CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE  NEW

The House met today to consider the FY14 continuing resolution (CR) to keep the government funded in the new fiscal year that begins on October 1 (see next item below). The Senate did not meet.

Although the House had been scheduled to be in recess next week, the expected back-and-forth between the House and Senate over the CR has prompted House Republican leaders to announce that they will reconvene the House on Wednesday, September 25, with the expectation of working over the following weekend.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

HOUSE APPROVES FY14 CR  NEW

The House today approved the FY14 continuing resolution (H.J. Res. 59), a stopgap bill to fund the government from October 1 through December 15 while the House and Senate attempt to reach agreement on a full-year FY14 budget. The measure would fund most federal programs at their current post-sequester FY13 levels, at a total level of $986.3 billion.

The House passed the CR by a party line vote of 230 to 189, with two Democrats voting in favor of the bill and one Republican voting against it.
Most controversially, the measure includes a provision to defund the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which Senate Democratic leaders have said the Senate will reject and the President has said he would veto. The Senate is expected to strip the ACA defunding provision from the CR, approve the bill, and send it back to the House.

It remains unclear what will happen next, but the failure of Congress to approve the CR by September 30 would force a government shutdown, which Washington leaders on all sides say they do not want.

**AAU ISSUES STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES RESEARCH**

AAU issued a statement on September 17 expressing the association’s “unequivocal support” for social and behavioral research. In FY13, the House Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill would have prohibited the National Institutes of Health from funding economics studies. That provision was eventually dropped. But the final FY13 funding package included a provision that bars the National Science Foundation (NSF) from supporting political science studies except those that the NSF director certifies as demonstrating national security or economic benefit.

**OTHER CONGRESSIONAL ISSUES**

**SENATE HELP COMMITTEE LEADERS ANNOUNCE HEARINGS ON HEA REAUTHORIZATION**

The chairman and ranking member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee on September 16 announced their intention to hold a series of hearings on reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA). Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Ranking Member Lamar Alexander (R-TN) also released a letter outlining the hearing process and the way in which they will request recommendations from students, parents, the higher education community, and other stakeholders.

The Committee will announce each hearing at least one week in advance. Once a hearing is announced, individuals and organizations will be asked to submit recommendations related to the topic of that hearing only.

The hearings will address such issues as:

- The roles of the state, the federal government, and accreditors in higher education;
- Keeping college affordable;
- Ways to increase quality in higher education;
- Student access;
- Innovative approaches to improving student success;
- Student financial aid; and
- Teacher preparation programs.
The House Education and the Workforce Committee issued a similar call for recommendations last April when the panel announced its own series of hearings on the HEA reauthorization. The recommendations submitted to the Committee by AAU can be viewed here.

EFFORTS CONTINUE TO PROMOTE PUBLIC ACCESS TO FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH RESULTS

The Coalition of Open Access Policy Institutions, joined by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition, is renewing a campaign to generate support within the academic community for S. 350 and H.R. 708, the Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act (FASTR). The measure is intended to speed up efforts to expand public access to the results of federally sponsored research.

FASTR is substantially similar to its precursor legislation, the Federal Research Public Access Act (FRPAA). Both call for all federal agencies that provide more than $100 million in extramural research funding annually to develop public access policies that provide free public access to the final accepted manuscripts or, where feasible, the final published versions of peer-reviewed research papers resulting from federally funded research.

AAU strongly supports the goals of both bills but is concerned that they call for a six-month embargo period between the appearance of an article in a peer-reviewed journal and its free accessibility through a federal agency public access repository. In a letter that AAU and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) sent the authors of FRPAA last year, the two associations expressed concern that “a six-month embargo period may be too short a period of time for some journal publishers, resulting in a loss of subscriptions and threatening their business operations” and noting that NIH’s PubMed Central provides an embargo period of up to 12 months.

AAU has chosen to focus instead on the public access process underway through the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), which is already moving ahead. The directive issued by OSTP Director John Holdren last February specifies a 12-month embargo period as a guideline but provides agencies with the capacity to increase or reduce that period based on specified conditions. The 22 federal agencies that elected to participate in the OSTP public access program have now submitted their initial plans to OSTP and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review. When those reviews are completed, OSTP and OMB will return the proposals to the agencies with guidelines for further development and implementation.

In response to the OSTP directive, AAU has been working with APLU and ARL to develop the SHared Academic Research Ecosystem (SHARE), a federated system of institutional and allied repositories that will provide public access to the results of university research under terms permitting broad reuse. SHARE is intended both to benefit individual institutions and to meet the broader public purposes of the OSTP public access program.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION LAUNCHES COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY AND VALUE OUTREACH

Following up on the college affordability and value initiative that President Obama announced in August, the Department of Education yesterday released additional information about the series of public discussions it will hold to inform development of the plan’s college ratings proposal. The discussions, to be held at the Department’s headquarters in Washington, D.C., will include student advocates and leaders.

Members of the public are invited to send their ideas about the President’s plan and suggestions for the ratings system to collegefeedback@ed.gov. More information about the college value and affordability outreach initiative will be available on the Department’s College Affordability and Completion website in the coming days.

OTHER

SECOND ANNUAL GOLDEN GOOSE AWARD CEREMONY HONORS RESEARCHERS WHOSE WORK HAS HAD UNEXPECTED BENEFITS

Six scientists were honored last night at the second annual Golden Goose Awards, an accolade 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 benefits for society. The scientists received their awards at a standing-room-only ceremony on Capitol Hill, with the participation of five Members of Congress.

The 2013 awards recognized the accomplishments of Dr. John Eng, who used Gila monster venom to develop a treatment to help prevent harmful side effects of diabetes; Drs. Thomas Brock and Hudson Freeze who discovered heat-loving bacteria in the hot springs of Yellowstone National Park that helped make possible the biotechnology revolution; and Drs. David Gale, Lloyd Shapley, and Alvin Roth, whose work, decades apart, grew from theoretical mathematical algorithms about marriage stability and moneyless markets to programs that match students with public schools of their choice, new medical school graduates with their first hospital residencies, and unrelated kidney donors and recipients.

The event featured a video of the researchers 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. Speakers included Senator Chris Coons (D-DE) and Reps. Jim Cooper (D-TN)—whose idea it was to create the award—Randy Hultgren (R-IL), Rush Holt (D-NJ), and Scott Peters (D-CA).

The Golden Goose Award website provides additional information about the award, including the Capitol Hill event, more information about this year’s and last year’s recipients, lists of the endorsing Members of Congress and the sponsoring organizations, and details about the selection process.

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