

POLITICO

Study: 39,294 earmarks sought

By: Manu Raju
December 6, 2010 11:24 PM EST

Members of Congress requested almost 40,000 earmarks worth more than \$100 billion directed to their home districts and states for the current fiscal year, according to a first-of-its-kind analysis to be released Tuesday.

As Congress attempts to finalize appropriations legislation through next September, the new database shows that there remains a relentless bipartisan appetite for projects from coast to coast — whether it's the \$5 million Sen. Bill Nelson sought for an engineering project at the University of South Florida, the \$1 million requested by Sen. Kit Bond (R-Mo.) to develop soybeans resistant to a problematic pest, the \$160,000 that Rep. Doris Matsui (D-Calif.) sought for a local Boys and Girls Club in Sacramento or the \$2 million for a new transit transfer center in Lafayette called for by Sen. Dick Lugar (R-Ind.).

In total, the new database — developed by Taxpayers Against Earmarks, Taxpayers for Common Sense and WashingtonWatch.com — showed that House members and senators from both parties asked for 39,294 earmarks worth an eye-popping \$131 billion.

The dollar figure represents only the amount for earmarks requested by lawmakers, not the amount for earmarks that actually make it into legislation, which has hovered around \$16 billion annually in recent years. Some lawmakers ask for money they know they won't get simply to respond to an individual constituency or for political purposes. And the total dollar amount also may be inflated because the database separately counts instances in which House members and senators may have sought money for the same project.

But the database is novel because it lays out in stark detail the deep-seated interest that lawmakers have to seek funding for parochial projects back home. While in recent years lawmakers have posted their earmark requests online, there never before has been a searchable database compiling all the requests, and a legislative push by Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.) to mandate a congressional earmark database has stalled in the Senate.

Steve Ellis, vice president of Taxpayers for Common Sense, said that since there are just a few months between when House and Senate appropriations panels get earmark requests from lawmakers and when spending bills are initially drafted, "it would be physically impossible for a small army to vet tens of thousands of requests in that short amount of time."

"This data reinforces that Congress needs to pause and think about better ways to allocate our precious taxpayer dollars," he said.

The database covers requests for fiscal 2011 — a time when House Republicans vowed to follow a self-imposed earmark moratorium and House Democrats said they would not seek money earmarked to for-profit companies. But some House Republicans clearly went their own way; Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas), for instance, sought 51 earmarks worth more than \$358 million.

When the new Congress convenes in January, it'll be a much tougher climate in which to

win backing for pet projects.

The incoming House GOP majority has already vowed to eliminate earmarks, saying that the projects often amount to wasteful spending that leads to corruption on Capitol Hill and improper legislative horse trading. The House ban pressured reluctant Senate Republican leaders to follow suit, and now the Senate GOP Conference has a self-imposed earmark moratorium for the duration of the new Congress.

But Senate Democrats have resisted curbs on the practice, saying that critics have demagogued Congress's constitutional authority to set spending priorities across the country and that eliminating earmarks would simply transfer the money to other parts of the budget where the executive branch would have wide discretion to spend funds in the states.

That means the two chambers appear headed for a collision course after the appropriations season kicks off in the spring. Democrats argue they have already taken steps to make the once-secretive process more transparent, adding that they've moved to stop the most egregious abuses of earmarks since assuming power in Congress after the 2006 elections.

"What ultimately matters is not how many projects are requested but how many are actually included in legislation," said John Bray, a spokesman for Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii). "Since the Democrats took back Congress in 2006, earmark levels in appropriations bills have been cut by more than half and now represent less than 1 percent of discretionary spending. This amounts to only a small fraction of the projects requested."

The database also shows Inouye sought 195 earmarks worth \$815 million, while the top Republican on the committee, Thad Cochran of Mississippi, requested 712 earmarks worth \$2.5 billion.

In spending measures that went into law the previous year, Inouye's and Cochran's earmarks were prevalent — with the Mississippi Republican securing 252 earmarks worth nearly \$500 million and Inouye racking up \$392 million for his state, according to a separate analysis done by Taxpayers for Common Sense.

Congress has yet to pass any of its annual appropriations legislation for the fiscal year that started Oct. 1, and the government is operating under a stopgap resolution that ends Dec. 18. Appropriators are pushing for an omnibus appropriations bill, which would include earmarks, but spending foes are pushing Congress to enact a continuing resolution that would freeze funding levels through the rest of the fiscal year.

Brian Baker, president of Taxpayers Against Earmarks, said that his group was urging lawmakers "to reject any attempt during this lame-duck session of Congress to pass an omnibus bill."

State: Representative: Status:

International Center for Decision and Risk Analysis
University of Texas at Dallas, Richardson, TX 75080
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$2,500,000 (Requested)

Minority Science Initiative
Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Washington, DC 20036
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$5,000,000 (Requested)

Best Practices for Stormwater Treatment in North Texas
Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$2,000,000 (Requested)

International Inland Port of Dallas (IIPD) Water and Wastewater Infrastructure
City of Dallas, Dallas, TX 75201
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$8,000,000 (Requested)

Dallas Floodway
City of Dallas, Dallas, TX 75201
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$6,300,000 (Requested)

Dallas Floodway Extension
City of Dallas, Dallas, TX 75201
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$73,500,000 (Requested)

City of Balch Springs Medical Corridor
City of Balch Springs, Balch Springs, TX 75180
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,300,000 (Requested)

Consumer VOICE
Youth Advocate Programs, Harrisburg, PA 17102
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$600,000 (Requested)

Increasing English Language Proficiency and Improving College Preparation for Hispanic and Minority Students by Connecting After-School Programs to the Pleasant Grove Campus of Eastfield College

Wilkinson Center, Dallas, TX 75228

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$200,000 (Requested)

Sickle Cell Disease Research Program

The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, Dallas, TX 75390

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,000,000 (Requested)

Center for Alzheimer's Research and Therapy

The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas, Dallas, TX 75390

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,000,000 (Requested)

Reducing and Eliminating Disparities Using Community-Based Health Education (REDUCE)

University of North Texas at Dallas, Dallas, TX

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,000,000 (Requested)

Texas Woman's University Institute of Health Sciences – Dallas Center, Equipment Request

Texas Woman's University Institute of Health Sciences, Denton, TX 76204

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$715,967 (Requested)

Teacher Quality and Retention Program

Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Washington, DC 20036

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$6,000,000 (Requested)

Global Science Leaders Program

Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Washington, DC 20036

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$6,000,000 (Requested)

Pediatric Pharmacology Research and Development Center

Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Lubbock, TX 79430

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,750,000 (Requested)

Physician Scientist Training Program

Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX 75205

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,460,000 (Requested)

Parkland Health & Hospital System Jail Health Telemedicine

Parkland Health & Hospital System, Dallas, TX 75235

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$100,170 (Requested)

Parkland Health & Hospital System – NNICU Giraffe Omnibed Modernization Project

Parkland Health & Hospital System, Dallas, TX 75235

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$2,000,000 (Requested)

Parkland Hospital Comprehensive Breast Center MRI

Parkland Health & Hospital System, Dallas, TX 75235

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,900,000 (Requested)

Earmarks List

State: Representative: Status:

DCTA Bus Fleet Replacement

Denton County Transportation Authority, Lewisville, TX 75067

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,300,000 (Requested)

The 2011 Dallas Hispanic Youth Institute

Hispanic College Fund, Washington, DC 20005

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$100,000 (Requested)

Agriculture Appropriations Request: YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas

YMCA Youth Obesity – Mind, Exercise, Nutrition Do It, Dallas, TX 75201

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$250,000 (Requested)

Agriculture Appropriations Request: Texas A&M University

Texas Obesity Research Partnership (TORP) To Benefit At-Risk Texans, College Station, 77843

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$2,500,000 (Requested)

Transportation and HUD Appropriations Request: Denton County Transportation Authority

DCTA Bus Safety and Security Equipment, Lewisville, 75067

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$300,000 (Requested)

Transportation and HUD Appropriations Request: Denton County Transportation Authority

DCTA Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility, Lewisville, 75067

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$4,000,000 (Requested)

YMCA Youth Obesity – Mind, Exercise, Nutrition Do It

YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas, Dallas, TX 75201

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$250,000 (Requested)

Texas Obesity Research Partnership (TORP) To Benefit At-Risk Texans

Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$2,500,000 (Requested)

DCTA Bus Safety and Security Equipment

Denton County Transportation Authority, Lewisville, TX 75067

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$300,000 (Requested)

DCTA Bus Operations and Maintenance Facility

Denton County Transportation Authority, Lewisville, TX 75067

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$4,000,000 (Requested)

Dallas Area Rapid Transit Trinity Rail Express (TRE) Access to Fair Park

Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Dallas, TX 75266

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,000,000 (Requested)

Dallas Area Rapid Transit Rapid Card Development

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$2,000,000 (Requested)

Dallas Area Rapid Transit Dallas Central Business District Second Light Rail Alignment (D-2) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Dallas, TX 75266

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$2,000,000 (Requested)

Dallas Area Rapid Transit Northwest Southeast Light Rail Transit (NWSE LRT)

Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Dallas, TX 75266

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$86,250,000 (Requested)

Dallas Area Rapid Transit Bus Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Procurement

Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Dallas, TX 75266

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$5,000,000 (Requested)

Sustainable Community Planning

City of Dallas, Dallas, TX 75201

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$470,000 (Requested)

Expansion of Haymarket, Kleberg and Rylie Crest Roads

City of Balch Springs, Balch Springs, TX 75180

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$4,511,130 (Requested)

ICDC Business Assistance Center

South Dallas Fair Park Innercity Community Development Corporation, Dallas, TX 75210

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$166,500 (Requested)

Health Careers Resource Center

Dallas County Community College District, Dallas, TX 75215

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$300,000 (Requested)

Dallas Area Rapid Transit Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Fueling Station

Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Dallas, TX 75266

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$10,000,000 (Requested)

MetroLacrosse National Capacity Building ProgramMetroLacrosse, Inc, Dorchester, MA 02125**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,000,000 (Requested)**Kurdish Human Rights WatchAssistance to newly arrived Refugees and Special Immigrants, Dallas, TX 75218**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$500,000 (Requested)**Heart of a Champion Character Elevates Initiative for Dallas Independent School DistrictHeart of a Champion Foundation, Colleyville, TX 76034**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$720,000 (Requested)**Increasing Girls' Involvement in Science, Technology, Engineering, and MathGirls Scouts of the USA, New York, NY 10018**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,500,000 (Requested)**Dallas Museum of Nature and Science – STEM exhibits and curriculumDallas Museum of Nature and Science, Dallas, TX 75210**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$500,000 (Requested)**Neonatal Intensive Care Unit ExpansionChildren's Medical Center Dallas, Dallas, TX 75235**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$2,000,000 (Requested)**Children's Medical Center Dallas – Advanced Diagnostics Lab EnhancementChildren's Medical Center Dallas, Dallas, TX 75235**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$450,000 (Requested)**Big ThoughtThriving Minds After-School, Dallas, TX 75219**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,500,000 (Requested)**FastBacc Nursing Program at Baylor University Louise Herrington School of NursingBaylor University, Waco, TX 76798**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$130,500 (Requested)**Nursing IT Equipment at Baylor University Louise Herrington School of NursingBaylor University, Waco, TX 76798**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$175,000 (Requested)**Nurse Simulation Equipment at Baylor University Louise Herrington School of NursingBaylor University, Waco, TX 76798**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$335,000 (Requested)**AVANCE Parent-Child Education Program (Dallas Chapter)Avance, San Antonio, TX 78207**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$500,000 (Requested)**Pervasive Health CareThe University of Texas at Dallas, Dallas, TX 75235**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$2,500,000 (Requested)**

BrainHealth and Repair for SoldiersThe University of Texas at Dallas, Dallas, TX 75235**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$3,000,000 (Requested)**Mobile Renewable Energy for U.S. Bases in AfghanistanSundial Capital Partners, Dallas, TX 75201**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$4,000,000 (Requested)**Current Force Common Active Protection System (APS) RadarRaytheon Company, McKinney, TX 75071**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$5,200,000 (Requested)**Unmanned Air System, Main Mission Radar with Sense and AvoidMustang Technology Group, Allen, TX 75013**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$3,000,000 (Requested)**Serialized Item Management Information SystemEMSolutions, Dallas, TX**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$3,000,000 (Requested)**Soldier Load Carrying Improvement System (Back Injury Avoidance)Emerald Touch, Inc., Duncanville, TX 75116**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$2,000,000 (Requested)**Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT), Texas State University-San MarcosTexas State University - San Marcos, San Marcos, TX 78666**Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$1,496,500 (Requested)**

Drug and Alcohol Intervention and Treatment for Dallas Area Youth
Phoenix Academy of Dallas, Dallas, TX 75219

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$750,000 (Requested)

KidsPeace Dallas Therapeutic Foster Care Program

KidsPeace National Centers of North America, Schnecksville, PA 18078

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$450,000 (Requested)

Child Safety and Adoption Initiative—Dallas, TX

Forever Family, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$100,000 (Requested)

Dallas County Identity Verification Project

Dallas County Sheriff's Department, Dallas, TX 75207

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$900,000 (Requested)

STEM Professions Initiative

Dallas County Community College District, Dallas, TX 75215

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$300,000 (Requested)

CISDR—Closing the Achievement Gap

Communities In Schools, Dallas Region, Dallas, TX 75247

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$605,348 (Requested)

Dallas Police Technology

City of Dallas, Dallas, TX 75201

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$500,000 (Requested)

Dallas Re-Entry System

City of Dallas, Dallas, TX 75201

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$500,000 (Requested)

Texas Internet Safety 101

Enough Is Enough, Great Falls, VA 22066

Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (TX-30) requests \$500,000 (Requested)