



AAU WEEKLY WRAP-UP

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CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE *NEW*

The House and Senate did not meet today.

Both chambers will reconvene on Monday, March 23. The House may consider an omnibus public lands measure that has been stalled in Congress. It is attached to a battlefield protection bill (H.R. 146).

The Senate on Monday will continue consideration of legislation to expand national service programs (H.R. 1388), with a cloture vote possible that evening. CQToday reports that Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) would like to consider a bill next week to increase taxes on employee bonuses from companies that have received federal bailout funds. Senate Finance Committee leaders Max Baucus (D-MT) and Charles Grassley (R-IA) have introduced legislation to do so (S. 651) that is different from the version passed by the House on March 19.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

HOUSE AND SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEES PREPARE TO CONSIDER FY10 BUDGET RESOLUTIONS *NEW*

The House and Senate budget committees are preparing to mark up their respective FY10 budget resolutions next week. Democratic leaders in both chambers would like to approve their versions of the budget blueprint before the spring recess, which begins on April 4. The budget

resolution, which is not signed into law by the President, provides an overall guide for congressional spending and tax decisions, including a top-line number for appropriations.

The Obama Administration issued an outline of its FY10 budget on February 26, with mainly top-line budget information for agencies of concern to research universities. (See the February 27 AAU Weekly [Wrap-up](#) and the House Budget Committee [website](#) for additional information.) Although earlier reports had indicated that the Administration would submit its complete budget plan in mid-to-late April, CQToday reports that the Administration's budget might not go forward until late April to early May.

As discussed previously, Office of Management and Budget Director Peter Orszag told members of the Senate Budget Committee at a March 10 hearing that it is not unusual for Congress to act on a budget resolution before a new presidential administration submits a full budget. He cited a Congressional Research report showing that both the House and Senate had approved their respective budget resolutions before receiving budget details from President Clinton in 1993 and President Bush in 2001.

--House Budget Leader Says No Decision Yet on Supporting Pell Grant as Entitlement

Meanwhile, House Budget Committee Chairman John Spratt (D-SC) said that House Democratic leaders had not yet decided if they will support President Obama's proposal to fund the Pell Grant program as an entitlement program, rather than in the discretionary budget, and require that the maximum grant increase annually with inflation.

OTHER CONGRESSIONAL ISSUES

SENATE CONFIRMS TWO SCIENCE NOMINATIONS *NEW*

The Senate yesterday confirmed two of the President's nominees for top science positions: John Holdren as director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and Jane Lubchenco as Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

The two nominations, which were approved by the Senate Commerce Committee on March 12, had been delayed by anonymous holds by Senators. CQToday reports that it remains unclear why the most recent holds were placed on the nominations or why Senate Democratic leaders were able to move ahead with the confirmations.

Dr. Holdren also serves as Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, which does not require Senate confirmation. Dr. Lubchenco will head the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

AAU ENDORSES ESHOO-BARTON FOLLOW-ON BIOLOGICS BILL *NEW*

AAU has endorsed legislation that was [introduced](#) March 17 by Reps. Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Joe Barton (R-TX), and Jay Inslee (D-WA) that would allow the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to approve generic versions of biologic drugs.

The Pathway for Biosimilars Act (H.R. 1548), which is nearly identical to the biologics bill introduced last session by Reps. Eshoo and Barton, would create a process for approving generic versions of complex biotechnology drugs, called follow-on biologics. The measure would give

brand drug makers a 12-year period of data exclusivity from competition by generic drug makers.

As AAU wrote in a [letter](#) endorsing last year's legislation, the bill "effectively implements a balanced policy that we strongly endorse: providing access to safe, effective and affordable biologic treatments while continuing to promote the innovative research and development in the life sciences that will fulfill the promise of current and future discoveries and treatments."

House Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Health Subcommittee Ranking Member Nathan Deal (R-GA) introduced a different follow-on biologics bill ([H.R. 1427](#)) on March 11, which would limit the data exclusivity period to five years and give the FDA greater flexibility in determining the amount of data required of generic drug makers. The shorter period of data exclusivity is widely viewed within the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries as insufficient to recover the costs of investment, which would significantly impair the ability of universities to license their discoveries in this domain. H.R. 1427 also contains a number of provisions that would limit the ability of universities to protect their patent rights for patents implicated in a follow-on biologic application process.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

NSF DIRECTOR ISSUES PLANS FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY ACT FUNDS *NEW*

National Science Foundation Director Arden Bement issued a [notice](#) on March 18 detailing how NSF plans to spend its \$3 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

Key points from the notice, as well as a general breakdown of how the Recovery Act funds will be distributed, are below:

- **NSF will use a large share of its ARRA funding to address the backlog of existing proposals.** The notice states, "With the exception of the Major Research Instrumentation, Academic Research Infrastructure and Science Masters programs, the majority of proposals eligible for Recovery Act funding include those that are already in house and will be reviewed and/or awarded prior to September 30, 2009...NSF also will consider proposals declined on or after October 1, 2008."
- **Proposals supported with ARRA funds will have to be expended in a timely fashion.** The notice states, "Given the goals of the Recovery Act, awardees will be informed that they are expected to expend funds in a timely manner on allowable award costs and that NSF will be monitoring awards for expenditures. If, after 12 months, no allowable expenditures have taken place, NSF may consider reducing or terminating the award and reallocating the funds."
- **All grants issued with Recovery Act funds will be standard grants with durations of up to five years.** The notice says this approach "will allow NSF to structure a sustainable portfolio."
- **Funding for new principal investigators and high-risk, high-return research will be a top priority for ARRA funding.**

PRESIDENT DESIGNATES WHITE HOUSE ARTS AND CULTURE LIAISON *NEW*

President Obama last week designated a new position to oversee arts and culture in the Office of Public Liaison and Intergovernmental Affairs, according to the New York Times. The position will be held by Kareem Dale, who previously was named Special Assistant to the President for Disability Policy. Mr. Dale will report to senior advisor Valerie Jarrett.

The Times [reported](#) March 14 that the White House has not yet described the new position, but that Bill Ivey, a former chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts who served on the president's transition team for the arts and humanities, said he expected Mr. Dale mainly to help coordinate activities of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute of Museum and Library Services "as they relate to the White House."

AAU is working with the broader humanities community to make suggestions to the Administration about how the position might be structured.

OTHER

HUMANITIES ADVOCACY MATERIALS AVAILABLE ON THE AAU WEBSITE *NEW*

AAU has posted on its website materials for advocacy on behalf of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The [materials](#) include a document on the importance of NEH and the humanities—with a focus on the restoration of funding for core program divisions and the creation of a new graduate education program—with back-up charts showing funding trends for NEH and individual programs. Also included is a [letter](#) sent to House leaders last year detailing AAU's proposal to create a new graduate student-faculty competitive grant program at the Endowment.

AAU ONLINE COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORY IS UPDATED FOR 2009 *NEW*

Since 1996, AAU has published a directory of community service and outreach programs at its member campuses around the country. The 2009 [directory](#) is the 14th edition of this on-line publication, which was initiated under the leadership of Tulane University.

It is widely recognized that research universities educate the leaders of tomorrow and conduct cutting-edge research that fuels innovation. But it may not be as widely appreciated that major research universities also support a broad array of public service activities in their communities. Faculty members and staff—and especially students—are helping improve the quality of life in their communities, often in support of the most disadvantaged residents.

Each university listing in the AAU directory includes one or more web sites that provide detailed information about each institution's activities.

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