September 14, 2012

CONTENTS
CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE
BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
House Votes on Six-Month FY13 Stopgap Funding Bill   UPDATED
OMB Issues Report on Effects of Budget Sequestration   NEW
OTHER CONGRESSIONAL ISSUES
Higher Education Associations Weigh in on Veterans Education Bills   UPDATED
OTHER
Inaugural Golden Goose Awards Given to Prominent Scientists at Capitol Hill Ceremony   NEW

CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE

The House met today to consider legislation to bar the Energy Department from issuing loan guarantees for innovative and renewable energy project applications submitted after 2011. The Senate did not meet.

Both chambers will return to session on Wednesday, September 19, following the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah. The Senate next week will consider the FY13 continuing resolution and a veterans' jobs bill (see items below); the House plans to continue consideration of energy and environment legislation.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

HOUSE VOTES ON SIX-MONTH FY13 STOPGAP FUNDING BILL   UPDATED

The House yesterday approved a continuing resolution (CR) that would sustain federal appropriations for the first six months of FY13, which begins on October 1. The vote on H.J. Res. 117 was 329 to 91. The Senate is expected to vote on the CR next Thursday, September 20.

If approved by both chambers and signed by the President, as expected, the CR would postpone final battles over FY13 spending levels until next March, well beyond the November elections.

The CR is based on the $1.047 trillion FY13 spending level agreed to in last year’s Budget Control Act (BCA), but reflects an extra $8 billion from higher-than-expected federal revenues. The measure is largely an extension of current funding, with a few “anomalies,” or spending increases—none in research or higher education—and no controversial policy riders. The extra
funding increases most appropriations accounts by 0.6 percent over what they would have been otherwise.

The outlines of the CR were agreed to by House and Senate leaders and President Obama before the August recess. In exchange for having an opportunity to make further cuts in FY13 spending next year, House Republicans agreed to abide by the FY13 discretionary spending level approved in last year’s Budget Control Act and used by the Senate in its FY13 appropriations bills. The House had sought to reduce that spending total by $19 billion.

**OMB ISSUES REPORT ON EFFECTS OF BUDGET SEQUESTRATION**  
NEW

The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) today released its report detailing the impact of the massive across-the-board budget cuts that will be triggered automatically in early January unless Congress and the Administration agree to some alternative. The estimated budget cuts for FY13 under sequestration are about $109 billion, divided evenly between defense and non-defense spending. The OMB report lists the estimated cuts for more than 1,200 budget accounts.

There is “no question that the sequestration would be deeply destructive to national security, domestic investments, and core government functions,” the report says. It adds that the sequester would require a 9.4-percent cut in defense programs and an 8.2 percent cut in discretionary programs. According to CQ.com, this translates into cutting defense by $54.67 billion, domestic discretionary spending by $38 billion, Medicare by $11 billion, and other mandatory non-defense spending by about $5 billion.

The OMB report was required by legislation enacted earlier this year.

**OTHER CONGRESSIONAL ISSUES**

**HIGHER EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS WEIGH IN ON VETERANS EDUCATION BILLS**  
UPDATED

The six major presidentially based higher education associations, including AAU, this week sent two letters to Capitol Hill on pending legislation dealing with consumer protections for veterans using their G.I. Bill education benefits.

The first letter, sent to Senators Patty Murray (D-WA) and Richard Burr (R-NC), raised concerns about “The G.I. Bill Consumer Awareness Act” (S. 2241). The associations expressed support for efforts to give veterans the information they need to make informed decisions about using their G.I. bill benefits and to protect them from fraudulent and unduly aggressive recruiting practices. But they said that S. 2241 would require colleges and universities to provide highly detailed data that they do not currently collect, which would impose a considerable cost, and that the bill contains provisions that largely duplicate other veterans’ consumer initiatives already underway. Earlier this week, it appeared that Senator Murray might add S. 2241 to the Veterans Jobs Corps Act (S. 3457) as part of the manager’s amendment, but she did not do so. (The jobs bill will be considered by the Senate on September 19.)
The second letter, sent to all Members of the House, expressed overall support for the Improving Transparency of Education Opportunities for Veterans Act (H.R. 4057) because the measure provides a more streamlined and less prescriptive approach to consumer disclosure requirements than the Senate bill. The letter also detailed several provisions that the higher education community hopes can be further addressed in a House-Senate conference. The House approved H.R. 4057 yesterday under suspension of the rules.

OTHER

INAUGURAL GOLDEN GOOSE AWARDS GIVEN TO PROMINENT SCIENTISTS AT CAPITOL HILL CEREMONY NEW

Eight scientists, including four Nobel Prize winners, were honored last night with the first annual Golden Goose Awards, a new honor created by a coalition of academic, scientific, and business groups—including AAU—to celebrate researchers whose seemingly odd or obscure federally funded basic research turned out to have significant impacts on society. The inaugural award ceremony honored the accomplishments of an individual researcher and two research teams whose work dealt with radiation waves, tropical coral, and glowing jellyfish.

The five scientists who were able to attend the Capitol Hill event received their awards during a standing-room-only ceremony that featured a video of them telling the stories about their scientific breakthroughs; a roundtable discussion about their research, the unpredictable course of scientific progress, and the role played by federal funding; and remarks by Democratic and Republican Members of Congress, including Rep. Jim Cooper (D-TN), who originally conceived the award.

The Golden Goose Award website provides additional information about the award, including the Capitol Hill event, the video of the recipients, the endorsing Members of Congress, the sponsoring organizations, and details about the selection process.

End of document

Please visit us at www.aau.edu and follow us on Twitter at @AAUniversities.