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NEW

CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE  NEW

The House was not in session today. The Senate was in session and fell 12 votes short of the 60 needed to invoke cloture in order to take up a climate change bill (S. 3036).

CQToday reports that the Senate next week is expected to consider an energy bill (S. 3044) that would roll back $17 billion in tax breaks for oil companies. The Senate also may consider a House-approved tax package (H.R. 6049) to revise or extend several provisions, including the research and development tax credit and the deduction for education tuition. (The higher education community wrote a letter about the bill to the House Ways and Means Committee in May.) The Senate also may take up legislation being developed by Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) to prevent a 10-percent cut in Medicare physician payments that is scheduled to go into effect on July 1.

House Democratic leaders hope to bring up a revised version of the FY08 war supplemental funding bill (H.R. 2642) next week, but it is unclear if the measure will be ready for consideration (see item below). The House also may consider reauthorization bills for Amtrak (H.R. 6003) and NASA (H.R. 6063).

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS
CONGRESS APPROVES FY09 BUDGET RESOLUTION  UPDATED

Congress has approved the FY09 budget resolution (S. Con. Res. 70), setting the stage for the FY09 appropriations process to begin in earnest. The House approved the budget resolution on June 5 by a vote of 214 to 210; the Senate approved the measure on June 4 by a vote of 48 to 45.
(The budget resolution sets guidelines for congressional tax and spending policies for the fiscal year; it is not signed into law by the President.)

The conference report assumes $21 billion more in discretionary spending in FY09 than the President’s request. The House Budget Committee Web site provides additional details about the measure. CQToday reports, “Congressional Democrats admit their budget blueprint will serve mostly as a placeholder until the new president and new Congress are elected. They do not plan to tackle major spending or tax issues this year.”

**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE PROVIDES MARKUP SCHEDULE**

With final approval of the FY09 budget resolution, the House and Senate appropriations committees are moving ahead to schedule markups in their respective 12 subcommittees.

The House Appropriations Committee has listed its markup schedule on the Committee Web site, which is subject to change. The Senate Appropriations Committee has not yet announced its schedule.

**STATUS OF SCIENCE IN FY08 SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING BILL REMAINS UNCLEAR UPDATED**

As House and Senate Democratic leaders work to craft a version of the FY08 supplemental appropriations bill (H.R. 2642) that can pass both chambers, it remains unclear what will remain in the package. CQToday reports that while House Democratic leaders are seeking to streamline the package to head off the President’s veto threat, Senate Democrats appear less willing to jettison provisions. Senate Democrats have focused specifically on retaining an extension of unemployment benefits in the package; it is not clear if they also will hold firm on retaining domestic spending add-ons, including those for science.

The Senate version of the bill includes $10 billion in discretionary spending beyond what the President has requested, including $1.2 billion for four science agencies. The measure also expands veterans’ educational benefits without the corresponding tax increase on wealthy individuals that has been demanded by the “Blue Dog” Democratic conservatives in the House. Both versions of the bill include a variety of other provisions, including an extension of unemployment benefits, a delay in implementation of certain Medicaid regulations, and funding for federal food assistance programs. The White House has threatened to veto the bill over several issues, including overall funding in the bill.

The Senate’s $1.2 billion package for the science agencies would provide: $400 million for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), $200 million for the National Science Foundation, $200 million for NASA, and $400 million for the Department of Energy ($100 million for the DOE Office of Science and $300 million for environmental remediation.)

**BUSINESS, ACADEMIC, ASSOCIATION LEADERS URGE INCLUSION OF SCIENCE IN FY08 SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING BILL**

A group of 74 business, academic, and association leaders sent a letter to House Democratic and Republican leaders on June 3 urging them to preserve the funding increases for the physical
sciences and engineering that were included in the Senate-passed version of the FY08 war emergency supplemental funding bill.

“America’s business, scientific, and academic communities are united in asking for your leadership to preserve this funding in the FY 2008 supplemental and to put America back on track in FY 2009 to secure our crucial innovation investment commitments,” said the letter.

AAU THANKS SENATORS HARKIN AND SPECTER FOR INCLUDING NIH IN SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING BILL  NEW

AAU sent letters to Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Arlen Specter (R-PA) on June 4 thanking them for including funding for NIH in the Senate version of the FY08 supplemental funding bill. “The $400 million you intend to provide for NIH makes a strong statement that the erosion of our nation’s biomedical research enterprise must not be allowed to continue,” said the letter. “This additional funding will restore the promise of the NIH doubling and continue the transformation of American medicine.”

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