Friday, February 2, 2007

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CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE    NEW
Neither the House nor the Senate is in session today. Both chambers will reconvene on Monday,
February 5. The House next week will consider legislation to authorize $10 million for the
Environmental Protection Agency to research chemical additives to improve the transportation of
biofuels (H.R. 547). The Senate will debate a non-binding resolution criticizing the President’s
new Iraq strategy.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

HOUSE APPROVES FY07 CONTINUING RESOLUTION, WITH SENATE ACTION
EXPECTED WEEK OF FEBRUARY 12   UPDATED

The House on January 31 approved the full-year FY07 continuing resolution (CR) by a vote of
286-140. Despite concerns raised by Republicans about not being permitted to offer
amendments, 57 Republicans joined 229 Democrats in voting for the measure. (The vote is
goes to the Senate, where, AAU staff has learned, it will be considered the week of February 12.
The current FY07 CR expires on February 15.

An AAU statement issued January 30 in support of H.J. Res 20 is available at:
AAU also sent thank-you letters to the House and Senate Democratic leadership and to Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Arlen Specter (R-PA) for their efforts in developing a continuing resolution that provides substantial increases for research and education programs. Additional letters will be sent soon to other Members of the House and Senate who have been instrumental in these funding increases. The letters are available on the AAU Web site at: http://www.aau.edu/budget/fy2007CR.cfm.

Although the FY07 continuing resolution (CR) will freeze funding for most domestic and foreign aid programs at their FY06 levels, the measure developed by House and Senate appropriators and the Democratic leadership would provide added funding for a variety of health and research programs of importance to research universities. The measure includes a $260 increase in the maximum Pell Grant—from $4,050 up to $4,310—and added funding for all three research agencies on which AAU institutions have focused their advocacy efforts: the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science. Additional funding also would be provided for the research programs at the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Although the aeronautics account at NASA would receive an increase, funding for NASA science programs would drop slightly (see details below).

Information about the CR, including a summary of its major provisions and the text, is available on the House Appropriations Committee Web site at: http://appropriations.house.gov/News/pr_070129.shtml.

According to CQToday, appropriators were able to make these and other plus-ups by holding more than 60 programs below their FY06 levels and rescinding some unobligated balances, providing about $10 billion in savings to be distributed elsewhere. About $2.3 billion of those savings are to be distributed to programs in the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. In addition, the measure contains no new earmarks and states that any language specifying an earmark "shall have no legal effect with respect to funds appropriated."

Information provided by the House Appropriations Committee and other sources indicates the following increases for research programs:

**Scientific Research**

- National Institutes of Health: $28.9 billion, an increase of $619.5 million. The House Appropriations Committee says the additional funding would reverse a projected decline in new NIH research project awards and support an additional 500 research project grants and 1,500 first time investigators. Some $483 million of the increase is for the NIH Common Fund, including $40 million for Junior Pioneer awards for high-risk, high-impact research.

- National Science Foundation: $5.9 billion, an increase of $335 million allocated to the Research and Related Account. Total funding for the Research and Related Account would be $4.7 billion, an increase of 7.7 percent and the same as the Administration’s FY07 request.

- Department of Energy, Office of Science: $3.8 billion, an increase of $200 million to support research. The Office of Science also retains an additional $128 million in previously earmarked FY06 funds which can be used for FY07 program priorities.
• Department of Energy, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Resources: $1.5 billion, an increase of $300 million to accelerate research and development activities for renewable energy and energy efficiency programs.

• National Institute of Standards and Technology Innovation Programs: $50 million in new funding for physical science research and lab support for nanotechnology and neutron research.

• For NASA, the CR would provide $890.4 million for aeronautics research, up $166 million from the Administration’s FY07 request and $6.3 million above FY06. Space science would receive $5.25 billion, down by $79 million from the FY07 request and by $3 million from the FY06 level.

UNIVERSITY AND INDUSTRY LEADERS URGE ADDED FY07 FUNDING FOR NSF, DOE, AND NIST  UPDATED

University and industry leaders have joined together in several efforts to encourage congressional appropriators to bolster funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology in the year-long FY07 continuing resolution (CR). These actions have included both letters and direct contacts with Members of Congress and their staffs.

Last week, AAU reported on several letters that had been sent and made available to the association. Added to that list now are letters from the University of Maryland and Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems; Duke University, the University of North Carolina, SAS Institute, and GlaxoSmithKline; the University of Chicago and Henry Crown and Company; and Vanderbilt University and Ingram Industries.

Letters reported on last week are two from the Task Force on the Future of American Innovation, in which AAU participates, and letters from Princeton University and Google; UCLA and Northrop Grumman; Ohio research universities, Battelle, and Proctor & Gamble; Syracuse, Anaren, and Sensis; University of Oregon and Intel; the AAU universities in California; and the AAU universities in Michigan.

All of these letters are available on the AAU Web site at: http://www.aau.edu/budget/fy2007CR.cfm.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

WHITE HOUSE STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY ON FY07 CR URGES FULL FUNDING FOR COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAMS

In the Statement of Administration Policy on the FY07 CR, issued January 30, the White House complained that the measure provided only half of the requested spending for basic research and education and urged full funding of the programs. Specifically, the statement said:

“The President’s budget proposed to double funding for basic scientific research at the National Institute of Standards and Technology labs, the Department of Energy’s Office of Science, and the National Science Foundation, as well as
increase math and science education assistance at the Department of Education. Only half of the requested research increase is provided. The Administration strongly urges the House to restore the $450 million reduction to the President’s request for these basic research programs in order to rapidly improve the Nation’s economic security through research in areas such as high-end computing and nanotechnology.”


FY08 BUDGET WILL CALL FOR RAISING THE PELL GRANT MAXIMUM TO $4,600

Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings said in a speech February 1 that the Administration’s FY08 budget will propose raising the maximum Pell Grant award to $4,600 next year and to $5,400 over the next five years. She characterized the proposal as the largest Pell Grant increase in more than 30 years. The President’s FY08 budget will be released next Monday, February 5.

It is likely that the President’s budget will propose to reduce or eliminate a number of student aid programs to help pay for the proposed Pell Grant increase. Previous budget requests, including FY07, called for significant cuts in the TRIO programs and the elimination of the Perkins Loan, Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnerships, and the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate programs.

The FY07 continuing resolution that has passed the House and is awaiting action in the Senate would raise the Pell Grant maximum from the current $4,050 to $4,310.


OMB ISSUES MEMO ON IDENTIFYING, CATALOGING CONGRESSIONAL EARMARKS

The White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on January 25 issued a memorandum to heads of federal agencies and departments outlining its definition of a congressional earmark and how OMB plans to begin cataloging them. The aim is to provide a baseline for determining when the President’s goal of reducing the number and cost of earmarks by at least half has been met.

Under the new policy, federal agencies will be required to identify and submit to OMB information on earmarks in all appropriations bills and certain authorization bills, including report language. According to the memorandum, authorization bills likely to be included in this review are the Department of Defense FY07 Authorization Act and the Farm Security Investment Act of 2002.

A copy of the OMB memo is available on the AAU Web site at: http://www.aau.edu/research/OMB_Earmark_Def_01_25_07.pdf.
NIH ISSUES GUIDANCE ON IMPLEMENTING NIH REAUTHORIZATION ACT

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has posted information on its Web site regarding how the agency will implement the NIH reauthorization bill, which President Bush has signed into law (P.L. 109-482).

The material is available on the NIH Web site at: http://www.nih.gov/about/reauthorization/index.htm.

OTHER

AAAS POSTS INFORMATION ON FY08 BUDGET BRIEFINGS NEXT WEEK

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is keeping track of the dates and times of the FY08 budget briefings by federal research departments and agencies. The briefings will follow the formal release of the President’s FY08 budget on Monday, February 5. The AAAS listing can be accessed at: http://www.aaas.org/spp/rd/brief08.htm. It will be updated as new information becomes available.

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