

**Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation  
Congressional Justification for the Fiscal Year 2026**

Submitted to Congress  
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Congressional Budget Justification  
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## Agency Introduction



THE HARRY S. TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

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This year marks the 50th anniversary of the official federal memorial to President Harry S. Truman and we continue to fulfill his mandate of identifying and encouraging accomplished young people to pursue careers in public service. We do so by:

**Investment in Future Leaders:** The Truman Scholarship program invests in the development of future leaders who are dedicated to making a positive impact on their communities and the nation. By providing financial support and mentorship, we cultivate a new generation of public servants who are passionate about addressing critical societal issues.

**Broad Reach:** The Truman Foundation selects Scholars nationwide and supports Scholars from a wide range of perspectives, interests, and geographic areas in the public service arena. Bringing together Scholars with varied interests and experiences encourages collaboration and problem solving.

**Promotion of Civic Engagement:** The Truman Scholarship program not only provides financial support but also fosters a culture of civic engagement and responsibility among its Scholars. It encourages them to seek careers in public service and provides opportunities for them to explore various avenues of civic leadership.

**Positive Impact on Communities:** Truman Scholars have a proven track record of making significant contributions to their communities and the nation. Many have gone on to hold public office, work in government agencies, or lead nonprofit organizations, driving positive change in areas such as healthcare, education, and governance.

**Enhanced Global Competitiveness:** Supporting the Truman Foundation ensures that the United States remains competitive on the global stage. Well-

prepared and dedicated leaders are crucial for addressing international challenges and maintaining our nation's influence and standing in the world.

**Efficient Allocation of Resources:** The Truman Scholarship Foundation has a strong track record of responsible stewardship of its resources. It consistently identifies and supports exceptional students, making efficient use of the funding it receives.

The Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation plays a pivotal role in fostering the development of leaders committed to public service and addressing the critical issues of our time. It is an investment in our nation's future that not only benefits our citizens but also enhances our global standing. Thank you for your support of the Foundation and ensuring that its vital work continues to shape the leaders of tomorrow.

**HARRY S TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION**

**Introduction**

The Harry S Truman Scholarship Foundation (the Foundation) was established in 1975 (P.L. 93-642; 20 U.S.C. 2001, *et seq.*) as the sole federal memorial to President Truman. The authorizing legislation charged the Foundation with the mission of identifying and supporting exceptional college students who plan to pursue careers in public service.

In 1975, Congress appropriated \$30 million to fund the Foundation. As required by statute (and at the direction of the Department of Treasury), the Foundation’s trust fund is invested solely in U.S. Treasury securities. Congress intended for the Foundation to operate on interest earnings from the trust fund. During the early years of the Foundation, the interest rates from these securities allowed the Foundation to grow the fund to \$54 million. The table below provides the recent earnings from investments that are used to fund the Foundation’s programs and expenses.

**Mandatory Appropriation**

	<b>FY 2022 (actual)</b>	<b>FY 2023 (actual)</b>	<b>FY 2024 (actual)</b>	<b>FY 2025 (est)</b>	<b>2026 (est)</b>
<b>Income</b>	\$337,211	\$0*	\$1,733,796	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000

\* The Foundation invests only in Treasury backed securities. Our normal practice is to create a ladder of notes coming due at various times. During the period FY 2022 through FY 2023, the interest rate for these notes was at or near zero. During the FY 2023 period, all of our investments had either been called or matured and there were no appropriate instruments available to us at that time.

Beginning in FY 2009, Congress supplemented the Foundation’s budget authority with a discretionary appropriation to the trust fund. These funds are immediately available to the Foundation.

**Highlights of the FY 2026 Request and Appropriation Language**

	<b>FY 2024 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2025 Enacted</b>	<b>FY 2026 Budget</b>
Scholarship Awards	\$1,200,000		\$1,200,000
Program Administration	\$1,800,000		\$800,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,000,000</b>	<b>\$2,970,000</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>

The FY 2026 Budget provides \$2 million for the Harry S Truman Scholarship Foundation to fund its scholarship awards and administer the operations and programs that support the Truman Scholars.

## Appropriations Language

### *PAYMENT TO THE HARRY S TRUMAN SCHOLARSHIP MEMORIAL TRUST FUND SALARIES AND EXPENSES*

*For payment to the Harry S Truman Scholarship Foundation Trust Fund, established by section 10 of Public Law 93-642, \$3,000,000, to remain available until expended.*

#### **Policy Priorities**

The Truman Scholarship Foundation's policy priorities further the goal of making higher education more affordable and increasing innovation by developing human capital through its scholarship program. Foundation policies and programs also encourage our Scholars to explore internships and careers with the federal government.

#### **Funding Priorities**

The Foundation executes its funding through two programs: Scholarship Awards and Program Administration. For FY 2026, the Foundation plans to obligate its discretionary funding as described below.

#### **Scholarship Awards**

The FY 2026 Budget provides \$1.2 million to fund at least 53 scholarship awards. The Truman Scholarship is a merit-based award available to college juniors who plan to pursue careers in government or elsewhere in public service. In FY 2026, the Foundation will continue its current level of support and offer each Scholar two-year scholarships at \$15,000 per year.

#### **Program Administration**

##### **Leadership Development Programs**

In addition to receiving scholarships, Truman Scholars participate in leadership development activities and have special opportunities for internships and employment with the federal government. The Truman Scholarship program has several components:

- *Truman Scholars Leadership Week:* All newly-selected Truman Scholars are required to attend a week-long orientation to the services provided by the Foundation and the many pathways to public service. Scholars participate in seminars and workshops with distinguished Truman alumni and other public service leaders, a policy analysis project, a graduate school and career fair with representatives from the schools and programs most attended by Truman Scholars and community service events. In FY 2026, the Foundation plans to obligate approximately \$175,000 for the Truman Scholar Leadership Week.

- *Summer Institute:* Immediately after college graduation, Scholars have the opportunity to participate in a ten-week long Summer Institute in Washington, DC. The Foundation arranges internships with government agencies and nonprofit organizations, seminars and workshops, meetings with Washington policymakers and Truman alumni, and opportunities for community building among Scholars. In FY 2026, the Foundation plans to obligate approximately \$300,000 to cover the cost of the Summer Institute. This amount includes an estimated \$45,000 will be allocated to the living stipend for Scholars. The stipend has not been increased since the early 2000s and has been a barrier preventing Scholars from accessing the program.
- *Additional Fellows Programs: Truman-Albright Fellows Program:* After Summer Institute, Scholars may elect to stay on in Washington, DC for a full year in the Truman Fellows Program. Scholars are placed in public service jobs – most with the federal government – while participating in a graduate level public policy discussion, mentoring opportunities, and a community service program. *The Democracy Fellows Program:* This program is designed for Truman Scholars who plan to run for public office. The group meets periodically over the course of a year to meet with Truman Scholars who are also elected officials. *The Governance Fellows Program:* This program is provided for Truman Scholars who seek high-level positions with the federal government. Scholars meet with high-ranking federal government employees and others who can provide insight on how to secure top-level positions with the federal government. In FY 2026, the Foundation expects these programs to cost \$30,000. These programs will be funded by donations from our alumni organization.

### Administration

Program Administration also funds all administrative functions and activities that support the Foundation and its mission, including workforce requirements, fixed costs and fees for services, and the costs of equipment and supplies. The major cost elements are described below.

- *The Selection Process:* The Foundation conducts a national selection process to identify Truman Scholars. All accredited two and four-year U.S. institutions are eligible to nominate students for the award. Students apply for the Truman in their junior year of college and must complete a lengthy application process. A Finalist Selection Committee reviews all nominated candidates (approximately 800 are received each year) and selects approximately 200 for interviews. Sixteen Regional Review Panels in various locations around the country then interview finalists and select between 53 to 60 students as Truman Scholars each year. The

number of awards is determined by funding constraints and the strength of the applicant pool in a given year. In FY 2026, the Foundation plans to obligate approximately \$100,000 for the cost of the selection process.

- *Applicant Recruitment:* The Foundation representatives travel to a number of colleges and universities, conferences, and meetings each year to increase awareness of the scholarship award as well as government and public service careers in general. These events provide excellent opportunities to recruit from a diverse array of applicants and institutions. We also planned to host events in conjunction with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Truman Foundation. In FY 2026, the Foundation initially budgeted \$100,000 for recruitment and alumni events, however we have reduced this amount to \$50,000. Remaining events will be funded by alumni contributions.
- *Contractors:* The Foundation currently contacts with GSA, DOI and OPM for payroll, personnel and budgeting services. The Budget includes \$60,000 to cover these fixed costs.
- *Audits:* The Foundation is required to engage in regular audits. Finding agencies willing to audit a small entity has been challenging and the cost of Foundation audits has doubled over the past two years. Currently, the Foundation conducts full audits every other year. In FY 2026, the Foundation plans to obligate approximately \$25,000 for audits.
- *Security and Cybersecurity:* The Foundation needs to update our hardware and software to better comply with government-wide cybersecurity directives. The Foundation plans to obligate approximately \$70,000 to this activity.