CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE  NEW

The Senate met today to continue consideration of comprehensive immigration reform legislation (S. 744), and will do so throughout next week. (See item below.) The House did not meet today and will return on Tuesday, June 25. The chamber will consider the FY14 Agriculture appropriations bill.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE SETS ALLOCATIONS, BEGINS FY14 MARKUPS  UPDATED

The Senate Appropriations Committee began work on its FY14 funding bills this week, allocating its discretionary spending total across its 12 subcommittees—the so-called 302(b) allocation—and approving the FY14 Agriculture and Military Construction-Veterans Affairs funding bills.
The committee-passed Agriculture appropriations bill would provide $316 million for the competitively allocated Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI). This is about $25 million more than the amount approved for AFRI by the House Appropriations Committee.

The Senate Energy-Water and Transportation-HUD appropriations bills will be marked up in their respective subcommittees on June 25.

--Senate Subcommittee Allocations Assume No FY14 Sequester  NEW

The subcommittee funding allocation plan developed by Committee Chair Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) was approved on a party line vote of 15 to 14. It provides $1.058 trillion in discretionary spending in FY14, a level which assumes that the sequester in FY14 will be lifted.

Senator Mikulski said in her opening statement that she was unwilling to accept that the sequester had become “the new normal.” The House-approved discretionary spending level of $967 billion, which reflects continuation of the sequester in FY14, “does not meet the needs of a growing nation,” she said. She added, “The $1.058 trillion provided in my spending allocation is the same as in the American Taxpayer Relief Act of just five months ago…My allocation assumes that we will work together, across the aisle, across the Dome, and across town with the White House, to find a solution to sequester before our final bills are enacted.”

AAU PRAISES SENATE FY14 APPROPRIATIONS ALLOCATIONS  NEW

AAU issued a statement on June 20 praising Senate appropriators for approving FY14 spending allocations “that protect the Senate’s ability to sustain key investments in the nation’s future.” The statement also calls for eliminating the sequester.

“Investments in areas like scientific research, education, and infrastructure are key to long-term economic growth, job creation, and global competitiveness, and we cannot afford to let them be squeezed out by the arbitrary sequestration that grows more constricting the longer it is kept in place,” says the statement.

HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVES FY14 ENERGY AND WATER APPROPRIATIONS BILL  CORRECTED

The House Appropriations Energy and Water Subcommittee on June 18 marked up its FY14 funding bill with $4.7 billion for the Office of Energy Science. This is a cut of $223 million from the FY13 ENACTED level, but $32 million ABOVE the post-sequester FY13 funding level. The budget for the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA-E) would be cut by $215 million, or by 81-percent.

The funding levels for energy research are an indication of the difficulty facing House appropriators with their low discretionary spending total and House leaders’ decision to protect national security-related bills and programs from the impact of the sequester. Subcommittee Ranking Member Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) said in a statement that the Energy and Water Subcommittee’s FY14 allocation is $2.8 billion below the FY13 level and $462 million below FY08 levels.
So far, there has been House action on six of the 12 FY14 appropriations bills. The House has passed the Military Construction-Veterans and Homeland Security bills; the full Appropriations Committee has also approved the Agriculture and Defense bills; and subcommittees have approved the Energy and Water and Transportation bills.

**DEFENSE DEPARTMENT ISSUES REPORT ON IMPACT OF FY13 BUDGET SEQUESTER**

The Department of Defense earlier this month released its comprehensive report on the impact of the FY13 budget sequester on funding for DOD programs and projects. AAU has updated its FY14 DOD funding chart with those FY13 numbers to provide more precise data for comparison. The chart is available [here](#).

**OTHER CONGRESSIONAL ISSUES**

**SENATE CONTINUES DEBATE ON COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM**

In what may be a breakthrough in moving the comprehensive immigration reform bill (S. 744) through the Senate, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) today set up a procedural vote for next Monday on a border security amendment aimed at attracting more Republican votes. *CQ.com* reports that the [amendment](#) offered by Senate Judiciary Committee Chair Patrick J. Leahy (D-VT) includes a proposal developed by Senators John Hoeven (R-ND) and Bob Corker (R-TN) that would condition permanent legal status on a range of increased border security measures. The Hoeven-Corker proposal would require a larger investment in technology, infrastructure, and personnel along the U.S.-Mexico border before immigrants could be switched from provisional to permanent status, the precursor to citizenship, reports the publication.

The plan is to invoke cloture on Monday, June 24 at 5:30 p.m. and have a final vote on the bill on Thursday, June 27. Majority Leader Reid has said that there will be time for senators to offer amendments between now and Monday.

Also aiding supporters of the bill is the [analysis](#) released this week by the Congressional Budget Office showing that the bill would boost U.S. economic output and reduce the federal deficit by $197 billion over 2014-2023 and by about $700 billion over the succeeding decade, 2024-2033. Some of the additional resources would be used to pay for the additional border security measures envisioned in the Hoeven-Corker proposal.

—Associations Express Support for Senate Immigration Reform Bill  NEW

A group of 16 higher education associations, including AAU, sent a [letter](#) to all members of the Senate on June 20 expressing strong support for the Senate comprehensive immigration reform bill (S. 744). “In its current form, S 744 is a strong bill that offers welcome and much needed changes to the nation’s immigration system,” said the letter. “Indeed, this bill represents a historic opportunity to create with bipartisan support an immigration system that better serves the needs of our country.”
The letter expresses specific support for the DREAM Act provisions in the bill that would give undocumented individuals brought to this country as children an expedited path to citizenship through academic accomplishment and/or serving in the military; provisions to streamline the green card process for those who graduate from U.S. colleges and universities with an advanced degree in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields; and provisions to increase the number of non-immigrant visas, particularly H-1Bs.

The association letter also encourages Senators to approve two amendments affecting H-1B non-immigrant visas; to consider using the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) broader definition of STEM fields as the STEM definition in the bill; and to allow the DHS Secretary to waive background checks for Designated School Officers if a college or university already conducts adequate checks.

--Associations Urge Opposition to Immigration Amendment on DREAM Act

A group of 15 higher education associations, including AAU, sent a letter to all members of the Senate on June 20 urging them to oppose an amendment that would make it more difficult for many DREAM Act students to complete four-year degrees.

The amendment, offered by Senator Joe Manchin (D-WVA), would eliminate the option for DREAM Act students in bachelor degree programs to gain lawful permanent residency after completing two years toward their degree. While the Senator’s apparent goal is to encourage students to complete their four-year degrees, the associations believe that allowing such students to achieve legal status after two years would help them complete their degrees by making them eligible for federal student grant aid.

OTHER

ORGANIZATIONS ANNOUNCE FIRST 2013 WINNER OF “GOLDEN GOOSE” AWARD

The organizations that created the Golden Goose Award announced on June 19 that the first recipient of 2013 would be the late Wallace H. Coulter, a researcher and inventor who some 50 years ago turned his research on paint for the Navy into the Coulter® Counter. His invention remains a standard machine for counting blood cells rapidly and efficiently. Dr. Coulter, who died in 1998, developed the technology while working on a grant from the Office of Naval Research to improve the paint used on ships.

A representative of the Wallace H. Coulter Foundation will accept the award on behalf of Dr. Coulter at the second annual Golden Goose Awards ceremony in Washington, DC this fall, along with other winners to be named in the coming months.

The Golden Goose Award was created in 2012 by a coalition of organizations, including AAU, to celebrate researchers whose federally funded research seemed odd or obscure but turned out to have a significant, positive impact on society. The award was the brainchild of Rep. Jim Cooper (D-TN) and enjoys support from a bipartisan group of Members of Congress.
AAA&S PANEL RELEASES REPORT AND FILM ON IMPORTANCE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

At a Capitol Hill press conference on June 19, the American Academy of Arts & Sciences (AAA&S) issued a report, “The Heart of the Matter: The Humanities and Social Sciences for a Vibrant, Competitive, and Secure Nation,” along with a film by Ken Burns that emphasizes the point.

The report and film call for the nation, states, and the philanthropic community to invest greater time, resources, and energy in research and education in the humanities and social sciences.

The report was prepared by the Academy’s Commission on the Humanities & Social Sciences, on which AAU President Hunter Rawlings served as a member. The study was requested by four Members of Congress: Senators Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Mark Warner (D-VA), and Representatives Tom Petri (R-WI) and David Price (D-NC). All four Members attended the press conference and gave remarks.

In a statement endorsing the report, Rawlings said:

“The humanities and social sciences strengthen our society, but they are increasingly undervalued and underfunded. In the long run, this trend will weaken our culture, economy, and quality of life. This report invites stakeholders across all sectors to collaborate in meaningful ways to advance these fields and to create new opportunities for their development. Philanthropists, states, and the federal government should not only increase funding for education and research in these areas but also encourage scholars in these disciplines to address many of the “Grand Challenges” facing our nation.”

--Cornell President and Former Lockheed Martin CEO Say Liberal Arts Vital to the Future

In an op-ed in USA Today on June 19, Cornell University President David Skorton and Former Lockheed Martin CEO Norman Augustine argue that “the humanities and social sciences, not just the physical and life sciences, are vital to the future of this country.”

“Science is essential,” they write, “but science alone cannot make the tough decisions that impact us as humans.”

The two authors, who were members of the AAA&S commission that developed the report on the humanities and social sciences, urge Members of Congress to read the commission’s report and “realize how much their constituents from all walks of life have gained from the social sciences and humanities and how much they need them going forward.”

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