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CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE

The House and Senate are out of session and will return for legislative business on Monday, September 8. The Senate has been operating under a “conditional” adjournment resolution that provides for several pro forma sessions to keep the President from making recess appointments.

When the Senate returns to session on September 8, it will take up the FY09 Defense authorization bill (S. 3001). At this writing, the legislative program in the House has not yet been announced.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

SENATE BILL WOULD CUT ADMINISTRATION’S FY09 REQUEST FOR BASIC ENERGY SCIENCES FUNDING   NEW

The university research community is concerned that the Senate Appropriations Committee is proposing to reduce the Administration’s FY09 request for Basic Energy Sciences (BES) at the Department of Energy (DOE) by $150 million, to $1.4 billion. (The Senate level is $184 million below the House FY09 level of about $1.6 billion and $132 million above the FY08 level of $1.27 billion—which does not include the $13.5 million added to BES in the FY08 emergency supplemental bill.)

This proposed reduction from the request—which is included in the FY09 Energy and Water appropriations bill (S. 3258) marked up by the Senate committee in July—likely would force DOE to postpone launch of the Energy Frontier Research Centers program, a university research
program that the Department plans to initiate in FY09. It also would essentially eliminate funding for basic solar energy research at BES by transferring $60 million in that program to applied solar research and development in the Energy Efficiency and Renewable account. The university community will be working to avert both of these outcomes.

### HOUSE SCIENCE COMMITTEE TO HOLD SEPTEMBER 10 HEARING ON BASIC ENERGY RESEARCH

The House Science and Technology Energy and Environment Subcommittee will hold a hearing on basic energy research on Wednesday, September 10, in 2318 Rayburn Building from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. EDT.

Additional information about the hearing, titled, “The Foundation for Developing New Energy Technologies: Basic Energy Research in the DOE Office of Science,” is available on the Committee’s Web site. The session will be Web cast.

### OTHER CONGRESSIONAL ISSUES

**GRASSLEY, WELCH PROVIDE ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON ENDOWMENT ROUNDTABLE**

Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT) have provided additional details about the roundtable discussion on university endowments and college costs that they are sponsoring on Monday, September 8, including a more complete list of participants and a suggested reading list.

Among those who have been added to the discussion are Brit Kirwan, chancellor of the University of Maryland system, David Shulenburger of NASULGC, Ed Elmendorf of AASCU, Rick Legon of the Association of Governing Boards, and Jane Wellman of the Delta Project. They join Princeton University President and AAU Vice Chair Shirley Tilghman, who will represent AAU on the panel dealing with mandatory endowment payouts, as well as Molly Corbett Broad, president of the American Council on Education, and John Walda, president of the National Association of College and University Business Officers.

A full list of participants and the recommended reading list are available on the Senate Finance Committee Web site. AAU staff will provide additional information as it becomes available.

The session, entitled “Maximizing the Use of Endowment Funds and Making Higher Education More Affordable,” will take place at 215 Dirksen Senate Office Building and run from 12:30 to 4:00 p.m. An August 26 press release states that the public may attend on a space-available basis and may submit comments or papers to endowments@finance-rep.senate.gov.

The session will consist of three panel discussions on the following topics: Understanding College Costs, What is an Endowment?, and Are Mandatory Payouts Beneficial?

AAU has been informed by Senator Grassley’s staff that the session will be Web cast live. The link for the Web cast will be made available that morning at the following address: http://finance.senate.gov/sitepages/grassley.htm.
EXECUTIVE BRANCH

NSF REQUESTS PUBLIC COMMENT ON COST-SHARING POLICIES  REMINDER

As part of a continuing review of cost-sharing policies at the National Science Foundation (NSF), a committee of the National Science Board (NSB) has issued a request for public comment on the use of cost-sharing in NSF-funded activities, with a focus on a list of specific topics. The NSB will use this information in developing the second of two reports on NSF cost-sharing, which will be more comprehensive than the first report and which the NSB plans to issue in early 2009. (The NSF request was also discussed in the CFR Weekly Wrap-up, 08-15-08.)

The deadline for comments is October 1, 2008. AAU and the Council on Governmental Relations (COGR) will soon share their draft comments with members of the CFR.

BACKGROUND

A provision of the America COMPETES Act tasked the NSB with conducting a comprehensive review of the “unintended consequences” of the agency’s decision in 2004 to eliminate mandatory cost-sharing for all NSF programs. In February 2008, the Board issued its first report to Congress, which focused on mandatory cost-sharing.

Based on recommendations in the first report, NSF will reinstate mandatory cost sharing in FY09 for the following programs: Engineering Research Centers, the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, and Industry/University Cooperative Research Centers.

A statement accompanying the first report said that the Task Force would continue to examine this issue, with the goal of formulating a comprehensive set of recommendations on NSF cost-sharing policy. The panel held two roundtable discussions with stakeholders on July 9-10, 2008—in which AAU President Robert Berdahl and AAU staff participated—which also will help inform the final report.

OTHER

COUNCIL ON COMPETITIVENESS TO UNVEIL NATIONAL ENERGY PLAN ON SEPTEMBER 9  NEW

The Council on Competitiveness (COC) has developed a “100-Day Energy Action Plan,” which it plans to release on Tuesday, September 9, during a luncheon at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute President Shirley Ann Jackson.

President Jackson co-chairs the Council’s Energy Security, Innovation, and Sustainability Initiative, which developed the plan. She will outline the proposal, which is aimed at guiding the next Administration and Congress in developing a comprehensive energy strategy. The goal is to offer a path to provide affordable energy for businesses and individuals, produce domestic jobs, and protect the environment.

The Tuesday luncheon session will be held from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. at the National Press Club, 529 14th Street, NW.
Additional information about the COC energy event and how to make a reservation to attend the luncheon is available on the National Press Club Web site. Reservations also can be made by calling 202-662-7501.

**NATIONAL HUMANITIES ALLIANCE ANNOUNCES MARCH 2009 CONFERENCE**

The National Humanities Alliance, in which AAU participates, has announced that its 2009 conference will take place in Washington, D.C. on March 10-11, 2009. Humanities Advocacy Day congressional visits will be held on March 11; a pre-conference event will be hosted on March 9 by the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. The event brochure and online registration will be available later this fall.

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