
2010 .....	2,239

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) program in fiscal year 2011. Instead of seeking separate funding for this program, the Administration proposes to consolidate the funding for this small, duplicative competitive grants program with the larger VR

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

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State grants program. The Administration believes that consolidating this small program into the much larger VR State grants program will eliminate administrative inefficiencies and help focus Federal efforts on ensuring that States provide appropriate services to all eligible individuals, including the population served under this program.

The authorizing legislation for the VR State grants program requires States to submit a plan to the Rehabilitation Services Administration that describes how the State will provide services to all eligible individuals within that State. The statute contains many provisions to ensure that State VR agencies reach and serve all individuals with disabilities within the State, including minority, unserved, and underserved populations--

- States must provide for the cooperation, collaboration, and coordination with other components of the Statewide workforce investment system. Specifically, States must describe their interagency cooperation with, and utilization of the services and facilities of, Federal, State and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the Department of Agriculture's Under Secretary for Rural Development.
- States must provide an assurance that the State will not impose a residence requirement that excludes from services any individual who is present in the State.
- States must conduct comprehensive, statewide assessments describing the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the States, particularly the VR service needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR State grants program. Using the statewide assessment, States must identify the goals and priorities in carrying out their programs.
- States must provide a description of the strategies they will use to address the needs identified in the comprehensive, statewide assessment and to achieve the identified goals and priorities, including outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR States grant program.

Specialized services, such as those provided through the MSFW program, can be beneficial in meeting the complex needs of migrant or seasonal farmworkers with disabilities. However, the specialized services provided under the MSFW program are services all State VR agencies should be providing to reach and appropriately serve underserved populations under the VR State grants program and should not depend on the availability of separate funding. For example, outreach activities in churches and community centers that identify farmworkers with disabilities would also assist in identifying other persons with disabilities who visit these places. The hiring of bilingual counselors benefits all consumers who are monolingual in a non-English language, whether those consumers are farmworkers or not. In addition, the provision of transportation services for rural areas will benefit all rural residents, whether farmworkers or not.

Even after spending a total of \$54.3 million in Federal dollars over the past 33 years on grants under this program, State-reported data from the VR State agencies on the employment outcomes for migrants and seasonal farmworkers suggest that employment outcomes are not better overall in States that have a MSFW project as compared to those States without MSFW projects. In fiscal year 2008, the 44 States without MSFW projects reported obtaining

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

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employment outcomes for 59 percent of the migrant and seasonal farmworkers (802 of the 1,348) they served, while the 13 States with MSFW projects reported employment outcomes for 55 percent of the individuals they served (119 of 218).

The Administration believes that continuing to provide separate funding for this small, narrowly targeted program is not the best way to ensure appropriate and high quality services for special populations who may be underserved under the VR State grants program. The Administration believes that RSA should focus its monitoring and technical assistance efforts on improving the performance of the VR State grants program, including its delivery of services to and the outcomes of its most needy and vulnerable populations. In developing its reauthorization proposal, the Administration will also consider legislative options for strengthening accountability for services to special populations like migrant and seasonal farmworkers under the VR State grants program.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
<b>Program funding:</b>			
New projects	0	\$442	0
Continuation projects	\$2,217	1,745	0
Minority outreach	22	22	0
Peer review of new award applications	<u>0</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total</b>	2,239	2,239	0
<b>Number of projects:</b>			
New projects	0	4	0
Continuation projects	<u>13</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>Total</b>	13	13	0

### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

#### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

**Goal: To increase employment opportunities for migrant and seasonal farmworkers who have disabilities.**

**Objective:** *Ensure that eligible Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers with disabilities receive Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services and achieve employment.*

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

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**Measure:** The percentage of migrant or seasonal farmworkers with disabilities served by both VR and the VR Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers projects who were placed in employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	65	56
2007	65	61
2008	65	55
2009	65	
2010	65	

**Assessment of progress:** During fiscal year 2008, the 13 States with MSFW projects served 218 individuals, placing 119 in employment (55 percent). Two of the grantees met or exceeded the performance target set for fiscal year 2008. Four grantees had a rate of 62 percent or more. However, the remaining States reported employment rates that ranged from zero to 60 percent. States without a Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers project that reported serving migratory workers in fiscal year 2008 placed in employment 58 percent of individuals served.

Previously, data collected on migrant and seasonal farmworkers served by both programs could not be interpreted because of inconsistent VR State agency reporting. States were asked to report data solely on the migrant and seasonal farmworkers served through this program. However, some VR State agencies reported data on the migrant and seasonal farmworkers served through their VR State grants program. To ensure consistent reporting across States, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) has clarified its reporting instructions to require States to report on all migrant and seasonal farmworkers served through either program. However, there are still problems with the quality of the data, with States without projects reporting individuals served by a project. A FY 2011 performance target has not been set for this measure because the Administration is proposing to eliminate the separate funding authority for the MSFW program and consolidate these funds with funds provided under the larger VR State grants program.

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### Projects with industry

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI, Part A)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$19,197	0	-\$19,197

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired in September 30, 2004; the program is expected to be authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. No appropriations language or new authorizing legislation is sought for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Projects With Industry (PWI) program is to create and expand job and career opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the competitive labor market by engaging the participation of business and industry in the rehabilitation process. PWI projects promote the involvement of business and private industry through Business Advisory Councils (BACs) that identify jobs and careers available in the community and provide advice on needed skills and training. BACs are required to identify job and career availability within the community, consistent with the current and projected local employment opportunities identified by the local workforce investment board for the community under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA).

This current-funded program provides job development, job placement, and career development services, and, to the extent appropriate, training services to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain or advance in employment in the competitive labor market. Projects must determine eligibility for services in a manner consistent with section 102 of the Rehabilitation Act.

PWI grants are made to a variety of agencies and organizations, including business and industrial corporations, community rehabilitation programs, labor organizations, trade associations, and foundations. Competitive grants are awarded for a period of up to 5 years and may not exceed 80 percent of the total cost of a project. New awards may be made only to projects proposing to serve geographic areas that are unserved or underserved by the PWI program.

PWI grantees must provide to the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) an annual evaluation of project operations in accordance with the established program standards and compliance indicators. Data and information contained in the report include the number of individuals with disabilities served, the number of individuals with disabilities who achieved a competitive employment outcome, improvement of participants' employment status and earning power following services, and employment retention. In addition, continuation

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Projects with industry

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awards may be made only to grantees that are carrying out the provisions of their approved grant application. In order to receive continuation funding for the third and subsequent years, grantees must meet the above requirements and also demonstrate compliance with the performance indicators by submitting data for the most recent complete project year. If a grantee does not demonstrate compliance on the basis of the previous year's data, the grantee has an additional opportunity to demonstrate compliance with the standards by submitting data from the first 6 months of the current project year.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2006.....	\$19,538
2007.....	17,293 <sup>1</sup>
2008.....	19,197
2009.....	19,197
2010.....	19,197

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<sup>1</sup> In FY 2007, funds amounting to \$2,245,030 were not needed to make planned continuation awards because six projects did not demonstrate sufficient performance to receive continuation funding and one project declined its FY 2007 award. These funds were transferred to the Demonstration and Training program (section 303 of the Rehabilitation Act).

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for the Projects with Industry (PWI) program in fiscal year 2011. The Administration proposes to reduce program duplication and eliminate administrative inefficiencies by consolidating PWI into the much larger Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program. The Administration is requesting a corresponding increase in funding for VR State Grants to offset the proposed reduction in budgetary resources for the services provided by the PWI program. PWI and VR State Grants are overlapping programs that serve the same target populations. In addition, the services provided by the PWI program can be provided by the VR State Grants program. In fact, nearly half of the individuals served by PWI grantees also receive services under VR State Grants.

The PWI program was initiated under the 1968 amendments to the Rehabilitation Act under the demonstration authority in section 304 (d), and was first funded in 1970. When the Act was reauthorized in 1978, the program's authority was moved to the new Title VI, Employment Opportunities for Handicapped Individuals, and the program's requirements were expanded. The program, created to engage the talent and leadership of private industry as partners in the rehabilitation process, authorized jointly financed projects with individual employers and other entities to provide training and placement in realistic work settings. Unfortunately, few private businesses were interested in operating PWI projects. A 1985 Department-funded evaluation of the PWI program found that most PWI projects were operated by traditional rehabilitation service providers and only a small number of projects were operated by the business sector. To ensure the involvement of business and industry in the program, PWI was amended in 1986 to

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Projects with industry

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require the establishment of business advisory councils. Since that time, the Business Advisory Council (BAC) has been the distinguishing feature of the PWI program.

Today, the business community is routinely involved in job training and employment programs. In 1998, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was enacted with the purpose of consolidating, coordinating, and improving employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation programs. Recognizing the importance of involving the business sector in job training and employment programs, WIA provided for local workforce investment boards in each State that include business, industry, labor, and other representatives. Two of the major functions of the BAC, identification of job and career availability within the community and the skills necessary to perform the jobs and careers identified, are now functions of the local workforce investment board under WIA. The State VR agency is represented on the local board as a partner of WIA's one-stop delivery system. In addition, since 1992, the VR State agency has been required to have four representatives of business, industry, and labor on its State Rehabilitation Council.

A program review conducted in 2004 found that the PWI program design is duplicative of the much larger VR State Grants program, which serves the same target population and provides similar services. In addition, a Department-funded evaluation of the PWI program published in December 2003 found that the group of individuals served by the PWI program is very similar to the population served by VR at the aggregate program level and that most PWI projects serve a specific subset of the population served by one or more local VR offices. Typically, PWI is one of several programs operated by a host organization, and the specific role of the PWI project at many, especially larger, grantee organizations is shaped by the other programs available at the host organization.

As the program operates today, the major contribution of PWI projects to the VR system is the provision of job placement services. Few PWI projects currently provide job skill training. Where available, VR agencies often refer their consumers to local PWI projects for job placement services.

If funding for the program is consolidated into VR State Grants, as proposed, the Administration anticipates that State VR agencies will absorb the job placement functions of PWI programs and continue providing placement services to their consumers. To ensure a smooth transition, PWI projects will be encouraged to refer program participants with significant disabilities to their State VR agency if the individual is not a current participant of the VR program and to refer individuals who do not require the services of the comprehensive VR program to other community resources, such as the local One-Stop Center. Where appropriate, VR State agencies will also be encouraged to purchase placement services from those entities that previously provided such services to VR consumers using funds from the PWI grant. Furthermore, State VR agencies will be encouraged to identify and adopt effective practices in developing collaborative relationships with employers and innovative strategies for marketing and job placement. The proposed Workforce Investment Fund would provide opportunities for validating and replicating these effective employment and placement practices, setting the stage for significant improvements to services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Projects with industry

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#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Continuation projects:	\$18,816	\$19,005 <sup>1</sup>	0
Number	66	67	0
New projects:	\$189 <sup>2</sup>	0	0
Number	1 <sup>2</sup>	0	0
Average Award	\$283	\$283	0
Minority outreach	\$192	\$192	0
Total	\$19,197	\$19,197	0

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<sup>1</sup> A portion of these funds may not be needed for continuation awards in FY 2010. Based on FY 2009 data, 29 projects did not demonstrate compliance with the required indicators. If these projects cannot demonstrate sufficiently improved performance in the first six months of FY 2010, then they will not receive continuation awards.

<sup>2</sup> No peer review funds were needed for this award because the project's application was reviewed as part of the most recent PWI competition in FY 2008.

#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

##### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program. Fiscal year 2011 performance targets have not been set for any of the measures for this program because the Administration is proposing to eliminate the separate funding authority for PWI and consolidate the funds with those provided under the larger VR State Grants program.

**Goal: To facilitate the establishment of partnerships between rehabilitation service providers and business and industry in order to create and expand employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities.**

**Objective:** *Ensure that PWI services (through partnerships with business and industry) result in competitive employment, increased wages, and job retention for individuals with disabilities.*

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Projects with industry

<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of individuals served who were placed into competitive employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
<b>2006</b>	63	56
<b>2007</b>	55	63
<b>2008</b>	56	63
<b>2009</b>	57	
<b>2010</b>	63	

**Assessment of progress:** In FY 2008, the 66 PWI projects in operation completed the first year of their 5 year grant. The projects served a total of 7,764 individuals with disabilities and placed 4,867 of those individuals (63 percent) in competitive employment, exceeding the target placement rate. Fiscal year 2009 data are expected in April 2010.

In assessing program performance, it should be noted that there is wide variation among grantees in the data reported and in their performance. For example, although the average number of individuals placed per project was 76, the number ranged from 13 to 323 with a median of 62. Project placement rates ranged from 34 percent to 90 percent with a median of 61 percent. Similarly, while the average number served per project was 121, the number ranged from 16 to 582 with a median of 96. In addition, these employment statistics do not hold over time. Grantees reported that 6 months after placement, only 39 percent of individuals served by the program in 2008 were still employed. In several projects, none of the placed individuals retained their jobs for 6 months.

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of exiting individuals who are placed in competitive employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
<b>2006</b>		85
<b>2007</b>	85	87
<b>2008</b>	85	76
<b>2009</b>	85	
<b>2010</b>	85	

**Assessment of progress:** The percentage of exiting individuals obtaining employment fell below the target level in 2008 most likely because RSA provided new instructions to grantees for completing the data collection instrument. RSA issued these new instructions in response to data inconsistencies found in grantee reports from prior years. In FY 2008, the highest placement rate reported by a project was 100 percent and the lowest was 39 percent, with a median among all grantees of 76 percent. Fiscal year 2009 data are expected in April 2010.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Projects with industry

<b>Measure:</b> Average increase in weekly earnings in dollars of individuals who are placed in competitive employment.		
Year	Target	Actual
<b>2006</b>	\$245	\$248
<b>2007</b>	\$248	\$270
<b>2008</b>	\$250	\$254
<b>2009</b>	\$255	
<b>2010</b>	\$263	

**Assessment of progress:** In fiscal year 2008, the average change in earnings for participants placed in competitive employment from the time of project entry was \$254, a slight decrease from the level reported for 2007. The average change in earnings reported by projects ranged from \$9 to \$676, with a median of \$256. The program continues to exceed the targets set for this measure. Fiscal year 2009 data are expected in April 2010.

### Efficiency Measures

Two efficiency measures have been established for the PWI program. These are the average annual cost per placement and the cost per participant.

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of Projects With Industry projects whose annual average cost per placement is no more than \$7,000.		
Year	Target	Actual
<b>2006</b>		56
<b>2007</b>		75
<b>2008</b>		81
<b>2009</b>		
<b>2010</b>	77	

For the purpose of this measure, the annual cost per placement is calculated as annual Federal project funds divided by the total number of placements in the reporting period. There was wide variation in among grantees in their reported performance data. The average annual cost per placement for the 66 projects operating in fiscal year 2008 was \$5,144. However, the annual cost per placement ranged from \$1,144 to \$17,024, with a median of \$4,246. Fiscal year 2009 data are expected in April 2010.

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of Projects With Industry projects whose annual average cost per participant is no more than \$4,500.		
Year	Target	Actual
<b>2006</b>		76
<b>2007</b>		80
<b>2008</b>	79	84
<b>2009</b>	79	
<b>2010</b>	80	

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### Projects with industry

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A common efficiency measure for job training programs is the cost per participant. Cost per participant is calculated as annual Federal project funds divided by the total number of persons served during the reporting period. The program's performance on this measure exceeded its target. For fiscal year 2008, the average annual cost per participant was \$3,298, with a range of \$689 to \$13,619, and a median of \$2,588. Fiscal year 2009 data are expected in April 2010.

### Other Performance Information

#### Grantee Performance on Program Compliance Indicators

PWI grantees must provide an annual evaluation of project operations in accordance with the established program standards and compliance indicators. In order to receive continuation funding for the third and subsequent years, grantees must demonstrate compliance with the performance indicators established in program regulations by submitting data for the most recent complete project year. Program compliance indicators place an emphasis on services to individuals who are considered most in need of PWI services due to their impaired capacity to obtain competitive employment. In 2008, approximately 91 percent (7,058) of the total number of individuals served and 91 percent (4,450) of the total number of individuals placed in competitive employment were individuals with significant disabilities. Furthermore, 78 percent (6,055) of all the individuals served and 78 percent (3,788) of the total number of individuals placed had been unemployed at least 6 months at the time of project entry.

In FY 2008, 23 percent (16) of the projects did not pass the compliance indicators. Most of these failing projects did not pass the placement indicator, a primary indicator. To pass the placement indicator, a project must place at least 55 percent of the individuals they serve into competitive employment. If a grantee does not demonstrate compliance on the basis of the previous year's data, the grantee has an opportunity to demonstrate compliance with the standards by submitting data from the first 6 months of the following project year. In order to receive continuation funding, these projects must demonstrate sufficiently improved performance during this 6 month period.

#### Evaluation of the Projects With Industry Program

Assessment of the PWI program is limited by the credibility of the data. In a Department-funded evaluation of the PWI program published in December 2003, the evaluators documented numerous concerns with the data collected and reported by PWI projects. In their review of participant files maintained by the 30 PWI projects visited during the study, the evaluators frequently encountered files lacking essential information, raising doubts about the quality and accuracy of the data that projects submit in compliance indicators reports. The project survey asked all respondents to report "the number of persons who achieved placement (i.e., a competitive employment outcome for a minimum of 90 days) during FY 2001," information identical to that required by the compliance indicators. A comparison of data submitted by projects on the two forms (i.e., project survey and compliance indicator reports), each of which asks for data from FY 2001, found that 19 of the 92 projects that responded reported different numbers for persons placed during the year, including several that differed by more than 50 percent. The final report (available at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/leg/rehab/eval-studies.html#pwi>) states that the fact "that one-fifth of the projects provided inconsistent

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### **Projects with industry**

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information on such a fundamentally important variable as the number of persons placed raises serious questions about the accuracy of other data reported in compliance indicator submissions.”

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### Training

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 302 (a)-(g)(2), (h)-(i), Section 303(c)-(d))

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$37,766	\$33,251	-\$4,515

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The President's FY 2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Training program is to ensure that skilled personnel are available to meet the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities assisted through the vocational rehabilitation (VR), supported employment, and independent living programs. The program supports training and related activities designed to increase the number of qualified personnel providing rehabilitation services. Grants and contracts are awarded to States and public and nonprofit agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education, to pay all or part of the cost of conducting training programs.

Awards may be made in any of 31 long-term training fields, in addition to awards for continuing education, short-term training, experimental and innovative training, and training interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and persons who are deaf-blind. These training programs vary in terms of content, methodology, and type of trainee. For example, the Long-Term Training program supports academic training grants that must direct 75 percent of the funds to trainee scholarships. The statute requires trainees who receive assistance either to work for a period of time in public or private nonprofit rehabilitation agencies or related agencies, including professional corporations or professional practice groups that have service arrangements with a State agency, or to pay back the assistance they received.

The Training program authority requires recipients of grants under the Long-Term Training program to build closer relationships between training institutions and State VR agencies, promote careers in the public vocational rehabilitation program, identify potential employers who would meet students' payback requirements, and ensure that data on student employment are accurate. Training of statewide workforce systems personnel is authorized under the Training program, and such training may be jointly funded by the Department of Labor. Statewide workforce systems personnel may be trained in evaluative skills to determine whether an individual with a disability may be served by the VR State grants program or another component of the statewide workforce system.

Of the funds appropriated for the Training program, 15 percent must be used to support the In-Service Training program. This program is intended to assist State VR agencies in the training

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### Training

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of State agency staff consistent with the State's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD). Under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, each State is required to establish procedures to ensure there is an adequate supply of qualified staff for the State agency, to assess personnel needs and make projections for future needs, and to address the current and projected personnel training needs. States are further required to develop and maintain policies and procedures for job-specific personnel standards that are consistent with certification, licensure, or other State personnel requirements for comparable positions. If a State's current personnel do not meet the highest requirements for personnel standards within the State, the CSPD must identify the steps a State will take to upgrade the qualifications of their staff, through retraining or hiring. VR State grant funds may be used to comply with these requirements.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2006 .....	\$38,438
2007 .....	38,438
2008 .....	37,766
2009 .....	37,766
2010 .....	37,766

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$33.251 million for the Training program in fiscal year 2011, a reduction of \$4.515 million from the fiscal year 2010 appropriation. The request reflects two proposed consolidations. The Administration is not seeking funding for the In-Service Training program under the Training program, but is, instead, proposing the consolidation of \$5.665 million for the In-Service Training program with the larger Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State grants program. In addition, the Administration is proposing the consolidation of two training activities currently supported under the Demonstration and Training programs for which \$1.15 million has been added to the Training program request.

Currently, the Act requires 15 percent of the funds appropriated for the Training program (\$5.665 million in FY 2010) to be set aside to support training of existing State VR agency personnel. Under the Administration's reauthorization proposal, State VR agencies would be required to reserve a specified amount of VR State grant funds for training State agency personnel, consistent with the agency's plan for personnel development under Title I of the Act. That amount would be equal to the funds the State was awarded for in-service training under the Training program in the most recent fiscal year, to be increased by inflation in subsequent years.

The Act currently authorizes Braille Training (\$300,000 in FY 2010) and Parent Information and Training Centers (\$850,000 in FY 2010) under the Demonstration and Training programs. Under the Administration's proposal, Demonstration and Training programs would be replaced by a new program, National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services, and these two small training programs would be consolidated with the Training program. Consistent with the purposes of the Training program, the Braille Training program supports projects that provide training in the use of braille for personnel providing VR services or educational services to youth

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Training

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and adults who are blind. The Parent Information and Training Centers program supports projects that provide training and information to enable individuals with disabilities, and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or other authorized representatives of the individuals, to participate more effectively with professionals in meeting the vocational, independent living, and rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities.

The majority of funds requested for fiscal year 2011 would be used to support continuations. Approximately \$31.6 million would be used to continue 179 grants that began in previous fiscal years. Approximately \$1.2 million would be available for an estimated 10 new grants, most of which would be awarded under the Long-Term Training (LTT) program. The LTT program supports degree-granting university programs to increase the supply of qualified VR counselors and other specialists needed to fill crucial personnel positions in State VR agencies and community rehabilitation programs that provide the majority of services to VR consumers. The Act requires that 75 percent of the funds awarded to universities under the LTT program must go directly to students for tuition assistance and stipends. Since this tuition assistance must be repaid through work in certain appropriate work settings, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) believes it is the best mechanism for recruiting new graduates into the field of rehabilitation.

In fiscal year 2011, RSA will continue support for 10 regional Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Centers (TACE Centers), that were established in fiscal year 2008 to provide technical assistance and continuing education to State VR agencies and their partners to improve their performance under and compliance with the Rehabilitation Act. State VR agency partners are entities that are actively engaged with State VR agencies in the provision of VR and independent living services to individuals with disabilities.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
<b>Program funding:</b>			
New awards	\$10,437	\$14,490	\$1,168
Continuation awards	27,071	22,548	31,560
Minority outreach	0	378	323
Peer review of new award applications	137	175	25
Conferences	<u>121</u>	<u>175</u>	<u>175</u>
Total	37,766	37,766	33,251
<b>Number of awards:</b>			
New awards	53	131	10
Continuation awards	<u>204</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>179</u>
Total	257	257	189

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Training

#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

Program Detail	Funding			Number of Awards		
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
<u>Long-term training:</u>						
New awards	\$8,650	\$6,181	\$1,168	50	43	10
Continuation awards	<u>14,463</u>	<u>14,458</u>	<u>19,676</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>115</u>	<u>149</u>
Total	<u>23,113</u>	<u>20,639</u>	<u>20,844</u>	<u>158</u>	<u>158</u>	<u>159</u>
<u>Technical Assistance and Continuing Education</u>						
New	1,597	0	0	2	0	0
Continuation awards	<u>4,299</u>	<u>7,900</u>	<u>7,900</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>
Total	<u>5,896</u>	<u>7,900</u>	<u>7,900</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Short-term:</u>						
New awards	190	560	0	1	2	0
Continuation awards	<u>560</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
Total	<u>750</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>In-Service:</u>						
New awards	0	5,665	0	0	80	0
Continuation awards	<u>5,665</u>	0	0 <sup>1</sup>	<u>80</u>	0	0 <sup>1</sup>
<u>Interpreter training:</u>						
New awards	0	2,084	0	0	6	0
Continuation awards	<u>2,084</u>	0	<u>2,084</u>	<u>6</u>	0	<u>6</u>
<u>Braille Training</u>						
New awards	0 <sup>2</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	0	0 <sup>2</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	0
Continuation awards	<u>0<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>0<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>300</u>	<u>0<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>0<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>3</u>
Total	<u>0<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>0<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>300</u>	<u>0<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>0<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Parent Information and Training</u>						
Continuation awards	0 <sup>2</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	850	0 <sup>2</sup>	0 <sup>2</sup>	8

<sup>1</sup> Under the Administration's proposal, funding for this activity is being consolidated with the VR State grants program.

<sup>2</sup> This activity was previously supported under Demonstration and Training Programs, which will be replaced by National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services .

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Training

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#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

##### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2011 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

**Goal:** To provide the public vocational rehabilitation (VR) sector with well-trained staff and to maintain and upgrade the skills of current staff.

**Objective:** To provide graduates who work within the vocational rehabilitation (VR) system to help individuals with disabilities achieve their goals.

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of RSA-supported graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through acceptable employment.		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2006</b>	83	86
<b>2007</b>	85	80
<b>2008</b>	85	
<b>2009</b>	86	
<b>2010</b>	86	
<b>2011</b>	87	

**Assessment of progress:** Performance for this measure exceeded the target in 2006, but did not meet the target established for 2007. Data for 2007 indicate that 49 of the 80 percent of Master's level graduates who are fulfilling their payback requirement work in State VR agencies. Thirty-one percent are fulfilling their payback through other acceptable employment such as work in nonprofit rehabilitation agencies and professional corporations or professional practice groups that maintain a service arrangement with the State VR agency.

RSA revised the Payback Reporting Form to be used by grantees in order to significantly improve the quality and accuracy of the data RSA receives about scholars. RSA expects to have detailed graduate-specific data in March of 2010.

##### Efficiency Measures

The Department has adopted an efficiency measure for the Long-Term Training program (LTT). That measure is the cost per Master's-level vocational rehabilitation counseling graduate. The measure is calculated by dividing the total funds spent on long-term training during a fiscal year by the number of graduates supported under that program during the same fiscal year.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Training

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<b>Measure:</b> The Federal cost per RSA supported rehabilitation counseling graduate at the Masters-level.		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2006</b>		\$10,962
<b>2007</b>	\$10,702	14,734
<b>2008</b>	10,702	10,022
<b>2009</b>	10,702	
<b>2010</b>	10,702	
<b>2011</b>	10,702	

**Assessment of progress:** The 2008 data suggests an improvement in efficiency over the prior 2 years. However, because of concerns about the accuracy of the data and problems with the methodology used for calculating this measure, it is difficult to interpret these data. RSA will consider establishing new targets after fiscal year 2010 data are available in March of 2010 using the revised Payback Reporting Form.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### National activities to improve rehabilitation services

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 303)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
0	\$6,472	+\$6,472

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The President's FY 2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The proposed new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program would support national activities that improve the administration and effectiveness of programs and services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act) or further the purposes of the Act in promoting the employment and independence of individuals with disabilities in the community.

Under the Administration's proposal, funds provided under this program would be awarded through grants and contracts and used to support projects and activities designed to improve program performance and the delivery of vocational rehabilitation and independent living services under the Act, including technical assistance. Funds could be used for activities to identify program needs, potential promising practices at the State and local level, and topics for research and evaluation. These activities would support the Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) by helping to inform decisions about the strategies and practices to be tested and evaluated. This program would also serve as a major vehicle for assisting State VR agencies and others in learning about and implementing evidence-based practices identified under WIF. Funds could also be used to increase the Department's knowledge of State agency policies and practices and to improve program monitoring. This activity would be current-funded.

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$6.472 million to establish a new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program that would replace the Demonstration and Training program. This new program would also consolidate the resources used to support technical assistance and projects designed to improve program performance and the delivery of vocational rehabilitation and independent living services under the Evaluation and Program Improvement programs.

The Administration believes that the consolidation of activities under these programs will enable the Department to more effectively conduct the types of activities currently authorized under these programs and ensure that the knowledge and products obtained from Rehabilitation

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### National activities to improve rehabilitation services

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Service Administration's (RSA) monitoring and program improvement activities, as well as activities funded under the National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and WIF, are utilized by program staff to assist State VR agencies and other grantees to improve employment and independent living outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The consolidation would also provide the Department with the flexibility to strategically plan and better direct its resources in order to improve program performance and the delivery of services.

Short-term descriptive studies and analytical and program performance activities currently conducted under the Evaluation program would be conducted under this new program. However, NIDRR would conduct multi-year research and rigorous evaluation studies of programs under the Act, capitalizing on its research and evaluation expertise. Under the Administration's proposal, NIDRR would also play a larger role in the development and evaluation of demonstration projects, particularly rigorous research-based intervention demonstrations. The expectation is that, working collaboratively, RSA and NIDRR will be able to develop and implement a better coordinated and rigorous approach to research, development, and knowledge translation investments in vocational rehabilitation and independent living.

In FY 2011, approximately 87 percent of the funds would be used to support the continuation of projects and activities that were funded under the Program Improvement, Evaluation, and Demonstration and Training Programs. Continuation funding would be provided for the final year of the model demonstrations to improve the postsecondary and employment outcomes of youth with disabilities and the assistive technology reutilization technical assistance grants awarded under Demonstration and Training Programs. Funds would also be used to support the second year of the model demonstrations to improve outcomes for individuals served by State VR Agencies that are receiving benefits under Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) to be awarded under the Demonstration and Training Programs in FY 2010. FY 2011 funds would also be used to continue support for ongoing technical assistance activities, such as RSA's National Technical Assistance Center and technical assistance webinars, currently funded under the Program Improvement program and for the program performance tasks and targeted issue briefs currently carried out under the Evaluation program. The remaining funds would be used to support technical assistance and program improvement and performance activities initiated under the new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program in fiscal year 2011.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2011</u>
Continuation Funding:	
Demonstration projects	\$4,826
Program Improvement and Evaluation projects	<u>793</u>
Subtotal	5,619
New projects and activities	789
Minority Outreach	<u>64</u>
Total	6,472

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Demonstration and training programs

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 303(b))

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): 0 <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
	\$11,601	0	-\$11,601

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The Administration is not proposing appropriations language for FY 2011, nor seeking reauthorizing legislation.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Demonstration and Training programs are authorized to provide competitive grants to, or contracts with, eligible entities to expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation and other services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act) and to further the purposes and policies of the Act. These current-funded discretionary programs also are authorized to support activities that increase the provision, extent, availability, scope, and quality of rehabilitation services under the Act, including related research and evaluation activities.

Section 303(b) of the Rehabilitation Act authorizes the support of activities to demonstrate methods of service delivery to individuals with disabilities, as well as activities such as technical assistance, systems change, special studies and evaluation, and dissemination and utilization of project findings. Eligible entities include State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies, community rehabilitation programs, Indian tribes or tribal organizations, other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations, and for-profit organizations. Competitions may be limited to one or more type of entity.

Sections 303(c) and (d) of the Act authorize a parent information and training program and a Braille training program.

The majority of projects currently supported under Demonstration and Training programs are designed to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities by expanding and improving the availability and provision of rehabilitation and other services. These projects are intended to increase employment outcomes for individuals for whom vocational rehabilitation services were previously unavailable or who previously did not take advantage of such services.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Demonstration and training programs

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Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(\$000s)
2006 .....	\$6,511
2007 .....	8,756
2008 .....	10,151 <sup>1</sup>
2009 .....	9,594 <sup>2</sup>
2010 .....	11,601 <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Includes \$3,100 thousand for Congressional earmarks.

<sup>2</sup>Includes \$3,088 thousand for Congressional earmarks.

<sup>3</sup>Includes \$5,095 thousand for Congressional earmarks.

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests no funds for Demonstration and Training programs in fiscal year 2011. While the existing authority for this program is flexible and could be used to support a broad range of activities, the Administration believes it can improve administration of the types of activities supported under this program and other related and overlapping programs and better meet the needs of the field for evidence-based practices and other information and assistance by reorganizing these functions.

The Administration is proposing to replace Demonstration and Training programs with a new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program that would support projects designed to improve program performance and the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services, including technical assistance. In addition, the Administration is not seeking separate funding for the Program Improvement and Evaluation programs and proposes to consolidate the resources for those activities into the new National Activities program. Under the proposed National Activities program, the Department would have the flexibility to strategically direct all of its program improvement resources, consolidated under one authority, to areas of need.

As part of a plan to expand the role of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) in vocational rehabilitation and employment research, NIDRR would play an increased role in the conduct of demonstration projects, in collaboration with RSA. NIDRR has the capacity and the expertise to conduct scientific research and to carry out rigorous evaluations of demonstration projects and of the policies, practices, and strategies used by State VR agencies and other service providers. In addition, the Administration is seeking new funding for a Workforce Innovation Fund, which will be another source for meeting the needs of the field for evidence-based practices. Under the proposed Workforce Innovation Fund, RSA and NIDRR would work together, in collaboration with other offices and agencies as appropriate, on projects to encourage innovation and to identify and validate effective strategies for improving services and outcomes for individuals with disabilities served under the Workforce Investment Act, including programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act.

Finally, the Administration is proposing to consolidate the training activities currently supported under Demonstration and Training programs (Braille Training and Parent Information and

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Demonstration and training programs

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Training Centers) with the Training program. Consistent with the purposes of the Training program, the Braille Training program supports projects that provide training in the use of braille for personnel providing VR services or educational services to youth and adults who are blind. The Parent Information and Training Centers program supports projects that provide training and information to enable individuals with disabilities, and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or other authorized representatives of the individuals, to participate more effectively with professionals in meeting the vocational, independent living, and rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities.

#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
<b>Program funding:</b>			
SSDI/SSI Demos and TA center	0	\$1,531	0 <sup>1</sup>
Transition initiative	\$3,280	3,411	0 <sup>2</sup>
AT Reutilization	258	258	0 <sup>2</sup>
Parent Information and Training Centers	850	850	0 <sup>3</sup>
Braille Training	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>0</u> <sup>3</sup>
Subtotal—Program funding	4,688	6,350	0
TA for Telework grantees	100	0	0
Peer review of new award applications	12	40	0
Minority outreach	1,246	116	0
Conferences	460	0	0
Earmarks	<u>3,088</u>	<u>5,095</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal—Other program costs	<u>4,906</u>	<u>5,251</u>	<u>0</u>
Total—Program and program costs	9,594	11,601	0
<b>Number of projects:</b>			
New	0	6	0
Continuation	<u>18</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>0</u>
Total—Number of projects	<u>18</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>0</u>

<sup>1</sup> Continuation costs of \$1,531 thousand for the SSDI/SSI Demos and TA Center are included in the request for the new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.

<sup>2</sup> Continuation costs of \$3,037 thousand for the Transition initiative and \$258 thousand for AT Reutilization are included in the request for the National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.

<sup>3</sup> Continuation costs of \$850 thousand for the Parent Information and Training Centers and \$300 thousand for Braille Training are included in the request for the Training program.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Demonstration and training programs

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#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

##### Efficiency Measure

**Goal:** To expand, improve or further the purposes of activities authorized under the Act.

**Objective:** *Expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation services that lead to employment outcomes.*

The efficiency measure for this program is the percentage of projects that met their goals and objectives as established in their original applications, or as modified during the first year. This efficiency measure is designed to determine whether the grantees are providing the services for which they were awarded funding through the competitive process. RSA reviewed applications in relation to the grantees' annual reports and found that this measure must be modified in order to accurately capture meaningful data regarding performance. RSA is currently working with a contractor to develop the best measure for this demonstration program that supports such diverse project activities.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Program improvement

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 12(a))

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): 0 <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$852	0	-\$852

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The Administration is not proposing appropriations language for FY 2011, nor seeking reauthorizing legislation.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Section 12(a) of the Rehabilitation Act authorizes the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to provide technical assistance and consultative services to public and nonprofit private agencies and organizations, including assistance to enable agencies and organizations to facilitate meaningful and effective participation by individuals with disabilities in workforce investment activities under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). In addition, section 12(a) funds may be used to provide short-term and technical instruction, conduct special demonstrations, develop and disseminate educational or information materials, carry out monitoring, and conduct evaluations.

Program improvement funds are awarded through grants and contracts to provide technical assistance and to support activities that increase program effectiveness and improve accountability in order to improve the operation of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program and the provision of services to individuals with disabilities under the Act. This activity is current-funded.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2006.....	\$835
2007.....	835
2008.....	622
2009.....	622
2010.....	852

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for this program for FY 2011. Funds to support new and ongoing projects designed to increase the Department's capacity for providing technical assistance to Rehabilitation Service Administration (RSA) grantees, particularly State Vocational agencies, are requested under a proposed new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Program improvement

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program. Under the new program, Department would be able to conduct the types of activities currently authorized under this program and some of the activities carried out under the Evaluation and the Demonstration and Training programs. The proposed program would provide the Department with more flexibility and enhance its ability to strategically direct its limited technical assistance and program improvement resources to areas of need. The proposed consolidation would reduce duplication and improve the management of these activities.

In FY 2010, nearly half (\$413,000) of the Program Improvement funds will be used to continue support for the National Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center (NTAC) that was initiated with FY 2008 funds. RSA plans to use remaining FY 2010 funds to conduct cost-effective training and technical assistance webinars for State VR agencies, their partners, and other RSA grantees as well as a national summit on program evaluation and quality assurance for State VR agencies. Funding for the NTAC in fiscal year 2011 would be provided under the proposed National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program. The Department would continue to support the delivery of timely training and technical assistance to RSA grantees and stakeholders through webinars and RSA's new Dissemination and Technical Assistance Resource (DATAR) web-based resource under the proposed new program. These strategies allow RSA to reach a broader population of grantees and stakeholders without convening face-to-face meetings, greatly improving the cost effectiveness of providing ongoing training and technical assistance.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Funding for technical assistance activities:			
New	0	\$252	0
Continuations	<u>\$622</u>	<u>\$600</u>	<u>0</u> <sup>1</sup>
Total	\$662	\$852	0
Number of activities:			
New	0	1	0
Continuation	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	4	4	0

<sup>1</sup> Funds to cover continuation costs in FY 2011 for the NTAC and technical assistance webinars are requested under the proposed National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.

### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Department has undertaken several major initiatives in its effort to improve the performance of the VR State Grants program. These include implementing a new monitoring process that focuses on the performance of State VR agencies, enhancing RSA's capacity to provide technical assistance, and developing a strategic performance plan for the VR program. A

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Program improvement

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description of the major activities supported with Program Improvement funds that are directed towards these efforts are provided below.

#### National Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center

The NTAC assists in coordinating the activities of and sharing information among members of the technical assistance (TA) network established by RSA in cooperation with the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, and other RSA TA resources. The NTAC is responsible for collecting, reviewing, and disseminating TA materials; identifying and disseminating research and other information that may be useful to TA network activities; and identifying potential technical assistance providers as needed on issues not specifically addressed by the Regional Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) centers. The NTAC also reviews the TACE centers work plans to obtain information that can be used in developing and implementing a common needs assessment and common evaluation. In addition, the NTAC will be implementing a process for assessing performance of the TACE centers.

The NTAC is in the process of developing a Technical Assistance and Continuing Education Manual. In FY 2009, the NTAC, in collaboration with RSA and the TACE centers, completed a proposed common needs assessment, common work plan, and common evaluation instruments. In August, the NTAC convened a meeting of the TACE centers to clarify the use of these proposed instruments and to review the process for submitting the reports developed from those instruments and to clarify the expectations of all parties in planning, providing, tracking and evaluating the delivery of technical assistance and continuing education to State VR agencies and their partners. These instruments will be housed in the RSA Management Information System. The NTAC continues to identify existing materials for the TA Network Library and subject matter experts for the Resource Directory. Currently, over 50 experts are entered into the directory.

#### VR Strategic Performance Plan (SPP)

The Department, with assistance from a contractor, has developed a performance plan for the VR State Grants program that identifies strategic goals, objectives, strategies, and outcome-oriented performance measures to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The plan will assist the Department in directing its monitoring, technical assistance, and management resources toward the implementation of policies and practices that are known to have a positive effect on increasing high-quality employment outcomes. A draft Strategic Performance Plan that outlines the proposed goals, objectives, and measures of progress towards achievement of the goals and objectives was developed in FY 2008 and made available to State VR agencies and other program stakeholders for comment. The plan was revised based on comments received by RSA and was presented at a meeting of the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation in April 2009.

RSA used FY 2009 funds provided under the Evaluation authority to procure outside assistance in assessing agency performance under the plan, identifying meaningful State agency-specific performance targets for the new measures, and formulating an assessment model for the SPP-related technical assistance that RSA will be providing. RSA will examine the performance of

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Program improvement

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each State VR agency, and conduct analysis of appropriate targets given agency size, consumer characteristics, funding contingencies, and other factors. RSA will continue to work with State agencies in determining appropriate performance targets that are sensitive to conditions in the State.

### Web-Based Dissemination and Technical Assistance Resource

The September 2005 Government Accountability Office report, entitled *Vocational Rehabilitation: Better Measures and Monitoring Could Improve Performance of the VR Program*, recommended that the Secretary take executive action to "...develop alternative means of disseminating best practices among state VR agencies...such as a central repository." RSA is taking steps to broaden the dissemination of information and publicize the availability of its monitoring and analytic work products. The Department awarded a contract in fiscal year 2006 to develop a web-based technical assistance resource (DATAR) to provide broader access to a wide variety of vocational rehabilitation and independent living program resources. The web-based resource project will serve as the "doorway and card catalogue" for an extensive online repository to facilitate public access to the most current vocational rehabilitation and independent living program information, including demographic and performance measurement data; effective practices; program initiatives; and current issues, research, and literature. A controlled working prototype of DATAR was completed in FY 2008 and later enhanced to make the search function more user-friendly. However, DATAR's implementation has been significantly delayed due to a number of unanticipated problems, including the need for technical adjustments so that DATAR could function as a viable public domain, required repair and retesting of the system due to the physical relocation of the Department's servers, and the need for further technical adjustments due to the redesign of the Department of Education's main website. The DATAR system is currently in an internal test phase.

### A Model Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and Training/Technical Assistance to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies

Section 101(a)(15)(i) of the Rehabilitation Act requires State VR agencies to jointly conduct a comprehensive, statewide assessment with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) at least once every 3 years that describes the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within that State. Section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act requires State VR agencies to develop goals and priorities in carrying out their VR program during the period in which the annual State plan is in effect, based on analysis of the comprehensive Statewide needs assessment (CSNA), including strategies the State will use to address the needs identified in the CSNA. Finally, the State VR agency must submit an annual report to the Commissioner that includes an evaluation of the extent to which the State's goals were achieved and, if not achieved, the factors that impeded achievement.

In reviewing FY 2007 State Plan submissions, RSA determined that State VR agencies have not carried out CSNAs that yield data that are sufficient to inform the development of goals and priorities. Many of the CSNAs do not address all of the required elements, and more importantly, even those CSNAs that do address the required elements, do not yield sufficient information on the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in the State. In discussions with State agencies about the quality of their CSNAs, many State agencies readily admit that

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they do not have the expertise to carry out a proper CSNA, and have asked RSA to provide them with a model. RSA awarded a contract in FY 2007 to develop a model CSNA to assist State VR agencies and SRCs in conducting their own CSNAs and to improve the development of goals and priorities based on the CSNA. A panel of experts was used to provide guidance in the development of the CSNA model. The conceptual model for the CSNA has been completed. The draft VR Needs Assessment Guide was released to State VR agencies, SRCs, TACE centers, TA Network members, and the NTAC in early September, 2009. Three State VR agencies piloted the use of the assessment guide with assistance from the contractor. The draft VR Needs Assessment Guide is available on the contractor's website. The draft VR Needs Assessment Guide and Personal Computer-Delivered Training and Self-Evaluation component are being revised based on feedback received from State VR agencies, SRCs, and TACE centers. The Department expects to receive the final products of this project by the end of January 2010.

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### Evaluation

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 14)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$1,217	0	-\$1,217

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The Administration is not proposing appropriations language for FY 2011, nor seeking reauthorizing legislation.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Secretary uses the funds appropriated under this authority to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of programs authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the Act), including their general effectiveness in relation to their cost, their impact on related programs, and their structure and mechanisms for delivery of services. Studies are designed to provide information for policy decisions related to program management and on effectiveness. In addition, subsection 14(f) of the Rehabilitation Act requires the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to identify and disseminate information on exemplary practices concerning vocational rehabilitation.

This is a current-funded program. Contracts and cooperative agreements are awarded for studies to be conducted by persons not immediately involved in the administration of the programs authorized by the Act.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2006.....	\$1,473
2007.....	1,473
2008.....	1,447
2009.....	1,447
2010.....	1,217

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for this program for fiscal year 2011. Funds to support new short-term projects designed to improve program performance and the delivery of vocational rehabilitation (VR) and independent living services under the Act are requested under a proposed new National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program. The proposed program would consolidate, reorganize, and reduce duplication in the functions and activities carried out under

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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this program and activities carried out under the Program Improvement and the Demonstration and Training programs. The proposed program would provide the Department with more flexibility and enhance its ability to strategically direct its limited program improvement resources to areas of need. In addition, the request reflects the Department's plan to transfer responsibility for conducting rigorous program evaluations and studies of programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act to the National Institute for Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). The proposed change would capitalize on NIDRR's research and evaluation expertise and provide for a better coordinated and rigorous approach to research, development, and knowledge translation investments in vocational rehabilitation and independent living.

RSA would continue to play a major role in identifying evaluation and research needs related to the programs it administers and would work collaboratively with NIDRR in the development of evaluation proposals. RSA is currently conducting a collaborative planning process to assist in identifying and prioritizing areas of study for future evaluations. A concept mapping approach that will systematically incorporate a range of input from Department staff, relevant Federal agencies, and external stakeholders is being utilized.

In fiscal year 2010, about 18 percent of the evaluation funds will be used to support ongoing quantitative and qualitative analytical activities that assist the Department to assess and improve program performance. In addition, the Department plans to initiate about three new evaluation projects totaling approximately \$1 million. About 82 percent of the funds available for new projects will be used to support an evaluation of the VR State Grants program. The evaluation questions to be addressed by this study are currently under development. To complement the supported employment evaluation that was initiated in 2009, RSA plans to support a study of how State VR agencies collaborate with other agencies, organizations, and employers to provide extended services for VR consumers who need such support to maintain employment in integrated settings.

Fiscal year 2009 evaluation funds were used to support a number of evaluation projects including studies of the Helen Keller National Center and the Supported Employment program, a feasibility study examining consumer attrition in the VR State Grants program, an evaluation of model transition demonstration projects, and a comprehensive review and revision of the major data collections that provide performance data for the State VR Services program. Evaluation funds were also used to support a number of short-term projects designed to assist the Department in assessing program performance or to provide information on topics that may warrant further study.

#### Supported Employment Evaluation

In fiscal year 2009, The Department initiated a study of supported employment services provided under title I and title VI of the Rehabilitation Act and the role of the Supported Employment (SE) State Grants program in assisting State VR agencies to obtain supported employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The SE State Grants program has received an annual appropriation of approximately \$29 million as a supplement to the VR State Grants program to assist States in providing supported employment services. The evaluation will provide more in-depth understanding of how the SE program is implemented across State VR agencies from both a fiscal and programmatic perspective, including how the

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SE appropriation (Title VI B funds) is used in conjunction with Title I funds to assist these individuals to achieve supported employment outcomes. The evaluation will also seek to identify the role of these programs in the current environment, their successes and challenges, and their impact within the larger SE system. Information from this evaluation will be used to improve monitoring, data collection, and accountability, and to inform broader policy decisions. The study is scheduled to be completed in June FY 2011.

### Evaluation of Model Transition Projects

In FY 2007, the Department awarded six grants under the Demonstration and Training program to support 5-year projects that demonstrate the use of promising practices of collaborative transition planning and service delivery to improve the postsecondary education and employment outcomes of youth with disabilities. FY 2007 funds were used to design an annual performance report to obtain information from each grantee for each year of the project. In FY 2009, the Department began a 3-year evaluation of these model projects to explore early indications of success and challenges. The evaluation will analyze annual grantee data and produce an aggregated national data set that will include demographic data, disability data, and information on the services provided and the outcomes achieved. Intermediate outcomes, such as program retention and school attendance, will also be reported.

The goal for this evaluation is to explore early indications of success and challenges in these model demonstration projects. Using the annual reports, interviews and site visits with grantees, grantee evaluation data, and other data collected from sites, the evaluation will seek to determine: (1) whether there is evidence that the demonstration projects produced positive outcomes for youth in transition; (2) what degree of fidelity the demonstration sites implemented with each of the research-based practices; (3) what evidence within the demonstration projects speaks to the effectiveness of these practices; and (4) if feasible, how the outcomes of the demonstration projects compare to previous rates of achievement or to other VR sites.

### VR Attrition Feasibility Study

In FY 2009, evaluation funds were used to conduct a feasibility study examining VR consumer attrition. RSA data show that approximately 30 percent of the eligible individuals whose case records were closed in fiscal years 2007 and 2008 dropped out of the VR program before an individualized plan for employment was developed or before receiving services. Attrition has a major negative impact on program operations and resources. State VR agencies often make significant resource investments in consumers only to have them drop out of the program prior to obtaining a successful employment outcome.

In the first phase of this feasibility study, data from three of RSA's VR data collections will be analyzed to provide a description of the national picture of State VR agency attrition. This includes elements such as: State and regional patterns, status categories of drop-outs, and components of the State VR agency service delivery system where attrition occurs. These data will be correlated with information on State resources, such as finances, staffing levels, counselor case loads, order of selection, and consumer profiles, to create a beginning understanding of possible correlations that may be causal factors in attrition. The contractor will use data on State VR agency performance and resources as maintained in the RSA-911

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database and other sources. This information will also be used to provide direction for an in-depth evaluation that investigates factors that cause attrition and ways to correct them. In the second phase of this study, the contractor will develop a proposed evaluation design for a large-scale study that will provide causal data and a set of policy and program recommendations. The contractor will provide an analysis of RSA-911 data and State data that assesses the appropriateness of these data sets for a large-scale study, looking for gaps in the data and possible data quality issues. The study is expected to be completed by the end of FY 2010.

#### Evaluation of the Helen Keller National Center

In fiscal year 2008, the Department initiated an independent study of the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) to evaluate the effectiveness of the Center. There is very little outcome data related to the performance of HKNC to associate with its program expenditures. The only study conducted of the Center was completed in fiscal year 1988 and covered the fiscal year 1986 program year. The study will address the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the programs for the various populations served by HKNC and its regional offices and the Center's interactions with vocational rehabilitation agencies. In addition, it will examine the support that HKNC provides to other service providers and to the family members of deaf-blind individuals who, in turn, support those individuals. The results of the study will be used to assist HKNC in planning future activities and setting priorities and to assist the Department in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities. The Department expects the study to be completed by December 2010.

#### VR Program Performance Reporting

Fiscal year 2008 and 2009 funds are also being used to support a comprehensive review and revision of the three major data collections that are used to provide information and assess the performance of the VR State Grants program. These data collections include the Case Service Report (RSA-911), the Cumulative Caseload Report (RSA-113), and the Annual Vocational Rehabilitation Program/Cost Report (RSA-2). These data collections are submitted annually by the 80 State VR agencies and are the major sources of performance data for the VR State Grants program. The RSA-911 database, the largest of these collections, contains about 125 data elements for each individual served by a State VR agency, including information on the characteristics of, services received by, and outcomes for, the consumers who have exited the VR program. The purpose of this project is to enhance the usefulness of the VR data in program management and evaluation to State and Federal policymakers. In particular, the project is designed to improve the accuracy, consistency, and timeliness of the performance information that RSA collects, identify gaps in information that are necessary in assessing grantee performance, and delete unnecessary data. Input on the redesign of the reporting forms will be solicited from knowledgeable Federal personnel, State VR agencies, and other non-Federal consumers of the data. The project is scheduled to be completed in FY 2010.

#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Funding for evaluation activities:			
New	\$843	\$997	0
Continuations	\$604	\$220	0 <sup>1</sup>

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#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Number of activities:			
New	7	3	0
Continuation	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	11	5	0

<sup>1</sup> Funds to cover continuation costs in FY 2011 are requested under the proposed National Activities to Improve Rehabilitation Services program.

#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

A description of major studies and evaluations that were conducted in recent fiscal years is provided below. Information obtained from these studies, along with information obtained from activities conducted under Program Improvement and findings from monitoring activities are being used by RSA to improve program performance.

##### Post Vocational Rehabilitation Experiences Study

The Post Vocational Rehabilitation Experiences Study (PVRES) examined the post-closure employment status of four subgroups of former VR consumers with significant disabilities who exited the program in FY 2006, including persons with mental illness, mental retardation, persons who received Social Security disability benefits, and youth in transition. The study also provided information on the supports received by individuals from these groups who exited the program with a supported employment outcome. Individuals were interviewed between December 2007 and March 2008, a period of at least 14 months after case closure. The study found that of VR consumers who left VR with employment, between 63 and 74 percent were employed at the time of the PVRES interview, and between 82 and 93 percent had been employed within the 12 months prior to the interview. The survey data also indicated that between 13 and 25 percent of these consumers returned to the program and received services within the 12 months before the PVRES survey. The study findings confirm that the need for VR-type services does not end for some people when a job placement is obtained and suggest that VR services may be too time-limited for those individuals who need ongoing services to maintain employment. For example, more flexible and consistent policies regarding provision of post-employment services would allow provision of follow-up services to former consumers, as needed, perhaps over a period of 12 months or more, without the need to reopen a case.

##### Evaluation of Projects Demonstrating the Use of Adult Education Literacy Services by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies to Improve the Earnings of Individuals with Disabilities

The purpose of the literacy evaluation, which received its final year of project funding in 2007, is to assess whether literacy instruction (focusing upon the Wilson Reading System) and the provision of relevant support services, as carried out by five Department-funded model demonstration projects, have an impact on the literacy skills, utilization of postsecondary education, employability, and earnings and benefits of VR consumers with poor literacy skills, particularly individuals with learning disabilities. The contract was modified in FY 2007 to

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support follow-up data collection at 6 and 12 months after a project participant's VR case is closed. These data will assist in determining the degree to which individuals have progressed in employment and pursued additional education and/or services, and the participants' perceptions of the usefulness of the literacy services. The contractor submitted the draft final report for review in December 2009. An expanded final report, including supplementary appendices is scheduled for completion in February 2010.

#### VR Practices Studies

FY 2007 evaluation funds were used to initiate targeted studies in three areas of State VR agency practices, the use of cooperative agreements, Comprehensive Rehabilitation Centers (CRCs), and quality assurance techniques. The studies will improve RSA's understanding of how these three practices affect VR program consumers and outcomes, and assist RSA in its efforts to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of services by State VR agencies. The purposes of these studies were as follows:

*Comprehensive Rehabilitation Centers:* The purpose of the CRC study was to determine how much CRCs cost to operate, what outcomes they produce, the extent to which States that support a CRC achieve different outcomes from other States, and what promising practices are used by CRCs.

*Cooperative Agreements:* The purpose of this study was to determine how widespread the use of cooperative agreements is among State VR agencies, what proportion of States' matching funds is derived from cooperative agreements, and what the effects are of such cooperative agreements.

*State VR Agency Quality Assurance (QA) Procedures:* The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent VR agencies perform QA and other functions to ensure that services are delivered in accordance with program requirements and in keeping with agency policies and procedures, how well these functions are performed, the results that are attributable to QA and/or similar functions, and what practices are effective.

The information for the CRC study was collected through site visits to eight State-operated CRCs. A briefing for RSA staff on the results of the CRC study was conducted in early April and the final report was received in May 2009. Data collection on the use of cooperative agreements and quality assurance techniques included a survey of the 80 State VR agencies and site visits to selected State VR agencies, chosen on the basis of survey results. Final reports on the use of cooperative agreements and quality assurance techniques are expected in March 2010.

#### An Assessment of Transition Policies and Practices in State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies

Youth with disabilities face significant challenges as they transition to adult life. Timely and significant investment in VR services for youth with disabilities before the beginning of their potential work life will give them the greatest opportunity to prepare themselves for self-support. The Department conducted a study supported with fiscal year 2004 and 2005 funds to increase its understanding of the transition policies and practices among State VR agencies. The study provides a descriptive national picture of transition policies and practices among State VR agencies, including the amount and source of resources supporting such practices, and

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identifies promising State VR agency practices in the provision of transition services. This study focuses on the population of individuals with disabilities aged 14 and over who are transitioning from secondary school (or an equivalent educational institution) to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, training, and employment. The specific objectives of the study were to:

- Describe and classify State policies and practices for identifying and serving youth with disabilities who are transitioning from school to post-school outcomes;
- Identify and describe policy issues, promising practices, and other factors that facilitate effective collaboration; transition planning; and provision of services; including effective strategies, policies, and practices that promote successful collaboration with secondary schools, postsecondary institutions, employers, and independent living centers;
- Identify major obstacles to collaboration and early intervention in transition planning; and
- Examine the influence of financial factors, including provision of complementary or matching funds to the VR agency by educational or education-related agencies, and where they exist, to identify non-Title I (VR) resources used to support transition practices.

The interim report was completed in November 2006 and site visits to identify promising practices were conducted in February and March 2007. A copy of the draft final report is available online at <http://www.vrtransitionstudy.org/reports/final.html>.

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### **Supported employment extended services for youth with significant disabilities** (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 303)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
0	\$25,000	+\$25,000

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The President's FY 2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the proposed program is to expand supported employment opportunities for youth with significant disabilities by awarding grants to States to provide extended services in collaboration with State VR agencies and other public and non-public entities. A supported employment outcome is achieved through the provision of short-term VR services that are augmented with extended services provided by other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations for the duration of that employment. Extended services are ongoing support services and other appropriate services that are needed to support and maintain an individual with a significant disability in supported employment once the individual is stabilized in the job. Extended services typically include case management, job coaching and job skill training, observation and supervision, facilitation of natural supports, and follow-up services, such as regular contact with the individual's employer.

Under the proposed program, 5-year awards would be made to States on a competitive basis for up to 90 percent of the cost of the program. Applicants would be required to submit a plan that: (1) identifies and addresses State and local needs for extended services for youth with significant disabilities; (2) demonstrates how the grantee will collaborate with State VR agencies, State educational agencies, and other public and nonpublic agencies to increase the access of transitioning youth to extended services and improve continuity in the provision of supported employment services; and (3) describes how the State will use these funds to leverage other public and private funds to increase resources for extended services and expand supported employment opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities. The factors used to determine the amount of each competitive award would be: the amount of funds available; the relative population of the State or Outlying Area; and the alignment of proposed activities with the needs identified in the applicant's plan.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Supported employment extended services for youth with significant disabilities

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#### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$25 million for the proposed Supported Employment Extended Services program to assist States in expanding supported employment opportunities for youth with disabilities as they transition from school to the workforce. In the last few decades, the needs and welfare of youth with disabilities have increasingly become the focus of public policy. Significant progress has been made in the educational opportunities and the quality of educational services accessible and available to youth with disabilities, including youth with significant disabilities. Although the overall percentage of youth with disabilities who are working after leaving high school has increased in recent years, youth with disabilities are still significantly more likely to be unemployed compared to youth without disabilities. In addition, youth considered to have significant disabilities are not experiencing comparable gains in post-school employment rates. Data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS-2) show that up to 2 years after leaving high school, about 40 percent of youths with disabilities are employed as compared to 60 percent in the same-age out-of-school youth in the general population. However, NLTS-2 data also indicate that employment rates vary considerably across disability categories for students with disabilities. Youth with learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, other health impairments, or speech impairments are the most likely to be employed in a 1-year period (50 percent to 60 percent). In contrast, youth with significant disabilities have much lower employment rates, e.g., 15 percent for youth with autism, 25 percent for youth with multiple disabilities, deaf-blindness, or orthopedic impairments, and 33 percent for youth with mental retardation or visual impairments.

Supported employment has been shown to be an effective strategy in assisting individuals with significant disabilities, including youth with significant disabilities, to obtain and maintain work in integrated settings. A State VR agency's assessment of an individual with a significant disability's VR needs must include consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome. If supported employment is the most appropriate outcome, the individualized plan for employment (IPE) must specify the time-limited supported employment services to be provided by the State VR agency and the expected extended services that are needed to support the individual in integrated employment. State VR agencies may provide these individuals with supported employment services for a period not to exceed 18 months, unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been established in the IPE. Once this period has ended, the State VR agency must arrange for extended services to be provided by other appropriate State agencies, private nonprofit organizations or other sources for the duration of that employment. Thus, the provision of extended services is the defining characteristic of supported employment, and the need for extended services is the defining characteristic of supported employment consumers. However, too often, individuals who have supported employment identified as a vocational goal do not achieve such outcomes because of the lack of resources to provide extended services.

The availability of extended services, and thus supported employment opportunities, varies from State to State and within States. In addition, funding mechanisms to support extended services vary from State to State. For the most part, funds to support extended services come from State and local developmental disability and mental health agencies, other State agencies, and from Medicaid. Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver program funds can only be used

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### Supported employment extended services for youth with significant disabilities

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for providing supported employment to a very limited and clearly defined group of individuals who meet funding restrictions imposed by Medicaid policies. As a result, State and local agencies must work through complicated mechanisms to pool monies that can be used to provide extended services. In addition, State and local funding for extended services has not kept pace with the funding available to secure the initial supported employment placement.

The limited availability of resources for extended services is a major barrier to increasing supported employment opportunities for students with significant disabilities transitioning from secondary education to employment who require ongoing support in order to work in the competitive labor market. In some cases, these students leave school only to find that they will have to wait for an extended period of time before they will be able to participate in community-based employment because extended services are not available. In other cases, a student may receive time-limited supported employment services through the State VR agency, but not obtain a supported employment outcome because resources for extended services are not currently available. These set-backs have a negative effect on the transitioning youth and the family and may affect the individual's chances of achieving a successful transition to employment in the community. Providing resources to States that will divert youth from pathways to unemployment or segregated employment at the critical juncture between high school and their transition to adult roles will go a long way in facilitating their entry into the competitive labor market and promoting integrated employment. Funds provided through this program will encourage State and local agencies to work together to develop and implement innovative methods of expanding the availability of extended supported employment services for youth with significant disabilities.

#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2011</u>
Project funding:	
New project awards	\$ 24,920
Peer review of new award applications	<u>    \$80</u>
Total	\$25,000
Average award	\$712
Estimated number of projects	35

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### Independent living

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII, Parts B and C, and Chapter 2)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
Grants for Independent Living (proposed)	0	\$110,000	+\$110,000
Services for older individuals who are blind	\$34,151	34,151	0
Independent living State grants	23,450	0	-23,450
Centers for independent living	80,266	0	-80,266

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired in September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The President's FY 2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the independent living programs is to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities, and to integrate these individuals into the mainstream of American society. Independent living programs provide financial assistance to provide, expand, and improve independent living services; develop and support statewide networks of centers for independent living; and improve working relationships among State independent living rehabilitation programs, centers for independent living, Statewide Independent Living Councils, Rehabilitation Act programs outside of Title VII, and other relevant Federal and non-Federal programs. The independent living programs are current-funded.

The **Independent Living State Grants** program supports formula grants to States, with funds allotted based on total population. States participating in the State Grants program must match 10 percent of their grant with non-Federal cash or in kind resources in the year for which the Federal funds are appropriated. The fiscal year 2009 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2007 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2007. The fiscal year 2010 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates released in December 2008.

To be eligible for financial assistance under the Independent Living State Grants or Centers for Independent Living program, States are required to establish a Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). Each State must also submit a State Plan for Independent Living that is jointly developed and signed by the director of the designated State vocational rehabilitation unit(s) (DSU) and the chairperson of the SILC. States may use these funds to provide resources to support the operation of the SILC and for one or more of the following purposes:

- to demonstrate ways to expand and improve independent living services;

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### Independent living

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- to provide independent living services;
- to support the operation of centers for independent living;
- to increase the capacity of public or nonprofit agencies and organizations and other entities to develop comprehensive approaches or systems for providing independent living services;
- to conduct studies and analyses, gather information, develop model policies and procedures, and present information, approaches, strategies, findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Federal, State, and local policymakers;
- to provide training on the independent living philosophy; and
- to provide outreach to populations who are unserved or underserved by programs under this title, including minority groups and urban and rural populations.

The **Centers for Independent Living (CIL)** program provides grants for consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential, private nonprofit agencies that are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities and provide an array of independent living services. At a minimum, centers are required to provide the core services of information and referral, independent living skills training, peer counseling, and individual and systems advocacy. Most centers are also actively involved in one or more of the following activities: community planning and decisionmaking; school-based peer counseling, role modeling, and skills training; working with local governments and employers to open and facilitate employment opportunities; interacting with local, State, and Federal legislators; and staging recreational events that integrate individuals with disabilities with their non-disabled peers.

A population-based formula determines the total amount that is available for discretionary grants to centers in each State. In most cases, the Department awards funds directly to centers for independent living. If State funding for CIL operation exceeds the level of Federal CIL funding in any fiscal year, the State may apply for the authority to award grants under this program through its DSU. There are currently only two States, Massachusetts and Minnesota, that are both eligible and have elected to manage their own CIL programs.

In addition to funding centers for independent living, the Department must award between 1.8 and 2 percent of the funds appropriated under this part for grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to provide training and technical assistance with respect to planning, developing, conducting, administering, and evaluating centers for independent living. Each State must submit an annual performance report providing information regarding the centers' and SILCs' most pressing training and technical assistance needs.

The Rehabilitation Act establishes a set of standards and assurances that centers for independent living must meet and requires the Department to develop and publish indicators of minimum compliance with the standards. These standards and assurances are used in evaluating compliance in the following areas: philosophy, including consumer control and equal access; provision of services on a cross-disability basis; support of the development and achievement of the independent living goals chosen by consumers; advocacy to increase the quality of community options for independent living; provision of independent living core

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services; resource development; and community capacity-building activities, such as community advocacy, technical assistance, and outreach. Each year, the Department must conduct compliance reviews of at least 15 percent of the centers and one-third of the designated State units funded under this part.

The Rehabilitation Act requires the Department to award grants to any eligible agency that had been awarded a grant as of September 30, 1997. In effect, all centers funded by the end of fiscal year 1997 are "grandfathered in" and thus guaranteed continued funding as long as they continue to meet program and fiscal standards and assurances.

The **Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind** program supports services to assist individuals aged 55 or older whose recent severe visual impairment makes competitive employment extremely difficult to obtain, but for whom independent living goals are feasible. Funds are used to provide independent living services, conduct activities that will improve or expand services for these individuals, and conduct activities to improve public understanding of the problems of these individuals. Services are designed to help persons served under this program to adjust to their blindness by increasing their ability to care for their individual needs. Services provided under this program are typically not covered under private insurance or Medicaid.

Grantees are State vocational rehabilitation agencies for persons who are blind and visually impaired or, in States with no separate agency for persons who are blind, State combined vocational rehabilitation agencies. States participating in the Older Blind program must match 10 percent of their grant with non-Federal cash or in kind resources in the year for which the Federal funds are appropriated. When appropriations for this program exceed \$13 million—as they have since fiscal year 2000—awards are distributed to States according to a formula based on the population of individuals who are 55 years of age or older. The fiscal year 2009 and 2010 allotments are based on the resident population of individuals 55 years of age or older as of April 1, 2008. Fiscal year 2010 allotments will be revised when new population estimates by age group become available.

### **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009**

The Independent Living State Grants, Centers for Independent Living, and Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind received significant one-time additional appropriations of funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act) of \$18.2 million, \$87.5 million, and \$34.3 million respectively, which totaled \$140 million. These funds are available for obligation by the Department through September 30, 2010. As discussed above, the Rehabilitation Act contains a provision allowing all Title VII grantees to carry over funds that are not obligated and expended by the recipient for an additional fiscal year, so these funds are available for obligation and expenditure by grantees until September 30, 2011.

The funds appropriated under the Recovery Act are considered supplemental to the regular 2009 appropriation for these programs and were added to the regular appropriations for purposes of calculating the allocations to States according to each program's statutory formula. The Recovery Act funds for the IL State Grants and Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind programs were awarded in April 2009. The funds appropriated under the Recovery Act

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### Independent living

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are subject to the requirements of the authorizing statute for each of these programs. Since these funds are also subject to additional reporting and transparency requirements in the Recovery Act and are available for obligation for an additional year, the Recovery Act funds were awarded as separate grants from the 2009 regular appropriation.

Under the Centers for Independent Living program, any additional funds beyond those required to continue support for and provide cost of living adjustments to existing centers may be used to award new grants for centers to provide independent living services to unserved or underserved areas in each State. The Department expects that the significant one-time additional appropriation of \$87.5 million under the Recovery Act will support an estimated 24 new centers in 10 States, consistent with the approved State Plans for Independent Living. These new centers would expand the provision of independent living services to unserved or underserved areas of these States.

The Administration's overall guidance for use of Recovery Act funds includes the following principles that are particularly relevant for the Independent Living programs: (1) spend funds quickly to save and create jobs; (2) ensure transparency, reporting, and accountability; and (3) invest one-time Recovery Act funds thoughtfully so as to minimize any "funding cliff" when they are no longer available. Specific examples of activities that are consistent with these principles include the following:

- Designing or identifying and providing services that may be extended at low cost beyond 2012 to additional individuals who wish to transition from nursing homes to their communities;
- Creating more efficient and effective ways of increasing independent living services to students with disabilities transitioning from school to employment and independent living;
- Building long-term capacity by improving the technological core of the program, Training current staff in effective ways of providing assistive technology to consumers;
- Expanding information and referral and advocacy services to address the needs of consumers who were laid off and may need assistance replacing services or assistive technology previously provided through an employer; and
- Providing professional development opportunities that have both short-term and long-term benefits to service provider staff.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Independent living

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Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

(\$000s)

#### Independent living State grants

2006 .....	\$22,588
2007 .....	22,588
2008 .....	22,193
2009 .....	23,450
Recovery Act .....	18,200
2010 .....	23,450

#### Centers for independent living

2006 .....	\$74,638
2007 .....	74,638
2008 .....	73,334
2009 .....	77,266
Recovery Act .....	87,500
2010 .....	80,266

#### Services for older individuals who are blind

2006 .....	\$32,895
2007 .....	32,895
2008 .....	32,320
2009 .....	34,151
Recovery Act .....	34,300
2010 .....	34,151

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2011 the Administration requests \$110 million for a new Grants for Independent Living program and \$34.2 million for the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind (Older Blind) program. The Grants for Independent Living program would replace the Independent Living State Grants program and the Centers for Independent Living program so funds are not requested under either of these authorities. The request for the Grants for Independent Living program is \$6.3 million greater than the combined 2010 appropriation for the Independent Living State Grants and Centers for Independent Living. The request for the Older Blind program is level with the 2010 appropriation.

#### Grants for Independent Living

The Administration requests \$110 million for a new program, Grants for Independent Living, that would provide formula grants to States to support the provision of independent living services through centers that meet the requirements for centers for independent living under section 725 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the Act). Title VII of the Act currently authorizes two programs with overlapping purposes, the Independent Living State Grants program, which provides

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Independent living

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formula grants to States, and the Centers for Independent Living program, which provides competitive grants directly to nonprofit centers for independent living. Annual program reports show that an estimated 60 percent of the formula funds awarded under the Independent Living State Grants program is used for the same purposes as the funds for the CIL program, which are awarded as competitive grants – to provide independent living services, either directly or through grants and contracts with centers for independent living and other providers. And, the advantages of a competitive grant program (stronger performance and accountability focus) are muted under the current CIL program because the authorizing statute requires all centers funded by the end of fiscal year 1997 to receive funding as long as they continue to meet program and fiscal standards and assurances. The proposed consolidation of the two programs would reduce program duplication, eliminate administrative burdens and inefficiencies at the Federal, State, and local levels, and encourage States to take a more active role in ensuring that effective service systems are available. The requested increase of \$6.3 million would provide modest increases to several States with significant unmet need.

To determine the optimal use within each State of Recovery Act funds provided for the CIL program, leading stakeholders such as the designated State units, Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs), and centers for independent living had to review the provisions of the approved State Plan for Independent Living and decide how the additional resources could be used to expand and improve the provision of independent living within each State, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of unserved and underserved areas. The Department believes the proposed consolidation of independent living funds into a single grant program would similarly encourage States, SILCs, centers for independent living, and consumers with disabilities to work together to determine the best use of the consolidated funds within their States. By awarding population-based grants to States, ensuring that SILCs have sufficient support, and requiring States to distribute subgrants in a manner consistent with the State Plan for Independent Living, the proposed new formula grant program would make it easier for the Department and for consumers with disabilities to hold States and SILCs responsible for ensuring that independent living services are provided to all areas of the State through a Statewide network of centers for independent living.

Under current law, States for which State funding for the general operation of centers for independent living equals or exceeds Federal funding are already eligible to administer their own funds under the Centers for Independent Living program. Only two States, Massachusetts and Minnesota, have elected to exercise this option. However, data collected in response to the section 704 annual reporting requirement indicate that as many as 21 States may be eligible to administer their own grant funds because State funding for CILs exceeds Federal funding. Centers for independent living in the two States that administer their own programs report higher percentages of consumers achieving outcomes under the performance measures for the CIL program compared to other States.

Under the proposed program, State grant allocations would be determined by a population based formula. The \$110 million request for this program would enable the Department to award grants to all States and Territories that would be at least equivalent to their combined allocations under the Independent Living State Grants and Centers for Independent Living programs in fiscal year 2010, with 26 States and 2 Territories receiving increased allocations to serve areas with significant unmet need. States participating in the program would be required

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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to match \$1 of non-Federal resources for every \$9 of Federal funds received under the Independent Living State Grants program in FY 2010. The Secretary would reserve up to 1.46 percent of the funds appropriated under the Grants for Independent Living program in 2011 to provide grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to provide training and technical assistance to centers for independent living. The amount of this set aside is approximately equal to the amount reserved for technical assistance and training under the existing Centers for Independent Living program. States would be required to set aside 5 percent of their allocations for the SILC. Under the existing Independent Living State Grants program, States have the discretion to provide as little or as much funding for SILC operations as they choose. The Department believes that it is necessary to clarify the duties and responsibilities of the SILC and to ensure that all SILCs have adequate funding to carry them out.

The States would be permitted to reserve up to 5 percent of the funds for the administration of the program, for activities such as administering competitive awards for subgrants to centers for independent living and oversight and monitoring of these grants. States could also use these funds to continue outreach, evaluation, and consumer satisfaction activities that were authorized under the Independent Living State Grants program. The remaining funds would be awarded by States as subgrants only to nonprofit entities that meet the requirements in section 725 of the Act.

Under the existing Independent Living State Grants program, funds can be used to support the provision of independent living services through centers for independent living or through contracts with other entities. The Department believes that the goal of maximizing the independence and full participation of individuals with disabilities in their communities is best served by providing these services through centers for independent living, rather than contracts with other entities, because CILs are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential, private nonprofit agencies that are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities. For this reason, subgrants to entities that do not meet the requirements in section 725 of the Act would not be authorized under the new program.

States would be required to distribute subgrants to centers for independent living according to a State Plan for Independent Living that makes independent living services available in all counties. The Department believes that the \$6.3 million requested increase provides an opportunity to expand services to areas with unmet needs as reflected in these State Plans, which are scheduled to be revised and resubmitted in 2011.

### Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind

The Administration requests \$34.2 million for the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind program for fiscal year 2011, the same as the 2010 appropriation. According to the 2000 census, 14.2 percent (about 4.7 million) of individuals 65 and older report having trouble with vision or hearing. The occurrence of a sensory disability was more than six times greater among older adults than working-age people. For this reason, the Department believes a sustained investment in this program is warranted. At the requested funding level, an estimated 16 States would receive the minimum award of \$225,000, and the Territories would continue to be funded at the minimum level.

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### Independent living

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#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
<b>Grants for Independent Living</b>			
Number of Grantees	0	0	78
Minimum State award	0	0	\$1,172
Average State award	0	0	\$2,049
Minority outreach	0	0	\$1,100
Training and technical assistance	0	0	\$1,606 <sup>1</sup>
<b>Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind:</b>			
Number of Grantees	56	56	56
Minimum State award	\$228 <sup>2</sup>	\$225	\$225
Average State award	\$1,300 <sup>2</sup>	\$647	\$647
Minority outreach	\$685 <sup>2</sup>	\$342	\$342
<b>Independent Living State Grants:</b>			
Number of Grantees	78	78	0
Minimum State award	\$546 <sup>2</sup>	\$313	0
Average State award	\$789 <sup>2</sup>	\$444	0
Minority outreach	\$417 <sup>2</sup>	\$235	0
<b>Centers for Independent Living:</b>			
Minimum State Allocation	\$1,177 <sup>2</sup>	\$859	0
Average State allocation	\$3,061 <sup>2</sup>	\$1,489	0
Minority outreach	\$875 <sup>2</sup>	\$803	0
Training and Technical Assistance	\$6,499 <sup>2</sup>	\$1,445	0
Peer review	\$101	0	0

<sup>1</sup> This is the maximum amount that the Department would set aside for training and technical assistance under the proposed program. The actual amount may end up being less than the amount shown.

<sup>2</sup> Includes funds appropriated for these programs under the Recovery Act.

### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

#### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2011 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

The current performance measures of the Centers for Independent Living and the State Grants for Independent Living programs would continue to be assessed in FY 2011 as part of GPRA

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Independent living

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reporting for the proposed Grants for Independent Living program. The objectives and goals of the proposed program would not change substantially from their current form shown below.

**Goal: To promote and support a philosophy of independent living (IL)—including a philosophy of consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, and individual and system advocacy—in order to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities, and the integration and full inclusion of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of American society.**

**Objective:** *Through the provision of IL services (including the four IL core services), increase the percentage of consumers who report having access to services needed to improve their ability to live more independently and participate fully in their communities.*

**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living Centers consumers who report having access to previously unavailable appropriate accommodations to receive health care services, as a result of direct services provided by an Independent Living Center (including referral to another service provider).

Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set a Baseline	66
2007	66	66
2008	67	41
2009	69	
2010	69	
2011	70	

**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living Centers consumers who report having access to previously unavailable assistive technology which results in increased independence in at least one significant life area, as a result of direct services provided by an Independent Living Center (including referral to another service provider).

Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set a Baseline	70
2007	70	75
2008	71	44
2009	73	
2010	74	
2011	76	

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**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living Centers consumers who report having access to previously unavailable transportation, as a result of direct services provided by an Independent Living Center (including referral to another service provider).

Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set a Baseline	81
2007	81	66
2008	83	18
2009	84	
2010	86	
2011	87	

**Assessment of progress:** For these measures, grantees in the Centers for Independent Living program are required to report annually on the percentage of their consumers who report—as result of services provided by a CIL (including referral to another service provider), DSU, or DSU grantee or contractor—having access to previously unavailable transportation, appropriate accommodations to receive health care services, and/or assistive technology resulting in increased independence in at least one significant life area. The denominator is determined by the grantee based on the number of consumers who have goals specified in their Independent Living Plans that require measurable progress on these intermediate outcomes (access to transportation, health care services, and/or assistive technology) for their achievement. These are not the only outcomes of interest to CIL grantees or consumers, but RSA believes that a significant portion of CIL activities are directly related to these outcomes and that improved performance on these outcomes will result in increased independence for CIL consumers overall.

Data for 2008 indicate that targets were not met in any of the outcome areas reported under these measures. During the 2008 reporting period, RSA staff conducted a number of data quality trainings, both nationally and on-site in conjunction with monitoring activities. These trainings have helped to address a number of reporting errors. RSA also implemented a series of data checks which have resulted in further improvements in the accuracy of the data. RSA will examine whether to reset baselines for these measures using the more accurate 2008 data. Data for 2009 are expected in May 2010.

**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living Centers consumers who move out of institutions into a community-based setting through the provision of Independent Living services (including the four independent living core services).

Year	Target	Actual
2006	Set a Baseline	54
2007	55	56
2008	55	44
2009	56	
2010	56	
2011	57	

**Assessment of progress:** RSA previously measured progress in deinstitutionalization by collecting data on the number of persons with disabilities who moved out of institutions as a

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Independent living

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result of receiving CIL services, but these data did not capture grantee improvement in this area. RSA issued revised guidance for the section 704 reporting requirements in fiscal year 2006 to ensure that the data are valid by clearly defining the outcomes being measured and setting standards for collection and reporting. The target for 2008 was not met. See the assessment of progress for the previous measures for a discussion of the steps RSA is taking to improve the accuracy of the performance data for this program. Data for 2009 are expected in May 2010.

**Objective:** *Increase access to community life for persons with disabilities through the provision of community services.*

The Department developed new measures in order to capture CIL efforts at the community level on key outcomes that correspond to the outcome measures for services and activities provided at the individual level. Grantees have found that measuring and reporting valid and reliable data on these outcomes at the community level is much more difficult. RSA is working to develop new measures that capture community-level activities and will include these new measures in the next version of the section 704 reporting instrument.

**Objective:** *Through the provision of services (either directly or through contracts), increase the percentage of consumers receiving services funded through the Older Blind program who report having access to services needed to improve their ability to live more independently and participate fully in their communities.***Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living older blind consumers who have access to previously unavailable assistive technology aids and devices.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	49	n/a
2007	50	94
2008	52	
2009	54	
2010	56	
2011	58	

**Assessment of progress:** Data for 2007 significantly exceeded the target. Future targets for this program will be revised if closer examination indicates that the 2007 data are valid and reliable. Data for 2008 were expected by May 2009 but are not yet available. Data for 2009 are expected by May 2010.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living older blind consumers who report an improvement in activities of daily living skills.

Year	Target	Actual
2006	54	n/a
2007	55	53
2008	56	
2009	57	
2010	58	
2011	59	

**Assessment of progress:** The target for 2007 was not met. Data for 2008 were expected by May 2009 but are not yet available. Data for 2009 are expected by May 2010.

### Efficiency Measures

The Department has established two efficiency measures for the CIL program: (1) the number of consumer service records closed with all goals met for every \$10,000 in net operating funds and (2) the number of consumer goals accomplished per \$10,000 in net operating funds. In fiscal year 2007, program staff began pilot testing these measures during site reviews of CIL grantees to see how grantees respond to the measures and how the data can be used to help monitor grantees. RSA is analyzing annual performance data at the grantee level and using these measures to work with grantees in order to improve efficiency.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Protection and advocacy of individual rights (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title V, Section 509)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
	\$18,101	\$18,101	0

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The President's FY 2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program supports a statewide system to protect the legal and human rights of individuals with disabilities who are ineligible for protection and advocacy (P&A) services provided under Part C of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, and the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act, or who need P&A services that are beyond the scope of the Client Assistance Program. The purpose of this program is to provide assistance and information to eligible individuals with disabilities and conduct advocacy to ensure the protection of their rights under Federal law. States may use these funds to plan and carry out P&A programs for eligible individuals with disabilities and to develop outreach strategies to inform individuals with disabilities of their rights.

Funds must be set aside under this program for two activities before awarding grants to eligible States and outlying areas with the remaining appropriation. If the appropriation is equal to or exceeds \$5.5 million, the Secretary must first set aside between 1.8 percent and 2.2 percent of the amount appropriated for training and technical assistance to eligible systems established under this program. In addition, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the Act) requires that in any year in which the total appropriation exceeds \$10.5 million, the Secretary must award \$50,000 to the eligible system established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act to serve the American Indian consortium. The Secretary then distributes the remainder of the appropriation to the eligible systems within the States and outlying areas on a population basis after satisfying minimum allocations. The fiscal year 2009 allotments were based on the July 1, 2007 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2007. The fiscal year 2010 allotments are based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State distributions will be based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates released in December 2009.

The Act also requires the Secretary to increase the minimum allotments for States and outlying areas by a percentage not greater than the percentage increase in the total amount appropriated for this program for the previous fiscal year. The Act establishes a minimum

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Protection and advocacy of individual rights

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allotment of \$100,000 for States or one-third of 1 percent of funds remaining after the technical assistance set-side and grant for the American Indian consortium, whichever is greater. The outlying areas receive a minimum allotment of \$50,000. The program is current-funded but States and outlying areas may carry over unobligated Federal funds for an additional year.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000)
2006 .....	\$16,489
2007 .....	16,489
2008 .....	16,201
2009 .....	17,101
2010 .....	18,101

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$18.101 million for the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program in fiscal year 2011, the same as the fiscal year 2010 appropriation. Federal support for PAIR ensures that States can provide assistance and information to eligible individuals with disabilities to ensure the protection of their rights under Federal law.

PAIR programs have reported considerable difficulties in trying to serve the large numbers of persons with disabilities who are eligible for the program. PAIR staff cannot estimate how many individuals eligible for PAIR go unserved but believe the numbers to be significant. During fiscal year 2008, PAIR programs reported representing through cases 15,747 individuals and responded to 47,317 requests for information or referral. Of the cases handled by PAIR programs in that year, the greatest number of specified issues involved education (20 percent), government benefits/services (15 percent), and employment (13 percent).

In addition to providing representation to individuals, PAIR programs address systemic issues faced by persons with disabilities through a variety of methods, including negotiations with public and private entities and class action litigation. In fiscal year 2008, 53 of the 57 PAIR programs (93 percent) reported that these activities resulted in changes in policies and practices benefiting individuals with disabilities. This number represents an increase from fiscal year 2007, when 52 of the 57 PAIR programs (91 percent) reported systemic advocacy that resulted in change in policies and practices.

The following example of case services provided in 2008 illustrates how PAIR programs assist individuals: A 35-year-old Army veteran with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury asked Missouri Protection & Advocacy Services to assist him in appealing a denial of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits. After returning home from service in Iraq, the veteran experienced severe chronic pain related to injuries he had sustained to his arms and legs, along with war-related flashbacks that interfered with his ability to work. He applied for SSDI, which SSA denied without any follow-up regarding the matter. The veteran believed he was denied SSDI because SSA hurried its cases. He quickly contacted the Missouri Protection & Advocacy Services program to assist him with an appeal. At the appeal hearing, the P&A

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### Protection and advocacy of individual rights

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advocate presented evidence on the veteran's disability, including an evaluation done by the Department of Veterans Affairs. As a result, the SSA hearing officer granted the veteran a fully favorable, on-the-record decision, and the veteran began receiving SSDI benefits.

#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Information inquiries/referrals	47,317	47,317	47,317
Individuals provided case services	15,747	15,747	15,747

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Note: Data for fiscal years 2009 through 2011 are projected from actual data collected for fiscal year 2008. Data for fiscal year 2009 will be available in April of 2010.

#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

##### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2011 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

**Goal: To provide assistance and information to individuals with disabilities eligible for the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights program and conduct advocacy to ensure the protection of their rights under Federal law.**

**Objective:** *Identify problem areas requiring systemic change and engage in systemic activities to address those problems.*

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of PAIR programs that reported that their systemic advocacy resulted in a change in policy or practice.		
Year	Target	Actual
<b>2006</b>	80	84
<b>2007</b>	83	91
<b>2008</b>	83	93
<b>2009</b>	83	
<b>2010</b>	85	
<b>2011</b>	89	

**Assessment of progress:** Because PAIR programs cannot address all issues facing individuals with disabilities solely through individual advocacy, they seek to change public and

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### Protection and advocacy of individual rights

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private policies and practices that present barriers to the rights of individuals with disabilities, utilizing negotiations and class action litigation. The target for fiscal year 2011 is derived by averaging the actual performance over the fiscal years 2006 through 2008. Of the 57 PAIR programs, 48 (84 percent) reported success on this measure in fiscal year 2006, and 52 (91 percent) reported successful systematic change in 2007. In fiscal year 2008, 53 of the 57 (93 percent) PAIR programs reported success on this measure.

### Other Performance Information

This program is one of eight protection and advocacy (P&A) programs housed in three Federal agencies. The different reporting and evaluation requirements translate into a significant paperwork burden for recipients under these programs. To help remedy this problem, the Department of Education, along with the Department of Health and Human Services and the Social Security Administration, is committed to improving Federal program coordination related to the monitoring and evaluating of these programs

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Recreational programs

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 305)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$2,474	\$2,474	0

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The President's FY2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Recreational programs provide recreational and related activities to individuals with disabilities to aid in their employment, mobility, independence, socialization, and community integration. Programs are designed to promote the development of social skills that can help individuals with disabilities integrate into the community.

This current-funded program awards discretionary grants on a competitive basis to States, public agencies, and nonprofit private organizations, including institutions of higher education. The statute requires the Federal contribution for projects funded under this authority to decrease over the 3-year project period. Grantees are required to maintain services during the second and third years of the project at the level provided in the first year. The Federal share of the costs of the project is 100 percent for the first year, 75 percent for the second year, and 50 percent for the third. The applicant is required to include a description in the application of how the project will continue after Federal assistance ends.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2006 .....	\$2,518
2007 .....	2,518
2008 .....	2,474
2009 .....	2,474
2010 .....	2,474

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$2.474 million for Recreational programs in fiscal year 2011, the same as the fiscal year 2010 appropriation. The funds requested for this program will provide seed money for 26 recreational projects. These funds will leverage non-Federal funds over the

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Recreational programs

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duration of the projects, since grantees are required to provide an increased level of support from non-Federal sources over their 3-year project period.

In fiscal year 2011, because the Federal share will be reduced to 50 percent for the 10 grants in their third year, \$1.8 million will be available for 16 new grants.

Projects funded under this program must provide recreational activities for individuals with disabilities in settings with peers without disabilities when possible and appropriate. Successful integration can greatly benefit an individual with a disability by developing skills, building self-esteem, and reducing social barriers that can prevent the individual from seeking employment in settings where there may not be any individuals with apparent disabilities. Individuals without disabilities also benefit from integrated recreational activities, as they are provided with the opportunity to learn about the abilities that individuals with disabilities possess. This knowledge is likely to positively affect the attitudes of individuals without disabilities about the capabilities of individuals with disabilities in other settings, such as in the workplace.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
<b>New awards:</b>			
Number	10	10	16
Average new award	\$119	\$117	\$112
Funding	\$1,199	\$1,175	\$1,799
<b>Continuation awards:</b>			
Number	16	16	10
Funding	\$1,170	\$1,274	\$600
<b>Other:</b>			
Minority outreach	\$25	\$25	\$25
Peer review of new award applications	<u>\$80</u>	<u>0<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>\$50</u>
Total	\$2,474	\$2,474	\$2,474

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<sup>1</sup> RSA receives hundreds of applications for this program. In order to reduce the amount of funds spent on peer review, RSA supports new grant competitions every 2 years and awards funds to grantees that were approved for funding but could not be supported with grant funds until the succeeding fiscal year. As a result there will be no peer review costs in fiscal year 2010, because RSA intends to fund 10 applications approved for funding, but not funded, from the competition in fiscal year 2009.

### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

#### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Recreational programs

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the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2011 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

**Goal: To provide individuals with disabilities recreational activities and related experience that can be expected to aid in their employment, mobility, socialization, independence and community integration.**

**Objective:** *To initiate recreational programs for individuals with disabilities that continue after Federal funding ceases.*

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of Vocational Rehabilitation-funded Recreational Programs in operation 1, 2, or 3 years after Federal funding ceased.		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2006</b>	79	79
<b>2007</b>	79	79
<b>2008</b>	80	81
<b>2009</b>	80	
<b>2010</b>	80	
<b>2011</b>	80	

**Assessment of progress:** The primary purpose of this program is to initiate recreational programs that will continue on their own after Federal funding ends. Grantees are required to provide an increased level of support from non-Federal sources over their 3-year project period. RSA measures the success of this program through the percentage of projects in operation 1, 2, and 3 years after Federal funding ceases. In fiscal year 2006, 79 percent of the 33 projects that received their last year of Federal support during 2003 through 2005 were still in operation and providing recreational services to individuals with disabilities. In fiscal year 2007, 79 percent of the 24 projects that received their last year of funding during 2004 through 2006 were still in operation. In fiscal year 2008, 81 percent of the 25 projects that received their last year of funding during 2005 through 2007 were still in operation and providing recreation services. The target for fiscal year 2011 is derived by averaging the actual performance over fiscal years 2006 through 2008.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
	\$109,241	\$111,919	+\$2,678

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired in September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The President's FY2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The mission of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) is to generate knowledge and promote its effective use to improve the abilities of people with disabilities to perform activities of their choice in the community, and also to expand society's capacity to provide full opportunities and accommodations for its citizens with disabilities. NIDRR conducts comprehensive and coordinated programs of research and related activities to maximize the full inclusion, social integration, employment, and independent living of individuals with disabilities of all ages. The purposes of NIDRR are to:

- Promote, coordinate, and provide for research, demonstration and training, and related activities with respect to individuals with disabilities;
- Widely disseminate findings, conclusions, and recommendations resulting from its activities; and
- Provide leadership in advancing the quality of life of individuals with disabilities.

NIDRR's research is conducted through a network of individual research projects and centers of excellence located throughout the Nation. Most funding is awarded through competitive grants, and most of the funds are awarded to universities or providers of rehabilitation or related services.

On February 15, 2006, NIDRR published its *Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 2005—2009*, which outlines three long-term performance goals and its strategies for achieving these goals. These goals are:

- Goal 1: Advancing knowledge through capacity building,
- Goal 2: Advancing knowledge through research and related activities, and
- Goal 3: Advancing knowledge through translation and dissemination.

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NIDRR funding supports a portfolio of research and development, capacity building, and knowledge translation projects that are aligned with these long-term performance goals. NIDRR plans to develop a new long-range plan in fiscal year 2010.

Following is a description of the primary areas for which NIDRR makes awards:

*Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs).* RRTCs receive funding to conduct coordinated and advanced programs of research, training, and information dissemination in problem areas that are specified by NIDRR. More specifically, RRTCs conduct research to improve rehabilitation methodologies and service delivery systems, alleviate or stabilize disabling conditions, and promote maximum social and economic independence for persons with disabilities; provide training, including graduate, pre-service, and in-service training, to help rehabilitation personnel provide more effective rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities; and serve as centers of excellence in rehabilitation research for providers and for individuals with disabilities and their representatives. Typically, awards are for 5 years. However, NIDRR also may award grants for less than 5 years to support new or innovative research.

*Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs).* The RERCs conduct research on issues dealing with rehabilitation technology, including rehabilitation engineering and assistive technology devices and services. RERC activities include developing and disseminating innovative methods of applying advanced technology, scientific achievements, and psychological and social knowledge to rehabilitation issues such as the removal of environmental barriers; developing and disseminating technology designed to lessen the effects of sensory loss, mobility impairment, chronic pain, and communication difficulties; scientific research to assist in meeting the employment and independent living needs of individuals with severe disabilities; and stimulating the production and distribution of equipment in the private sector, as well as clinical evaluations of equipment. Each RERC must provide training opportunities to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to become researchers and practitioners of rehabilitation technology. Awards are for 5 years, except that grants to new recipients or to support new or innovative research may be made for less than 5 years.

*Model Systems.* NIDRR funds model systems projects in three areas: spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury (TBI), and burn injury. Model systems funding supports 5-year grants to establish innovative projects for the delivery, demonstration, and evaluation of comprehensive medical, vocational, and other rehabilitation services to meet the wide range of needs of individuals in these areas. Grantees in each of the three areas contribute to a national database that is supported by NIDRR funding. These model systems programs have become platforms for conducting multi-site research, including randomized controlled trials to determine the efficacy of interventions.

- *Model Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems.* The Model Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) program funds research to meet the wide range of needs of individuals with spinal cord injuries. (See <http://www.ncddr.org/rpp/hf/hfdw/mscis/>.) The projects also disseminate information to individuals with SCI and others.
- *Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems.* The Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Model Systems projects are research and demonstration grants designed to advance the understanding of

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TBI and its consequences and improve rehabilitation outcomes. Currently, the NIDRR TBI model systems is the largest nonmilitary TBI service delivery/research entity participating in various intergovernmental efforts to improve treatment and outcomes for returning veterans. (See <http://www.tbindsc.org>)

- *Burn Injury Model Systems.* The Burn Model Systems (BMS) projects are research and demonstration grants designed to establish, demonstrate, and evaluate a model system of care for burn injury survivors. The goal of the projects is to reduce disability by improving treatment and rehabilitation. (See <http://mama.uchsc.edu/pub/NIDRR/index.html>.)

*Field-Initiated Projects (FIP).* Field-Initiated Projects supplement NIDRR's directed research and address a wide range of topics identified by investigators, including research, demonstrations, development, and knowledge translation. These projects allow NIDRR to address emerging developments in the field beyond the scope of announced priorities. Most of these awards are made for 3 years.

*Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRP).* Grantees under this program focus on discrete research topics identified by NIDRR and address problems encountered by people with disabilities through a variety of methods that may include research, demonstrations, training, dissemination, utilization, technical assistance, or combinations of these activities.

*Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTAC).* The DBTAC grants support a network of 10 regional centers that provide detailed technical assistance, disseminate information, and provide training related to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and promote awareness of the ADA. In addition, the DBTACs spend 15 percent of their funding to conduct ADA-related research to identify barriers to compliance with the ADA and develop innovative approaches for eliminating these barriers. NIDRR competes the DBTAC grants every 5 years.

*Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training (ARRT).* The ARRT program supports grants to institutions to provide advanced postdoctoral training in areas that are directly related to NIDRR's research portfolio, such as medical rehabilitation, engineering, technology, community integration, and employment. Grants are made to institutions to recruit qualified persons with doctoral or similar advanced degrees and prepare them to conduct independent research in areas related to disability and rehabilitation. These training programs must operate in interdisciplinary environments and provide training in rigorous scientific methods.

*Small Business Innovation Research projects (SBIR).* SBIR awards support the development of new rehabilitation technologies that are useful to persons with disabilities by inviting the participation of small business firms with strong research capabilities in science, engineering, or educational technology. This 2-phase program takes a product from development to market readiness. During Phase I, firms conduct feasibility studies to evaluate the scientific and technical merit of an idea. During Phase II, they expand on the results and pursue further development. In order to be eligible, small businesses must be American-owned and independently operated and be for-profit with no more than 500 employees. The principal researcher must be employed by the business.

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*Switzer Research Fellowships.* Switzer research fellows receive 1-year fellowships to carry out discrete research activities that are related to NIDRR's research priorities or to pursue studies in areas of importance to the rehabilitation community.

*Outreach to Minority Institutions.* The Rehabilitation Act requires that 1 percent of funds appropriated for programs authorized under certain titles be reserved for awards to minority entities and Indian tribes, or to provide outreach and assistance to minority entities and Indian tribes.

*Other Activities:* NIDRR funding also supports a variety of other activities, including knowledge translation; collaborative projects with other agencies; development and maintenance of grantee reporting systems; program review; and reporting, evaluation, long-range planning, and the *Interagency Committee on Disability Research* (ICDR). The primary purpose of the ICDR is to promote cooperation across various Federal agencies in the development and execution of disability and rehabilitation research activities. (See <http://www.icdr.us/>.)

NIDRR funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(\$000s)
2006 .....	\$106,705
2007 .....	106,705
2008 .....	105,741
2009 .....	107,741
2010 .....	109,241

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$111.92 million for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), an increase of \$2.68 million above the fiscal year 2010 appropriation level. The additional funds would be used to support new research activities related to vocational rehabilitation and program evaluations, consistent with the Administration's reauthorization proposals.

The Administration plans to propose amendments to the authority for NIDRR in the Rehabilitation Act that would identify research and demonstrations related to vocational rehabilitation (VR) as a discrete program and that would give NIDRR responsibility for conducting rigorous evaluations of programs and activities supported under the Rehabilitation Act. The unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities remains unacceptably high and the percent of individuals with disabilities who have achieved employment outcomes under the VR State Grants program, compared to the number of individuals who received services and exited, has been under 60 percent since 2002 (See the justification for the VR State Grants program for additional information on the employment of individuals with disabilities and the performance of the VR State Grants program). There is very limited research focused on improving the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and outcomes for individuals served under Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) programs.

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In recent years, NIDRR has increased its funding of research related to the vocational rehabilitation services funded through RSA. This increase builds on many years of investments in research on the employment of individuals with disabilities. NIDRR has the capacity to conduct rigorous research, development, and evaluation activities, and the experience and resources necessary to rigorously evaluate demonstration projects and determine their potential for replication on a wider scale. NIDRR staff have a deep understanding of the rehabilitation program and RSA issues. At the same time, NIDRR is one step removed from RSA and its programs, which puts it in a good position to conduct independent evaluations of vocational rehabilitation practices and programs. The new focus area will capitalize on this expertise and allow NIDRR, in close collaboration with RSA, to provide leadership in addressing the need for evidence-based practices that could improve the effectiveness of programs administered by RSA, such as VR State grants, Independent Living, and Assistive Technology.

NIDRR plans to use \$1.65 million of the \$2.68 million in new funding for research related to vocational rehabilitation. This may include research and demonstration activities related to: (1) identifying, developing, and evaluating evidence-based practices or policies that are effective in improving employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, such as employment supports that assist individuals to become successful in the workplace; (2) improving the provision of services for special populations, such as the development of strategies to enhance employment services and outcomes for middle-aged and older workers with disabilities; and (3) activities related to improving the performance of State VR agencies, such as testing methods of service delivery that have the potential to improve their performance. NIDRR would work with RSA in developing its research agenda; rigorously evaluate the results of these projects; and work with RSA to disseminate and promote the implementation of evidence-based practices identified through these activities. The remaining \$1 million would be used to initiate independent, large scale evaluations of one or more programs administered by RSA.

In fiscal year 2011, NIDRR will continue to strive to improve the quality and utility of disability and rehabilitation research, exchange expertise and information, train future researchers, determine the best strategies and programs to improve rehabilitation outcomes for underserved populations, identify research gaps and mechanisms of integrating research and practice, and disseminate findings. The fiscal year 2011 budget request will allow NIDRR to continue to support programs integral to NIDRR's mission and build on its past successes. For example, topics under consideration include the following:

- Rehabilitation Research Training Centers: NIDRR proposes to fund a center on children with disabilities with special health care needs and a center on measurement and independence in community living.
- Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers: The current centers on technology for low vision, blindness, and multi-sensory loss; wireless technologies; and wheelchair transportation safety conclude in fiscal year 2011. These grants have been very productive and the areas of inquiry continue to be important. NIDRR plans to hold competitions in each of these areas for new centers in fiscal year 2011. In addition, a new center on technologies and model practices to assist individuals with disabilities in emergency situations would be funded.

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NIDRR also plans to make new awards for Disability and Rehabilitation Research and Training, Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems, Field Initiated Projects, Small Business Innovation Research, Knowledge Translation, and Switzer Research Fellowships. The request also includes \$13.2 million for the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTACs). The DBTACs grants were increased by \$1 million in FY 2010 to support ADA-related research to identify barriers to compliance with the ADA and develop innovative approaches for eliminating these barriers.

Past support for NIDRR has yielded substantial benefits in a variety of areas, including advancements in technology, policy changes, and improvements in rehabilitation and disability research. In fiscal year 2010, NIDRR has proposed to fund RRTC's in the following areas:

- Reducing Obesity and Obesity-Related Secondary Health Conditions Among Adolescents and Young Adults with Disabilities from Diverse Race and Ethnic Backgrounds
- Employer Practices Related to Employment Outcomes Among Individuals with Disabilities;
- Individual-Level Characteristics Related to Employment Among Individuals with Disabilities;
- Employment Measurement and Policy;
- Mental Health Care Access, Decision Making and Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities; and
- Employment Outcomes for Individuals with Blindness and Low Vision.

NIDRR also plans to make awards for RERCs related to technologies for children with orthopedic disabilities and universal design and the built environment. Other examples of potential competitions include new awards for field initiated projects and disability and rehabilitation research projects on transition to employment and enhancing researcher capacity to conduct culturally competent research.

#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

	<b>Funding (\$000s)</b>			<b>Number of Awards</b>		
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
<i>Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers</i>						
Continuations	\$13,247	\$13,297	\$14,198	16	17	16
New awards	<u>2,850</u>	<u>2,951</u>	<u>2,850</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Subtotal	16,097	16,248	17,048	19	19	19

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	Funding (\$000s)			Number of Awards		
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
<i>Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers</i>						
Continuations	\$10,350	\$15,648	\$18,387	21	21	25
New awards	<u>7,344</u>	<u>4,800</u>	<u>1,450</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>
Subtotal	17,694	20,448	19,837	26	27	27
<i>Vocational Rehabilitation Research and Demonstration Projects</i>						
Continuations	0	0	500 <sup>1</sup>	0	0	1
New awards	<u>0</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>1,650</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
Subtotal	0	500	2,150	0	1	3
<i>Model Systems</i>						
<i>Spinal Cord Injury</i>						
Continuations	8,918	8,899	0	17	17	0
New awards	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>9,075</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>17</u>
Subtotal	8,918	8,899	9,075	17	17	17
<i>Traumatic Brain Injury</i>						
Continuations	9,191	9,029	8,565	19	19	18
New awards	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>625</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
Subtotal	9,191	9,029	9,190	19	19	19
<i>Burn Injury</i>						
Continuations	1,750	1,750	1,750	5	5	5
New	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	1,750	1,750	1,750	5	5	5
<i>Field Initiated Projects</i>						
Continuations	8,568	7,831	7,987	46	44	40
New awards	<u>4,176</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>
Subtotal	12,744	11,831	11,987	68	64	60

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	Funding (\$000s)			Number of Awards		
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
<i>Disability and Rehabilitation Research</i>						
Continuations	\$3,918	\$5,999	\$5,846	10	12	11
New awards	<u>950</u>	<u>1,450</u>	<u>1,600</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Subtotal	4,868	7,449	7,446	11	15	15
<i>Advanced Rehabilitation Research and Training Program</i>						
Continuations	1,799	1,799	2,248	12	12	15
New awards	<u>599</u>	<u>600</u>	<u>600</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
Subtotal	2,398	2,399	2,848	16	16	19
<i>Minority Outreach</i>						
Continuations	1,065	1,080	1,119	3	3	3
New	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	1,065	1,080	1,119	0	0	3
<i>Small Business Innovation Research</i>						
Continuations	1,260	1,269	1,250	5	5	5
New	<u>2,352</u>	<u>2,375</u>	<u>2,375</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>
Subtotal	3,612	3,644	3,625	25	25	25
<i>Mary Switzer Fellowships</i>						
Continuations	0	0	0	0	0	0
New	<u>530</u>	<u>505</u>	<u>505</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>
Subtotal	530	505	505	8	7	7
<i>Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers</i>						
Continuations	11,859	11,867	0	11	11	0
New	<u>0</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>13,155</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11</u>
Subtotal	11,859	12,867	13,155	0	0	11
<i>Knowledge Translation</i>						
Continuations	3,403	2,100	2,550	6	4	4
New awards	<u>2,000</u>	<u>1,550</u>	<u>1,850</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
Subtotal	5,403	3,650	4,400	8	7	7
Subtotal, grants	96,129	100,299	104,135	236	236	237

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	Funding (\$000s)			Number of Awards		
	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Vocational Rehabilitation Program						
Evaluation Activities	0	0	\$1,000			
External Evaluation of NIDRR	\$3,135 <sup>2</sup>	0	0			
Other Activities (Contracts)	3,819	\$6,101	5,648			
Peer review of new grant applications	749	600	700			
Other Support and Forward Funding	<u>3,909</u>	<u>2,241</u>	<u>436</u>			
Subtotal	11,612	8,942	7,784			
Total, NIDRR	107,741	109,241	111,919			
Total, continuation awards	75,328	80,568	64,400	179	170	143
Total, new grant awards	20,801	19,731	39,735	57	66	94

<sup>1</sup> The FY 2011 amount includes \$1.531 million for continuation awards previously funded under the Demonstration and Training program authority.

<sup>2</sup> 2009 includes funding for the first two years of the contract.

#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

##### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2011 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

**Goal: To conduct high-quality research and related activities that lead to high-quality products.**

**Objective:** *Advance knowledge through capacity building: Increase capacity to conduct and use high-quality and relevant disability and rehabilitation research and related activities designed to guide decision-making, change practice, and improve the lives of individuals with disabilities.*

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<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of NIDRR-supported fellows, post-doctoral trainees, and doctoral students who publish results of NIDRR-sponsored research in refereed journals.		
Year	Target	Actual
2006		9
2007		17
2008		12
2009	TBD	
2010	TBD	
2011	TBD	

**Assessment of progress:** For this measure, refereed journals are those journals that are recognized by the Thompson Institute for Scientific Information. See: <http://www.thompsonscientific.com/cgi-bin/jrnlst/jloptions.cgi?PC=master>. Due to the large differences among the first 3 years of data, NIDRR intends to collect at least 1 more year of data before establishing targets for this measure. A single author is counted only once if he or she produces multiple peer-reviewed publications, and fellows or graduate students who co-authored a publication are counted individually for their contributions to one publication. In fiscal year 2008, there were a total of 624 NIDRR-supported fellows, post-doctoral trainees, and doctoral students, of whom 76 produced publications that appeared in refereed journals. Therefore, approximately 12.2 percent of researchers funded by NIDRR produced publications that appeared in refereed journals. This measure only includes NIDRR research grantees funded under NIDRR's Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTC), Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs), Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Grants (ARRT), Model Systems (MS), Disability Rehabilitation Research Projects, (DRRP) and Field Initiated Projects (FIP). In 2009, grants in these areas accounted for approximately 68 percent of NIDRR's total appropriation. Data for fiscal year 2009 will be available in December 2010.

**Objective:** *Advance knowledge through research and related activities: Generate scientific-based knowledge, technologies, and applications to inform policy, change practice, and improve outcomes.*

**Measure:** The number of accomplishments (e.g., new or improved tools, methods, discoveries, standards, interventions, programs, or devices) developed or tested with NIDRR funding that have been judged by expert panels to be of high quality and to advance the field.

**Assessment of progress:** NIDRR has been reviewing one-third of its grant portfolio each year since fiscal year 2005. Reviewers who are experts in disabilities research were asked to rate the accomplishments reported by grantees. In fiscal year 2007, baseline data were reported that indicated that 49 percent of the accomplishments reviewed by the panel were judged to be of high quality and to advance the field. However, there were concerns about the validity and reliability of the data generated by these reviews. In fiscal year 2010, NIDRR plans to obtain data about the quality of grantee products through an external evaluation. NIDRR is entering into a contract with the National Academy of Science to conduct a review of the final outcomes of NIDRR grants to assess the quality of products produced and determine the extent to which the outputs of these projects generate new knowledge for intended audiences. This evaluation will provide a new source of data for this measure. We expect that the data from the fiscal

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years 2005 to 2007 reviews will not be comparable with data produced by the new peer review mechanism. The Department may need to change the language of the measure or the measure, itself.

<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of NIDRR-funded grant applications that receive an average peer review score of 85 or higher.		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2006</b>	85	99
<b>2007</b>	90	96
<b>2008</b>	99	84
<b>2009</b>	96	94
<b>2010</b>	96	
<b>2011</b>	96	

**Assessment of progress:** This measure assesses the extent to which NIDRR-funded grant applications are judged by expert review panels to be of high quality. In fiscal year 2008, 94 percent of new awards received ratings of 85 or higher, which is just below the target. While the target was not met, 94 percent is extremely high, and the data suggest that NIDRR makes awards to high-scoring grantees. Data for the measure include all grant awards made within a given fiscal year. Fiscal year 2010 data will be available in December 2010.

<b>Measure:</b> Percentage of new grants that assess the effectiveness of interventions, programs, and devices using rigorous methods.		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2006</b>	65	35
<b>2007</b>	65	59
<b>2008</b>	49	63
<b>2009</b>	35	
<b>2010</b>	60	
<b>2011</b>	60	

**Assessment of progress:** This measure provides information on the proportion of NIDRR grantees that are engaged in experimental, quasi-experimental, or single subject research to determine whether interventions, programs, and devices are effective. The percentage of NIDRR grants that include tightly controlled research methods, such as true experimental, quasi-experimental, or single-subject methodologies, began high and then declined over a period of years from 65 percent in fiscal year 2002 to 35 percent in fiscal year 2006. However, this trend appears to have changed. In fiscal year 2007, the percentage was 59 percent and in 2008 was 63 percent. Based on the more recent data, the Department revised the targets for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 to 60 percent. Data for fiscal year 2010 will be available in December 2010.

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**Objective:** Advance knowledge through translation and dissemination: Promote the effective use of scientific-based knowledge, technologies, and applications to inform policy, improve practice, and enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities.

<b>Measure:</b> The number of new or improved NIDRR-funded assistive and universally designed technologies, products, and devices transferred to industry for potential commercialization.		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2007</b>		26
<b>2008</b>	27	23
<b>2009</b>	24	30
<b>2010</b>	27	
<b>2011</b>	27	

**Assessment of progress:** In fiscal year 2009, NIDRR grantees reported that 30 technologies, products, or devices had reached the commercialization stage, i.e., transfer to industry. This number exceeded the target. NIDRR expects that these numbers will remain relatively small because of the length of time it takes to develop new technologies that are appropriate for private industry to take to market. This measure includes development projects funded by NIDRR through SBIRs, RERCs, and FIPs. Data for fiscal year 2010 will be available in December 2010.

<b>Measure:</b> The average number of publications per award based on NIDRR-funded research and development activities in refereed journals.		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2006</b>	2	2.7
<b>2007</b>	1	1.8
<b>2008</b>	3	1.3
<b>2009</b>	3	
<b>2010</b>	3	
<b>2011</b>	3	

**Assessment of progress:** For this measure, refereed journals are those journals that are recognized by the Thompson Institute for Scientific Information journal selection process (<http://www.thompsonscientific.com/cgi-bin/jrnlst/jloptions.cgi?PC=master>). The methodology for determining performance under this measure was changed in 2007 to include only NIDRR projects that are expected to produce publications as part of their specified tasks. This measure is now limited to NIDRR research grantees funded under the RRTC, RERC, ARRT, MS, DRRP, and FIP programs. In addition, the methodology was changed to ensure that publications related to a grant were counted only once, regardless of the number of authors under the grant that participated in the publication. In fiscal year 2009, approximately 200 NIDRR grantees published an average of 1.28 publications per grant in refereed journals. This figure is well below the target and levels reported for the prior 6 years. Fiscal year 2009 data for this measure will be available by October 2010.

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**Objective:** *Enhance the efficiency of the NIDRR grant award process.*

#### Efficiency Measures

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of grant competitions for a given fiscal year that are announced by the beginning of that fiscal year (October 1).		
Year	Target	Actual
2006	25	11
2007	50	69
2008	90	75
2009	70	21
2010	75	
2011	75	

<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of grant awards issued within 6 months of the competition closing date.		
Year	Target	Actual
2006	90	87
2007	90	100
2008	90	90
2009	80	84
2010	85	
2011	85	

**Assessment of Progress:** NIDRR has established efficiency measures that assess its performance in announcing grant competitions on a regular schedule and awarding grants in a timely manner. A regular announcement schedule will allow potential applicants to better schedule their workload. NIDRR's goal is to announce all grant competitions for each fiscal year by the beginning of the fiscal year (October 1) and to notify applicants whether they have received an award within 6 months of application closing dates. However, NIDRR points out that there are numerous factors and levels of review that can affect the schedule, not all of which are under the Institute's control.

In fiscal year 2009, only 21 percent of new competitions were announced by October 1<sup>st</sup>. This is well below the target and the prior year's level. NIDRR met the fiscal year 2009 target for grant awards issued within 6 months of the competition closing date. However, while it met the target, the rate was 6 percent lower than the rate in fiscal year 2008.

#### Other Performance Information

In fiscal year 2010, NIDRR is implementing a study of the process NIDRR uses to establish priorities, conduct peer reviews of applications, and manage NIDRR grants. In addition, the study will review the final outcomes of NIDRR grants to evaluate the quality of products produced and determine the extent to which the outputs of these projects generate new knowledge for intended audiences. NIDRR is entering into a contract with the National

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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Academy of Science (NAS) to conduct this study. The comprehensive evaluation will take place over a period of 24 months with an option to extend the contract to review two additional cycles of NIDRR's priority development, grant making, and product evaluations.

The study consists of two components, a process study and a summative review. As part of the process study, NAS will conduct on-site interviews with NIDRR staff and review existing programmatic guidance. It will also conduct phone interviews with the principal investigators for a subset of the grants in their final year. The findings from the process reviews will be presented in an evaluation report.

During the summative review, NAS will develop a sampling procedure for selecting approximately 30 grantees to be reviewed each year. The review will cover all products produced by these grantees. Because grantees have multiple projects and each project will report on its two most important outcomes, this will extend the scope of the review to many more products. For example, in fiscal year 2007, NIDRR funded 272 grantees that are conducting a total of 1,624 projects or an average of 6 projects per grantee. As such, the sample of 30 grantees could include approximately 180 projects. Each of these projects will be presenting up to two products to be reviewed during the summative review process by a summative review panel consisting of at least five experts.

The Department plans to use the results of this study to improve the priority setting and grants making process at NIDRR. The study will also provide data that can be used to assess the performance of grantees. This information also will be used to develop a new ongoing review process and to supply data for use with the Government Performance and Results Act measures.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Workforce innovation fund

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
0	\$30,000	+\$30,000

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired in September 30, 2004. The President's FY 2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the proposed Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) is to encourage innovation and identify and validate effective strategies for improving services to, and the outcomes for, individuals with disabilities served under programs authorized by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), including programs authorized by the Rehabilitation Act. The Fund proposed in this account would be part of a larger Workforce Innovation Fund that includes funding in the Departments of Education and Labor from multiple programs authorized under WIA.

Under the WIF, public and private agencies and organizations would be eligible to compete for multi-year grants or contracts to help build evidence of what works, enable the replication of the most effective approaches to service delivery, and promote more coordinated service delivery across programs. Eligible applicants under this Fund would include State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies, other providers of VR services, other workforce-related agencies, community-based organizations such as centers for independent living, institutions of higher education, research organizations, and other public and private entities. There would be a priority on new partnerships and strategies that show promise of delivering services that are administratively efficient and likely to result in better outcomes for individuals with disabilities, particularly the most vulnerable populations. Rigorous evaluation would be required. The evidence framework that would be used would distinguish between new strategies with strong designs and more mature strategies with promising evidence that are ready for validation.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration and the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research would work together in identifying priorities for the competitions for this Fund and, as part of a Partnership for Workforce Innovation, the Department would collaborate with other offices in the Department (including the Office of Vocational and Adult Education and the Institute of Education Sciences), the Department of Labor, and other agencies as appropriate on administration of WIF activities. To the extent appropriate, the administering agencies would use similar selection criteria in reviewing proposals and would apply common standards for identifying evidence-based practices. This is a current-funded program.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Workforce innovation fund

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#### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2011, the Administration requests \$30 million for the Workforce Innovation Fund. This program would be part of a larger Workforce Innovation Fund that would encourage innovation and identify and validate effective strategies for improving the delivery of services and outcomes for beneficiaries under programs authorized by the Workforce Investment Act.

This program provides an opportunity to work across program and agency lines, as well as with State, local, and private partners, to identify the best approaches for improving the delivery of services and achieving better outcomes for individuals with disabilities served under WIA, including programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act. RSA and NIDRR would collaborate in identifying priorities for grant competitions.

Possible topics for grant priorities would include identifying strategies for:

- Achieving and retaining high quality employment outcomes for populations with particularly high rates of unemployment, such as individuals with psychiatric disabilities, migrants, and American Indians with disabilities.
- Effectively serving individuals with disabilities through One-Stop centers, particularly those who may not be eligible for or able to receive services provided by State VR agencies.
- Preparing youth with significant disabilities for employment and independent living by providing opportunities for career exploration and work experience.
- Preparing individuals with significant disabilities for employment in high demand occupations through partnerships among State VR agencies, community colleges, and employers.
- Engaging public, private, and nonprofit sector employers in creating full-time career opportunities with benefits for individuals with significant disabilities.

Promising practices identified and validated by the program's investments would be scaled-up, with the goal of significantly improving services and employment and independent living outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2011</u>
Project funding:	
New projects awards	\$29,700
Peer Review of new award applications	<u>\$300</u>
Total	\$30,000
Average award	\$594
Number of projects	50

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Helen Keller National Center

(Helen Keller National Center Act)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): To be determined <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$9,181	\$9,181	0

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired in September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2010 through appropriations language. The President's FY2011 budget proposes authorizing this program through appropriations language pending enactment of reauthorizing legislation for FY 2011.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNC) was created by Congress in 1969, and operates under the auspices of Helen Keller Services for the Blind, Inc. The Center provides services on a national basis to individuals who are deaf-blind, their families, and service providers through two component programs: a national headquarters center located in Sands Point, New York, with a residential training and rehabilitation facility where deaf-blind individuals receive intensive specialized services; and a network of 10 regional field offices that provide referral, counseling, and transition assistance to deaf-blind individuals and technical assistance to service providers.

The purpose of the program at the national headquarters center is to provide direct services for individuals with deaf-blindness in order to enhance their potential for employment and to live independently in their home communities. The program strives to provide clients with meaningful contact with the environment, improved means of communication, constructive participation in the home and community, increased employability, and other development pertinent to their rehabilitation. The headquarters program also offers training and consultation to other programs serving individuals who are deaf-blind through a technical assistance center and national training team.

The Center employs regional representatives in each of the 10 Federal regions. These representatives provide a variety of services, including training for service agency staff, general technical assistance, community advocacy, and help in developing direct service plans for deaf-blind clients for State vocational rehabilitation counselors, mental health workers, and special education programs. In addition, the regional staff provide counseling, information, referral services for individuals who are deaf-blind and their families, and assistance to clients who receive training at headquarters to help them make the transition back to their home community.

HKNC also operates a number of special projects related to deaf-blindness. These include a service project for individuals who are elderly and deaf-blind and a national parent and family

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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services project. In addition, the Center operates an internship program for undergraduate and graduate students in the field of deaf-blindness. These interns are financially supported by their sponsoring institutions or colleges during their stay and are expected to initiate and complete at least one project while at HKNC.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(\$000s)
2006 .....	\$8,511
2007 .....	8,511
2008 .....	8,362
2009 .....	8,362
2010 .....	9,181

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration's request for the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) is \$9.181 million, which would maintain funding at the fiscal year 2010 appropriation level. The request is sufficient to support a range of educational, independent living, and training programs that expand independent living and employment opportunities for individuals who are deaf-blind.

The Federal appropriation for HKNC represented about 71.3 percent of HKNC's total budget in fiscal year 2009. Most of the Center's total budget supports operations and programs associated with serving clients in the headquarters program. In fiscal year 2009, the Center served 74 adult clients, 21 fewer than its target of 95. HKNC also served 22 short-term clients at Headquarters.

Other Sources of Funding: In addition to funds provided through the appropriation, the Center receives funding from a variety of State, private, and other Federal sources. For example, HKNC received \$760,000 in fiscal year 2009 through a grant from the Department to provide technical assistance to State and local educational agencies. The Center also greatly increased the number of non-Federal grants it received. This includes a 5-year grant from the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities for \$1.1 million per year to operate housing and provide supported employment services for individuals who are deaf-blind with intellectual disabilities. These individuals were former participants in HKNC's training program. HKNC also has a contract with the New York State Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVH) to operate a Community Services Program (CSP) which provides rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility, case work and job placement to deaf-blind individuals in the New York Metropolitan area who do not require the comprehensive services offered at the Headquarters training program.

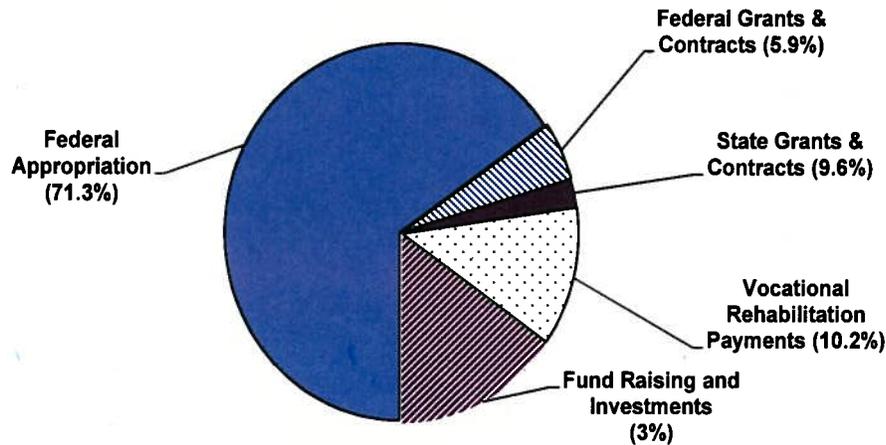
In fiscal year 2009, HKNC also expanded its efforts to raise funds from private sources, including charitable foundations. The Center has targeted fund raising efforts toward facilities improvement and special initiatives related to training and distance learning. The following chart shows the sources and percentages of the Center's fiscal year 2009 operating budget of approximately \$12.72 million.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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FY 2009 Operating Budget (\$12.84 million)



In fiscal year 2011, HKNC would use approximately 67 percent of the amount requested, or \$6.15 million, to support client training and consumer support activities, the residence, maintenance and plant operations, and administrative functions at the Center's headquarters facility. The Center would use these funds to support 11 direct services departments: audiology; case management; communications; independent living; low vision; medical; orientation and mobility; vocational services; adaptive technology; clinical social work services; and staff functions such as payroll and benefits. At the request level, the Center estimates that it would serve approximately 95 adult clients with deaf-blindness at its headquarters facility and provide short-term training for approximately 12 high school students, 10 senior citizens, and 5 individuals who need training in the use of technology in fiscal year 2011.

HKNC would devote approximately 33 percent of the amount requested, or \$3.03 million, to its field services and community education programs, including the activities of HKNC's 10 regional centers and the National Training Team (NTT). These programs help State agencies and other programs to serve or acquire the capacity to serve individuals who are deaf-blind through training, community education, and technical assistance. The regional centers provide technical assistance to individuals who are deaf-blind, professionals in the field, and family members in planning and obtaining services to assist individuals who are deaf-blind to live and work independently in the community. The 11 regional representatives also provide individual and program assessment, referrals and follow-up, advocacy, consultation, and training. In addition, one of the regional representatives serves as the older adult program specialist. The NTT provides training nationwide on a request basis, with the requesting agency covering the travel costs for the team. The NTT also coordinates on-site conferences and workshops across the country to train professionals working with individuals who are deaf-blind.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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#### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Number of individuals served:			
At headquarters:			
Adult training program clients	74	95	95
Short-term training:			
High school students	10	12	12
Senior citizens	8	8	10
Technology training	4	5	5
Through regional representatives: <sup>1</sup>			
Consumers	1,897	1,500	1,500
Families	505	500	500
Agencies/organizations	950	1,050	1,050
HKNC FTE	97	110	110

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Note: Impact data are provided according to fiscal year, not HKNC's program year of July to June. The estimates for the number of individuals served in fiscal years 2010 and 2011 and full-time equivalent (FTE) figures are based on historical trend data, which may or may not be consistent with data for fiscal year 2009.

<sup>1</sup> Individuals served by the regional representatives include individuals attending workshops or conferences in which HKNC participates, who receive materials from the Center, or who receive technical assistance, referral services, or counseling from regional staff. The regional offices began using a new data collection system in fiscal year 2007 that resulted in lower, but potentially more accurate output data.

#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2011 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Goal: Individuals who are deaf-blind will become independent and function as full and productive members of their local community.

**Objective:** *Individuals who are deaf-blind receive the specialized services and training they need to become as independent and self-sufficient as possible.*

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

**Measure:** The percentage of training goals set and achieved by adult consumers, of adult consumers seeking employment who are placed in employment, and of adult consumers seeking to maintain their ability to live independently or move to less restrictive settings who achieve their goals.

Year	Target				Actual			
	# of Adult Consumers	% of Training goals met	% in Less Restrictive Settings	% Placed in Employment	# of Adult Consumers	% of Training goals met	% in Less Restrictive Settings	% Placed in Employment
<b>2006</b>	95	88	72	45	91	93	96	46
<b>2007</b>	95	90	75	45	78	91	91	49
<b>2008</b>	95	90	75	45	84	88	83	48
<b>2009</b>	95	90	75	45	74	90	75	47
<b>2010</b>	95	90	75	45				
<b>2011</b>	90	90	75	45				

**Assessment of progress:** The number of adult clients attending the HKNC rehabilitation training center in fiscal year 2009 (74) was substantially below the target of 95 and prior year levels. HKNC points out that the number of consumers served may fluctuate from year to year due to factors beyond the control of the Center, such as changes in State vocational rehabilitation program funding or policy. HKNC also suspended the Person Centered Approach to Habilitation and Training (PATH) program in 2008, which may have reduced the number of individuals coming to the Center. The Center is considering reinstating this program in fiscal year 2010.

In addition to its traditional adult consumers, HKNC also provided short-term training for 10 youth in high school, 8 senior citizens, and 4 individuals seeking training in the use of technology. The high school students participate in career exploration, college preparation, and other services offered by the Center and return to high school after their training. The high school students, senior citizens, and individuals receiving short-term training are not included in the counts of adult consumers, consumers placed in employment or less restrictive settings, or consumers who meet their individualized training goals. Clients who participate in short-term training in the use of technology are included in the measure on training goals set and achieved by adult consumers.

The Center evaluates the progress of clients in achieving the goals stated in their individualized training plans (ITPs). This measure represents the percent of training goals achieved by all consumers served during the program year. The consumers and their instructors mutually develop these instructional objectives. The method for reporting these data was changed in fiscal year 2004. Previously, this measure included outcomes for high school students and for senior citizens participating in short-term training programs. However, the Center and Department agreed that it would be a more accurate reflection of the Center's performance if this measure were limited to results for adult clients enrolled in the formal program. The percentages for fiscal years 2006 through 2011 reflect the new measure. In addition, the figures also include clients enrolled in the technology training program.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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The less restrictive settings measure refers to clients who move from settings such as living with parents or guardians, assisted living settings, and nursing homes to more independent living arrangements such as their own home or apartment or group homes. The percentage is taken only of those consumers with a specific goal to move to a less restrictive living situation. In fiscal year 2007, HKNC revised this measure to include participants in the independent living program whose goal is to maintain their ability to live independently in their current living situation. The Center believes that it is as important to help consumers who need assistance in maintaining their ability to live independently as those seeking to move to less restrictive settings.

The percent placed in employment measure refers to outcomes for those individuals who came to the Center with a specific vocational objective. In fiscal year 2009, 19 of the 57 individuals who terminated training had a desire to achieve a vocational outcome. Of the 19 who had a vocational objective, 9 or 47 percent achieved this goal, and 10 are at home and seeking competitive or supported employment. Among the 38 individuals not seeking a vocational outcome, 8 were homemakers and 3 attended college. One individual is working in extended employment, which is work in a non-integrated or sheltered setting for a public or private nonprofit agency or organization that provides compensation in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act. Four consumers did not complete the program and/or took a leave of absence. Four consumers received short-term training and eight were senior adults. In addition HKNC served 10 High School consumers.

**Objective:** *Increase the capacity of deaf-blind consumers to function more independently in the home community.*

The regional offices and training programs are consuming an increasing percentage of HKNC resources. Performance measures are needed to assess the performance of HKNC's field services and training programs. From 2004 to 2009, several sets of measures have been proposed, but each has been rejected due to data collection problems or methodological issues. The Department and HKNC have agreed on 2 new objectives and 4 measures, pending an analysis of the feasibility of collecting accurate data. The proposed objectives and measures are:

**Objective:** HKNC will increase the numbers of individuals who are deaf-blind (or their families) who can effectively access and benefit from community services and supports needed to enhance their quality of life and mitigate the isolating effects of deaf-blindness.

**Measure:** Number of individuals (or families on behalf of individuals) referred to State or local agencies or service providers by HKNC.

**Measure:** Percentage of consumers who participated in services or programs (other than HKNC) as a result of receiving a referral from HKNC

**Objective:** HKNC will assist State vocational rehabilitation and employment programs in increasing employment outcomes for individuals who are deaf-blind.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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Measure: Number of HKNC referrals to vocational rehabilitation or related employment programs.

Measure: Percentage of individuals who achieved successful employment outcomes in which HKNC played a collaborative role contributing training, advocacy and/or support to the consumer or job training agency.

### Other Performance Information

In fiscal year 2009, the Department initiated an independent, comprehensive study of HKNC to evaluate the effectiveness of the Center. The study will examine not only the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the programs for the various populations served by HKNC and its regional offices, but also the Center's interactions with vocational rehabilitation agencies. In addition, it will examine the support that HKNC provides to other service providers and to the family members of deaf-blind individuals who, in turn, support those individuals.

The study plan includes the following research questions:

- Does HKNC meet its legislative mandates?
- Is the Center providing services that address the vocational and independent living needs of its clients?
- Do the adjustment training, independent living, and vocational services provided by the HKNC Headquarters program and regional representatives to individuals who are deaf-blind effectively lead to or result in successful employment or independent living outcomes?
- Are some services more or less effective than others and why?
- Does HKNC make efficient use of its resources, and are services cost effective?
- Is the training provided to families effective in assisting them to maximize the vocational and independent living goals of individuals who are deaf-blind?
- Is the training provided to staff of vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies or the providers with whom they contract effective?
- Does pre-service and in-service training provided to professionals lead to enhanced capacity by VR agencies or other service providers to serve individuals who are deaf-blind?
- Are the vocational services and independent living services provided by the HKNC Headquarters program and regional representatives to individuals who are deaf-blind effective, and do they lead to or result in successful employment outcomes?
- Do VR agencies believe HKNC is offering the right mix of services and that the services provided meet the needs of VR consumers and agencies?
- Are the current performance measures adequate for monitoring the effectiveness of HKNC Headquarters, field services, and training services?
- What alternative outcome measures could be developed for the field services and training programs, and cost effectiveness and efficiency measures for the HKNC Headquarters and regional programs?

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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- What improvements can HKNC put in place to make its programs more effective or more efficient?

The Department anticipates that the study will be completed by October 2010.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Assistive technology

(Assistive Technology Act of 1998)

FY 2011 Authorization (\$000s): Indefinite <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority (\$000s):

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
	\$30,960	\$30,960	0

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension applies through September 30, 2011. Up to \$1,235 thousand may be used for National Activities, unless the amount available for AT State grants exceeds \$20,953,534, in which case up to \$1,900 thousand may be used for National Activities.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Assistive Technology (AT) Act is to provide States with financial assistance that supports programs designed to maximize the ability of individuals with disabilities of all ages and their family members, guardians, advocates, and authorized representatives to obtain AT devices and AT services. AT devices are defined as any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. A few examples of such devices are computer or technology aids, modified driving controls, and durable medical equipment such as wheelchairs or walkers. Grants support comprehensive statewide programs that are designed to increase the:

- availability of, funding for, access to, provision of, and training about AT devices and services;
- ability of individuals with disabilities of all ages to secure and maintain possession of AT during periods of transition, such as transition between school and home and home and work;
- capacity of public and private entities to provide and pay for AT devices and services;
- involvement of individuals with disabilities in decisions about AT devices and services;
- coordination of AT-related activities among State and local agencies and other private entities;
- awareness of and facilitate changes in law, regulations, procedures, policies, practices, and organizational structures, in order to improve access to AT; and
- awareness of the benefits of AT among targeted individuals and entities in the general population.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Assistive technology

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#### *Assistive Technology (AT) State grant program*

The AT State grant program has been a population-based formula grant program since fiscal year 2005. The purpose of these grants to States is to support comprehensive statewide programs that maximize the ability of individuals with disabilities of all ages to access and acquire AT. States must establish consumer-responsive advisory councils with a majority membership of individuals with disabilities who use AT to advise on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of these statewide programs.

Under the formula, States and outlying areas are allocated a base amount that is not less than the amount they received in fiscal year 2004 (totaling \$20,288,534). Funds appropriated in excess of the base amount are divided in half and distributed equally to each State, and by a State population-based formula, so that each State receives not less than \$410,000 and outlying areas receive \$125,000. If funds remain after increasing all States and outlying areas to these minimums, the remainder is again divided and distributed to States with 80 percent being allotted through the State population-based formula and 20 percent allotted in equal shares. The fiscal year 2009 allotments are based on the July 1, 2007 population estimates published in December 2007. The fiscal year 2010 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates released on December 22, 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates released in December 2009.

Each State must submit an application that contains measurable goals, with timelines, that address the AT needs of individuals with disabilities related to: education (including goals related to the delivery of AT devices and services to students receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)); employment (including goals related to the Rehabilitation Act's Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program); telecommunications and information technology; and community living. The application must include information on how the State will determine whether it has met its goals. The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) has the authority to hold States accountable for a lack of progress toward these goals.

The application must also contain a detailed description of how the State will implement each of the required activities. Required activities include State-level activities and State leadership activities. States must spend a minimum of 60 percent (unless the State elects to comply with the State flexibility provision in section 4(e)(6) of the AT Act, as described below) of their formula grant funds on four State-level activities: State financing programs, device reutilization programs, device loan programs, and device demonstrations. States may, however, direct their funds towards these activities in varying amounts if they use other State or non-Federal funds to support these activities at a comparable or greater level.

States may use up to 40 percent of their AT State grant program funding on State leadership activities, with at least 5 percent of that amount devoted to technical assistance and training related to transition for students exiting school or adults entering community living. The State leadership activities include the provision of technical assistance and training to targeted individuals and entities focused on promoting the general awareness of the benefits of AT; skills development for persons involved in the assessment of the need for AT; the appropriate application of AT; and the integration of AT devices and services in plans required to be developed under other Federal laws, such as the IDEA's Individualized Education Program and

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### **Assistive technology**

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the Rehabilitation Act's Individualized Plan for Employment. In addition, States must use a portion of their grant funds on public awareness activities, including the continuation and maintenance of a statewide system of information and referral, and coordination and collaboration activities amongst entities in the States that are responsible for the provision of AT.

The law provides States with flexibility to decide to carry out only two or three State-level activities, rather than all four. If a State elects to carry out two or three State-level activities, it must spend a minimum of 70 percent of its funds on those activities, while spending not more than 30 percent on the State leadership activities.

The AT Act specifies what a State must include in its annual progress report to RSA, including data on: the State's financing program, device loan program activities, device reutilization programs, device demonstrations, including an analysis of those individuals who benefited from each of these programs; training activities; the statewide system of information and referral; and the outcomes of any improvement initiatives carried out by the State. The report must also provide data on the use of resources, including any contributed to the program by other public and private entities, and the level of customer satisfaction.

### ***Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology***

Formula grants for protection and advocacy (P&A) systems established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act support protection and advocacy services to assist individuals with disabilities of all ages in the acquisition, utilization, or maintenance of AT services or devices. Funds are distributed on a State population basis, with a minimum annual grant of \$50,000. Outlying areas must receive not less than \$30,000 annually. Also, the Act requires a minimum award of \$30,000 to the P&A system serving the American Indian consortium. The fiscal year 2009 allotments are based on the July 1, 2007 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2007. The fiscal year 2010 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2008 population estimates released on December 22, 2008. The fiscal year 2011 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates released in December 2009.

### ***National Activities***

The AT Act provides authority for the provision of technical assistance—through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements awarded on a competitive basis—to individuals with disabilities of all ages, to AT State grant program grantees, and to protection and advocacy systems. The AT Act requires the Secretary to make an award to renovate, update, and maintain a national public internet site (<http://www.assistivetech.net>). In addition, the AT Act includes authority for grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to assist grantees in developing and implementing effective data collection and reporting systems.

In designing its technical assistance activities, the Department must consider the input of directors of AT State grant programs and Alternative Financing programs, individuals with disabilities who use AT, family members, and protection and advocacy service providers, among others. The technical assistance must respond to specific requests for information and

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Assistive technology

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disseminate information to States, entities funded under the AT Act, and any other public entities that seek information about AT. The technical assistance must provide model approaches for the removal of barriers to accessing AT, examples of effective program coordination, and practices that increase funding for AT devices.

#### ***Alternative Financing program***

In fiscal year 2005, the AT Act authorized the Secretary to award grants under the Alternative Financing program (AFP), as authorized in title III of the AT Act as it was in effect prior to October 25, 2004. This authority was extended in fiscal year 2006 through appropriations language. Although no new awards are being made, the Alternative Financing program continues to operate. In addition financing programs are among the State level activities specified under the AT State grant program.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

	(\$000s)
2006 .....	\$30,452
2007 .....	30,452
2008 .....	29,920
2009 .....	30,960
2010 .....	30,960

### FY 2011 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$30.96 million in fiscal year 2011 for Assistive Technology (AT), the same level as the fiscal year 2010 appropriation for this program. This program includes the AT State grant program, the Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology program, and National activities. These programs enable individuals with disabilities to acquire technology they might not otherwise be able to obtain—technology that improves their quality of life, and in many cases, enables them to work or participate in other productive activities.

#### ***The Assistive Technology (AT) State grant program***

The request includes \$25.66 million for the AT State grant program, the same as the 2010 level. These funds will be used by States to carry out the third year of their State plan. State plans must describe how the State intends to carry out its AT State grant program to meet the AT needs of individuals with disabilities in the State, achieve the measurable goals required by the AT Act, and comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

#### ***Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology***

The fiscal year 2011 request includes \$4.3 million for the Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT) program, the same as the 2010 level. At the requested level, 31 States would receive \$50,000, the minimum amount allowed under the AT Act for the protection and advocacy systems established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of

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Rights Act to carry out this program. Outlying areas each would receive \$30,000. Funds would be used to assist individuals with disabilities of all ages in the acquisition, utilization, or maintenance of AT services or devices. Examples of recent accomplishments include: assisting individuals in nursing facilities in California to obtain authorization under Medi-Cal for wheelchairs, which California had been denying as a matter policy; filing suit on behalf of a mobility-impaired client in New Jersey that resulted in a settlement agreement with the affected township and county to install accessible curb ramps; and working with a Wyoming school on an accommodation that would permit a student with Down's Syndrome to use her assistive technology in completing her work toward earning a traditional diploma.

### National Activities

The fiscal year 2011 request also includes \$1 million for National Activities, the same as the 2010 level. In fiscal year 2011, the Department will continue support for grants that began in previous fiscal years. The Act requires support for a national information internet system, and authorizes State training, technical assistance, data collection, and reporting assistance.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (\$000s)

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
AT State grant program	\$25,660	\$25,660	\$25,660
Protection and advocacy program	4,300	4,300	4,300
National activities	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>
Total	30,960	30,960	30,960

### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

#### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in FY 2011 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Under the AT Act, each State is required to establish measurable goals for access to and acquisition of AT, with timelines for meeting those goals. These goals must address the AT needs of individuals with disabilities in the State in the domains of education, employment, community living, and telecommunications and information technology (IT).

**Acquisition of AT:** In order to measure the increase in the acquisition of AT, the following three measures have been established for the AT State grant program. The Department is requiring States to survey individuals served under this program to determine whether those who obtained AT (for **education, employment, or community living** purposes) believe they would not have otherwise obtained the AT device or service.

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**Goal: To increase access to and acquisition of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.**

**Objective: To increase *acquisition* of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.**

**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who obtained assistive technology devices or services for **educational purposes** through State financing activities or reutilization programs, who would not have obtained the device or service.

Year	Target	Actual
<b>2007</b>		65
<b>2008</b>		71
<b>2009</b>		Available May 2010
<b>2010</b>	75	Available May 2011
<b>2011</b>	75	

**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who obtained assistive technology devices or services for **employment purposes** through State financing activities or reutilization programs, who would not have obtained the device or service.

Year	Target	Actual
<b>2007</b>		65
<b>2008</b>		69
<b>2009</b>		Available May 2010
<b>2010</b>	75	Available May 2011
<b>2011</b>	75	

**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who obtained assistive technology devices or services for **community living purposes** through State financing activities or reutilization programs, who would not have obtained the device or service.

Year	Target	Actual
<b>2007</b>		80
<b>2008</b>		92
<b>2009</b>		Available May 2010
<b>2010</b>	90	Available May 2011
<b>2011</b>	90	

**Assessment of progress:** Data reported for 2007 were incomplete. FY 2008 was the first year in which RSA had uniform data from all States, and the first year that States calculated their own internal baselines. States used these data from the first full year (2008) to set targets for the second year (2009). RSA used the performance data for 2008 as baseline to establish the national targets for fiscal year 2010. Once States have reported several years of data, RSA will be able to assist in setting targets at the State level and refine the targets at the national level.

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**Access to AT:** In order to measure the increase in access to AT, the following four measures have been established under the AT State grant program. The Department is requiring States to collect information from individuals served under this program to determine whether access to device demonstration or loan programs has enabled them to make informed decisions about AT devices or services (for **education, employment, community living, and telecommunications** purposes).

**Goal: To increase access to and acquisition of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.**

**Objective:** *To increase **access** to assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.*

**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for **educational purposes** as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.

Year	Target	Actual
<b>2007</b>		80
<b>2008</b>		87
<b>2009</b>		Available May 2010
<b>2010</b>	90	Available May 2011
<b>2011</b>	90	

**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for **employment purposes** as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.

Year	Target	Actual
<b>2007</b>		75
<b>2008</b>		80
<b>2009</b>		Available May 2010
<b>2010</b>	85	Available May 2011
<b>2011</b>	85	

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<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for <b>community living purposes</b> as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		80
2008		89
2009		Available May 2010
2010	90	Available May 2011
2011	90	
<b>Measure:</b> The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for <b>technology/telecommunications purposes</b> as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.		
Year	Target	Actual
2007		70
2008		73
2009		Available May 2010
2010	80	Available May 2011
2011	80	

**Assessment of progress:** Data reported for 2007 were incomplete. FY 2008 was the first year in which RSA had uniform data from all States. This is the year in which States calculated their own internal baselines. States used these data from the first full year (2008) to set targets for the second year (2009). RSA used the performance data for 2008 as baseline to establish the national targets for fiscal year 2010. Once States have reported several years of data, RSA will be able to assist in setting targets at the State level and refine the targets at the national level.

### Efficiency Measures

The efficiency measure established for the **Alternative Financing program (AFP)** (which was funded in previous years) will continue to be used to measure activities conducted as a result of this program. This measure is calculated by dividing the total amount loaned by a State by the amount of Federal AFP grant funds awarded to that State. Data fluctuate from year to year depending on how long the program has been operating, the mechanisms States use to make alternative financing available (e.g., guaranteed loans, interest rate buy-down loans, non-guaranteed low interest loans, guaranteed and interest rate buy-down loans, and direct loans), and differences in the amount used from the AFP to cover administrative and program costs.

**Goal: To increase availability of, funding for, access to, and provision of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services.**

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**Objective:** Reduce barriers associated with the cost of assistive technology devices and services for individuals with disabilities.

**Measure:** Alternative Funding Program (AFP): The amount loaned per \$1 million Federal investment.

Year	Target (\$ in millions)	Actual (\$ in millions)				
		Annual Federal Investment	Annual Amount Loaned	Cumulative Federal Investment	Cumulative Amount Loaned	Cumulative \$ Loaned per \$1M Federal
2006	.75	3.94	13.39	57.19	54.85	.96
2007	.75	2.61	14.45	59.80	72.17	1.2
2008	.95	0	17.32	59.80	92.11	1.5
2009	1	0		59.80		
2010	1.25	0				
2011	1.75					

**Assessment of progress:** The AFPs began to operate during the fiscal year following the fiscal year from which they received their Federal funding. Therefore, the annual Federal investment data are shown in the fiscal year following the year in which the funds were awarded. For example, the \$2.61 million shown in fiscal year 2007 was appropriated in fiscal year 2006. No funds have been appropriated since fiscal year 2006.

The amount loaned per \$1 million has fluctuated greatly from year-to-year, depending on the number of new programs being established, the type of program being implemented, and the availability of additional funds. Since fiscal year 2005, the amount loaned has risen as States continue to operate their programs. The Department continues to raise the target for the amount loaned per \$1 million loaned and is contemplating a new efficiency measure that may look at how many States loan a certain amount per \$1 million. A target of \$1.75 million has been set for fiscal year 2011, based on the review of actual performance in previous years.

### Other Performance Information

In February 2009, RSA published the Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT) Program Performance Report, Form RSA 661. RSA will use this form to collect information on the number of individuals with disabilities currently receiving protection and advocacy services under this program. No similar information is available from other data sources. Data from the form will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of eligible systems within individual States in meeting annual AT priorities and objectives.

In addition, this program is one of eight protection and advocacy (P&A) programs housed in three Federal agencies. The different reporting and evaluation requirements translate into a significant paperwork burden for recipients under these programs. To help remedy this problem, the Department of Education, along with the Department of Health and Human Services and the Social Security Administration, is committed to improving Federal program coordination related to the monitoring and evaluating of these programs.