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CONTENTS
CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE
BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS
No Funding Bills Yet Approved by Congress
EXECUTIVE BRANCH
Spellings Commission Member to be Nominated as Under Secretary of Education

CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE

Both the House and Senate remain out of session. The Senate reconvenes on Tuesday, September 5 and the House reconvenes on Wednesday, September 6.

When they return next week, both chambers will need to deal with the FY07 appropriations bills, none of which has received final approval. CongressDaily reports that leaders of the House and Senate also plan to consider this month a variety of bills dealing with issues of national and homeland security. These will certainly include the FY07 Defense appropriations and authorization bills (H.R. 5631 and H.R. 5122, respectively) and the conference report on Homeland Security appropriations (H.R. 5441), when it is completed. Also possible for consideration is legislation to open up the Outer Continental shelf for oil drilling, as well as bills dealing with surveillance laws, port security, and the legalization of military tribunals for Guantanamo Bay prisoners.

The publication further reports that House Republican leaders plan to try to revive the package to overhaul lobbying rules “before resorting to a House rules change implementing new requirements to disclose earmark sponsors in tax and spending bills.” In the Senate, Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN) has said that along with security issues, he also is interested in dealing with legislation to give the President line-item veto authority, address Internet gambling, and improve health information technology.

Additional information about the House and Senate legislative schedules will be available next week when Congress returns to session.

BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS

NO FUNDING BILLS YET APPROVED BY CONGRESS

Congress takes up its fall agenda next week with none of the FY07 appropriations bills approved and signed into law. The Defense and Homeland Security funding bills are likely to be the only appropriations bills approved as separate legislation. For those bills that cannot be approved
before the beginning of the new fiscal year on October 1, Congress will need to pass a continuing resolution.

So far, the House has approved all of its FY07 funding bills except the Labor-HHS-Education measure (H.R. 5647). That bill has been delayed—and could wait until after the November election—because a controversial amendment raising the minimum wage was added during committee markup. The Republican leadership opposes the amendment but appears to lack sufficient votes to delete it on the House floor.

The Senate Appropriations Committee has approved all of its FY07 appropriations measures, but only the Homeland Security bill has been approved on the floor.

**EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

**SPELLINGS COMMISSION MEMBER TO BE NOMINATED AS UNDER SECRETARY OF EDUCATION**

Sara Martinez Tucker, president and chief executive officer of the Hispanic Scholarship Fund and a member of Secretary of Education Spellings’ Commission on the Future of Higher Education, has been nominated to become Under Secretary of Education. If confirmed by the Senate, Ms. Tucker will assume the number three position at the U.S. Department of Education, which has been filled on an acting basis since the first of the year by David Dunn.

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that the role of the under secretary is to oversee policies, programs, and activities dealing with vocational and adult education, postsecondary education, and student aid. As a member of the Spellings commission she said her top priorities were college access and affordability and that she supported development of a unit record data collection system to track individual students’ progress through the postsecondary education system.

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