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# House Sets Up Battle on Funding Social Programs

By ROBERT PEAR

WASHINGTON — House Republicans are laying the groundwork for another battle with [President Obama](#) over spending and domestic policy with a bill that would cut some of his favorite health and education programs, tie the hands of the National Labor Relations Board and eliminate federal grants for Planned Parenthood clinics.

The bill, which finances the Departments of Labor, Education and Health and Human Services, would prohibit Mr. Obama from spending more money to carry out the new [health care law](#) until all legal challenges to the law were resolved.

The bill stipulates that no more federal money could be spent on the government's main family planning program, Title X of the Public Health Service Act, established more than 40 years ago. The program provides services to more than five million people a year at more than 4,500 clinics.

Under the bill, no money "may be made available for any purpose" to Planned Parenthood clinics unless they certify that they will not perform abortions. The clinics provide a wide range of health services and perform more than 300,000 abortions a year.

The bill does not provide any money for Mr. Obama's school improvement program known as Race to

the Top.

The bill reflects the position that House Republican leaders want to take into negotiations with the Senate. The top Senate negotiator, Senator Tom Harkin, Democrat of Iowa, supports many of the programs that House Republicans want to trim or eliminate.

Over all, the House bill provides \$153 billion for the fiscal year that started on Saturday — 2.5 percent less than in the prior year and 15 percent less than Mr. Obama requested. The Senate bill provides \$158 billion.

Representative Harold Rogers, Republican of Kentucky and chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, said the House bill would cut “wasteful spending” to protect the most important programs.

But Representative Rosa DeLauro of Connecticut, the senior Democrat on the subcommittee responsible for labor and health spending, said the bill was full of bad policy. After the threat of a government shutdown in the spring and a debt crisis in the summer, Ms. DeLauro said, she had hoped that Congress could finish the 2012 spending bills in “a timely and cooperative manner.”

The House bill also faces opposition from some Republicans who want deeper cuts in spending.

Lacking the votes to win approval on its own, the measure may be folded into an omnibus spending bill that finances many federal agencies, members of both parties said.

On education, the House bill would maintain the maximum Pell grant at \$5,550 but restrict eligibility, barring grants to students who attend college less than half time.

Terry W. Hartle, senior vice president of the American Council on Education, which represents 1,600 colleges and universities, estimated that the bill would eliminate Pell grants for a million students, or roughly 10 percent of those now eligible, while reducing the cost of the program by \$3.5 billion, also 10 percent.

Since many states have increased tuition at public colleges, Mr. Hartle said, the bill would mean that

**“low- and middle-income families will face higher college costs with less student aid.”**

With the bill, House Republicans try again, for the third time this year, to cut off federal money for National Public Radio. The bill would reduce home energy assistance to low-income families by more than 25 percent, to \$3.4 billion. And it would trim the budget for AmeriCorps, the public service program.

The House bill would also block numerous rules intended to protect workers. For example, the National Labor Relations Board could not use any money to enforce a new requirement that employers notify workers of their rights to form and join unions.

The bill says the Labor Department cannot require agricultural employers to reimburse foreign guest workers for transportation, meals and other costs incurred while traveling to a work site.

In addition, the bill would kill an Obama administration program that connects workers with private lawyers who can help them litigate claims involving the minimum wage, overtime pay, and family and medical leave. The Labor Department says it does not have the resources to resolve all the complaints it receives.

The House bill would also impose these restrictions:

¶ The government could not require employers to adopt “injury and illness prevention programs.” The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has been drafting such a requirement, which it says could save lives and reduce workplace injuries.

¶ Federal education officials could not enforce a new rule setting stricter standards for profit-making colleges and vocational schools. The purpose of the rule is to make sure such schools prepare students for “gainful employment,” but many in the industry say it is unnecessary and illegal.

¶ Federal health officials would have to curtail research comparing the effectiveness of different treatments for the same illness or injury. The Obama administration says such research can improve

care. Many Republicans fear the results will be used to deny coverage of expensive treatments.

The House bill would also eliminate money for a Labor Department program that trains workers for “green jobs” in energy-efficient industries. It would virtually shut down a Labor Department office that helps communities hurt by the downturn in the auto industry.



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