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Both the House and Senate are in session today. The House is voting on a non-binding resolution on Iraq and may also consider legislation to raise the minimum wage and provide small-business tax breaks (H.R. 976). The Senate will debate the Iraq resolution today and into tomorrow, Saturday. Both chambers will be out of session next week for the Presidents’ Day recess and will return the week of February 26.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

PRESIDENT SIGNS FY07 CONTINUING RESOLUTION   UPDATED

President Bush yesterday signed the FY07 continuing resolution (CR), which provides funding for most domestic and foreign aid programs through the end of the fiscal year. The House had approved the long-term measure (H.J. Res. 20) on January 31; the Senate approved it February 14.

During Senate consideration of the CR this week, several Republican Senators had hoped to offer amendments to the measure, which would have paid for their priorities by imposed across-the-board cuts on most programs funded in the bill. The Senators were unable to offer their amendments, however, because Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) employed a parliamentary maneuver, called “filling the amendment tree,” to block them. The Senate then voted to approve the CR on February 14 by a vote of 81-15. The President signed the measure on February 15, avoiding the need for a short-term extension of the previous CR, which was due to expire that evening.
The FY07 CR freezes funding for most domestic and foreign aid programs at their FY06 levels, but provides 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 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 is provided for 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 CFR Weekly Wrap-up, 02-02-07 for additional details on these programs.)

**OTHER CONGRESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTS**

**NEW CONGRESSIONAL NANOTECHNOLOGY CAUCUS-seeks members**

Four members of the House and Senate are inviting their colleagues to join a new bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Nanotechnology Caucus. The goal is to “promote nanotechnology, educate policy makers about this emerging area, and facilitate communication between industrial and academic researchers and the Hill.” Caucus activities will begin with a series of brown bag lunches for congressional staff on such topics as nanotechnology and medicine and nanotechnology and international competition.

Co-chairing the new caucus are Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Richard Burr (R-NC) and Reps. Bart Gordon (D-TN) and Ralph Hall (R-TX).

**EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

**DHS SCHEDULES UNIVERSITY NETWORK SUMMIT MARCH 15-16**

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will hold the first annual “University Network Summit on Research and Education” March 15-16 in Washington, D.C., with presentations and discussions about research topics in homeland security. The conference location is the L’Enfant Plaza Hotel at 480 L’Enfant Plaza, SW. It is open to homeland security officials, professionals, researchers, educators, and students, as well as other interested parties in government, academia, and industry.

Additional information about the conference and a registration form are available on the DHS Web site at: [http://www.orau.gov/DHS_RE_Summit07](http://www.orau.gov/DHS_RE_Summit07)

**OTHER**

**STUDENT AID ALLIANCE WILL HOLD HOUSE AND SENATE STUDENT AID BRIEFINGS NEXT MONTH**

The Student Aid Alliance, in which AAU participates, will offer briefings for House and Senate staff on the basics of federal student financial aid programs. The “Student Aid 101” session for
House staff will take place Thursday, March 1, 3:00-4:00 p.m. in 2175 Rayburn Building. The session for Senate staff will take place Friday, March 2, 9:00-10:30 a.m. in 430 Dirksen Building.

The briefings, which have been organized under the leadership of AAU staff, will provide an overview of federal student aid programs, including information on how campuses assemble student-aid packages. Both sessions will feature ample time for questions. Invitations to the briefings are being sent to all House and Senate education staff, with a focus on the staff of new Members. CFR members are encouraged to ask education staffers in their congressional delegations to attend these informational sessions.

House and Senate staff are asked to RSVP to Monique McGill of the American Council on Education at Monique_McGill@ace.nche.edu.

PRESENTATIONS FROM “BUDGET 101” SESSION NOW AVAILABLE

The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges and AAU sponsored a session for federal relations officers yesterday on the basics of the federal budget and appropriations process. Three Power Point presentations from that session are now available on the AAU Web site at: http://www.aau.edu/budget/AAU-NASULGC_Budget101_2-15-07.pdf.

The three presentations were by David Trinkle, OMB Budget Examiner for Science and Space Programs; Mike Telson, Science Advisor for the University of California office in Washington and formerly a staff member of the House Budget Committee and CFO of the Department of Energy; and Carole B. McGuire, an associate with Lewis-Burke Associates and a former staff member of the Senate Budget Committee. Also speaking during the session was Beth Felder, Director of Federal Relations for the Johns Hopkins University, and a former staff member of the Senate Budget Committee.

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