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# AAU WEEKLY WRAP-UP

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES  
1200 NEW YORK AVENUE NW, SUITE 550, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005  
Phone: 202-408-7500 Fax: 202-408-8184  
[www.aau.edu](http://www.aau.edu)

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## CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE *NEW*

Both the House and Senate met in pro forma session today, with no roll call votes. They will return to session on Tuesday, October 13, following the Columbus Day holiday on Monday.

Senate leaders hope to complete work next week on the FY10 Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill (see item below) and on the conference report for the FY10 Energy and Water appropriations bill. The House Democratic leadership has not yet announced next week's schedule.

## BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

### SENATE EDUCATION RECONCILIATION BILL LIKELY TO BE POSTPONED TO NOVEMBER

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee is likely to miss an Oct. 15 deadline to report out legislation overhauling federal student loan programs as part of the budget reconciliation process. Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA) expects to receive an extension from the Senate Budget Committee and take up the measure in November after completing work on health care legislation.

There is no language in the budget resolution explicitly stating that the deadline can be waived. But Senate Budget Committee Chairman Kent Conrad (D-ND) said Tuesday he did not see a problem if the student loan overhaul moves later. The House approved its version of the measure ([H.R. 3221](http://www.congress.gov/bills/111/3221)) on September 17.

The six presidentially based higher education associations, including AAU, remain concerned that the bill to be introduced in the Senate, as with the House-passed bill, will include financial incentives for states to create comprehensive new student tracking systems and impose new top-down controls on higher education. There also is strong concern that the revamped Perkins Loan program in both versions of the bill would cut the federal in-school interest subsidy for students and impose new fees on participating institutions.

### **SENATE CONTINUES WORK ON FY10 APPROPRIATIONS BILLS *NEW***

The Senate is making slow, steady progress on the FY10 appropriations [bills](#). With approval this week of the Defense funding bill (see item below), the chamber has now approved seven of the FY10 appropriations bills; the House has approved all 12.

Also this week, the Senate gave final approval to the conference report for the Agriculture appropriations bill (H.R. 2997), now the second FY10 funding bill Congress has sent to the President for signature. The first bill enacted was the Legislative Branch measure, which also carried the continuing resolution (CR) to sustain funding for federal agencies and programs until Congress completes its regular appropriations bills. The CR lasts through the month of October.

### **ADMINISTRATION EXPRESSES CONCERN ABOUT NSF FUNDING IN SENATE APPROPRIATIONS BILL**

The White House Statement of Administration Policy (SAP) on the Senate version of the FY10 Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill (H.R. 2847) expresses concern that the bill provides less for the National Science Foundation (NSF) than the Administration requested.

The [SAP](#), which was issued October 5 in advance of Senate consideration of the bill, which began the next day, says that NSF is a key component of “the President’s Plan for Science and Innovation and the Committee’s reductions would affect important research activities and agency operations in the near term and make it increasingly difficult to achieve the doubling goal for basic research in future years.” The SAP also targets cuts in the requested budget for the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

The Senate bill would provide \$6.917 billion for NSF, which the Senate Appropriations Committee says is \$426 million above the FY09 level and \$126 million below the FY10 request of \$7.045 billion. The House-passed bill provides \$6.937 billion for NSF.

As noted above, Senate Democratic leaders hope to conclude work on the Commerce-Justice-Science bill on Tuesday, October 13.

### **--Coburn Amendment Would Cut NSF Political Science Programs *UPDATED***

Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) introduced an amendment to the FY10 Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill on October 7 aimed at prohibiting the National Science Foundation (NSF) from “wasting federal research funding on political science projects.”

The [amendment](#) does not single out specific grants for cuts. The Senator cites current grants in his justification for the amendment, but the measure would eliminate the agency’s support for any political science research.

The Senate has not considered the amendment, and it remains unclear at this writing if Senator Coburn will bring it up when the Senate resumes work on the Commerce-Justice-Science bill on October 13.

A number of higher education organizations and institutions have contacted Senators urging them to oppose the Coburn amendment. For example, under the leadership of the American Council on Education, 11 higher education associations, including AAU, sent a [letter](#) of opposition to all members of the Senate on October 8; the American Political Science Association also has initiated a [campaign](#) to oppose the amendment.

## **SENATE APPROVES FY10 DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS BILL**

The Senate approved the FY10 Defense appropriations [bill](#) on October 6 by a vote of 93 to 7, bringing to seven the number of FY10 appropriations bill the chamber has approved. Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Daniel Inouye (D-HI) told CongressDaily that he hopes to have the House-Senate conference on the bill completed quickly. The House approved its version of the bill in July.

As reported from committee, the Senate bill provides \$1.785 billion for Defense 6.1 basic research, which is \$57.3 million below the FY09 level of \$1.842 billion, \$147 million below the House-passed FY10 level of \$1.931 billion, and \$13.6 million below the Administration's request of \$1.798 billion. Additional details about the House and Senate bills are available on the AAU [website](#).

## **OTHER CONGRESSIONAL ISSUES**

### **DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION CONFERENCE REPORT INCLUDES STATEMENTS ON BASIC RESEARCH AND MINERVA *NEW***

House and Senate conferees reached [agreement](#) this week on the FY10 Defense authorization bill (H.R. 2467), which authorizes increases in 6.1 basic research and includes language of interest on both basic research and [Minerva](#), the Defense Department's social science research initiative. The House approved the final bill on October 8 and the Senate is expected to do so next week.

The [conference agreement](#) authorizes \$1.824 billion for 6.1 basic research in FY10, which is \$26 million more than the Administration's request of \$1.798 billion. (The authorization level also is \$39 million above the Senate-approved appropriation and \$107 million below than the House-approved appropriation.)

On basic research, the conference report refers to a non-public [report](#) prepared by JASON—an independent scientific advisory group that advises the U.S. government on defense science and technology—which “raised a number of critical concerns with respect to the Department of Defense's (DOD) basic research program.” While conferees recognize and support the Secretary's call for significant increases in Defense basic research, says the conference report, they will carefully review how DOD reacts to the [JASON](#) study before authorizing future increases in basis research.

On Minerva, the conference agreement authorizes \$13.3 million for the program. It directs that at least \$5 million be used to develop in-house DOD capabilities at defense laboratories and schools that are consistent with the research goals of the program.

The complete statements on Minerva and basic research can be found on pages 68 and 78, respectively, of the conference [report](#) pdf.

## **OTHER**

### **ASSOCIATIONS BEGIN FALL SURVEY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENROLLMENTS**

A group of higher education associations, including AAU, has sent colleges and universities around the country their annual survey of international student enrollments. Campuses are asked to respond to the survey by October 23, 2009.

Members of the CFR are encouraged to ensure that their campuses fill out the survey, which is available on-line [here](#).

The fall 2009 survey, which is led by the Institute of International Education (IIE), aims to update the information collected in last year's online survey, and to supplement the more comprehensive data campuses provide each year to SEVIS and to IIE's Open Doors report. The goal of the fall survey is to collect quick and early information on international student enrollment trends that can be used to help educate the press, the public, and policymakers.

### **ACE SEMINAR ON OCTOBER 15 TO ADDRESS LOBBYING DISCLOSURE AND FEDERAL ETHICS GUIDELINES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION *NEW***

The American Council on Education (ACE) will hold a free virtual seminar on October 15 to help university representatives better understand the latest changes and interpretations of the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007 and the Lobbying Disclosure Act.

The session also will address the Obama Administration's new executive orders and clarification letters regarding certain interactions between political appointees, outside groups, and registered lobbyists.

The virtual seminar is scheduled for Thursday, October 15 from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. EDT. The event is free of charge for those whose institutions are members of ACE.

Additional information about the session and how to register is available [here](#) on the ACE website.

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