



AAU WEEKLY WRAP-UP

ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES
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CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE *NEW*

The House met today to continue work on chemical security legislation (see item below). The Senate considered but did not complete the FY10 Military Construction-VA appropriations bill (H.R. 3082), and it has adjourned until Monday, November 9.

The House is expected to remain in session through at least Saturday to consider the Democratic leadership's health care package ([H.R. 3962](#)). If the measure is approved on Saturday or Sunday, the chamber will be out of session next week for the Veterans Day recess. If the bill is not completed this weekend, the House could be in session on Monday and possibly Tuesday. Wednesday is Veterans Day, a federal holiday.

The Senate next week is scheduled to continue consideration of the Military Construction-VA funding bill, as well as several judicial nominations, before adjourning for the week on Tuesday.

BUDGET & APPROPRIATIONS

SENATE APPROVES COMMERCE-JUSTICE-SCIENCE FUNDING BILL *NEW*

The Senate on November 5 approved its version of the FY10 Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill (H.R. 2847), bringing to eight the number of FY10 funding [bills](#) the chamber has approved. Five of 12 FY10 bills have been enacted. A continuing resolution that expires December 18 is funding, generally at FY09 levels, those agencies and programs whose regular appropriations bills Congress has not completed.

The Senate Commerce-Justice-Science bill includes about \$200 million less than the President's FY10 request for programs in the bill, but provides more than \$7 billion above the FY09 level.

The Senate defeated by a vote of [62 to 36](#) an amendment offered by Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) that would have cut \$9 million from the National Science Foundation (NSF) budget to eliminate political science research programs. (See [October 16](#) AAU Weekly Wrap-up for more information on the Coburn amendment.)

National Science Foundation (NSF): The Senate bill includes \$6.917 billion for NSF. This is an increase of \$426 million above the FY09 level but \$128 million below the President's request, and \$20 million below the House-approved level of \$6.937 billion.

Within the NSF portfolio, the bill includes \$5.55 billion for Research and Related Activities, \$122 million for major research equipment and facilities, and \$857 million for Education and Human Resources. This compares to the House figures of \$5.64 billion, \$114 million, and \$863 million, respectively.

NASA: The Senate bill would provide \$18.68 billion for the space agency, the same as the President's FY10 request and about \$60 million above the FY09 level. The House provided \$483 million less for NASA than the FY10 request.

Within the NASA portfolio, the Senate bill would provide \$4.517 billion for the Science Mission Directorate, which is higher than the Administration's request of \$4.477 billion and the House level of \$4.496 billion) and \$507 million for Aeronautics, which is the same as the Administration's request and above the House level of \$501 million.

GROUPS URGE STRONG SCIENCE FUNDING IN FY11 BUDGET *NEW*

Two groups of organizations have written to the White House urging officials to increase funding for scientific research and education programs in the FY11 budget.

AAU and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) [wrote](#) to President Obama on November 3 to urge his administration's "continued strong support for scientific research" in its FY11 budget submission to Congress.

Noting that the President has committed to doubling funding for basic scientific research and has articulated the goal of devoting more than three percent of GDP to research, the letter adds, "...as you craft your FY 2011 budget, we urge you to build upon your already demonstrated commitment to science and we pledge to work with you to achieve your administration's goals in these important areas."

Likewise, the Task Force on American Innovation, in which AAU participates, sent a [letter](#) to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director Peter Orszag on November 5, urging "increased federal investment for research in the physical sciences and engineering."

The Task Force, a coalition of businesses, universities, and scientific and higher education associations, acknowledged in its letter that the current fiscal climate would constrain the FY11 budget and added, "...in setting priorities, we urge you to continue to give high priority to the areas of federal investment that are most likely to provide the greatest long-term return to the

American people, namely investments that strengthen our scientific and technological capabilities.”

The letter was signed by corporate leaders and by AAU’s Chair, Chancellor Henry T. Yang of the University of California, Santa Barbara, and by President Lee T. Todd, Jr. of the University of Kentucky, who chairs the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities.

OTHER CONGRESSIONAL ISSUES

HOUSE APPROVES UNIVERSITY AMENDMENT TO CHEMICAL FACILITY ANTITERRORISM ACT *NEW*

The House today by voice vote approved an amendment to the Chemical Facility Antiterrorism Act (H.R. 2868) which would give colleges and universities separate standards and security procedures for protecting chemicals used in research and education from those of chemical manufacturing facilities. The amendment was offered by Reps. Bill Foster (D-IL) and Ben Lujan (D-NM). At this writing, the House is still considering the measure.

The overall bill is designed to increase security at major chemical manufacturing facilities by creating standards and procedures for assessing vulnerabilities to theft, sabotage, or attack. However, the measure, as reported from committee, did not recognize that colleges and universities are not the same as major chemical facilities and failed to acknowledge the unique chemical usage and laboratory structure of academic institutions.

Six higher education associations, including AAU, [wrote](#) to Members of the House on November 3 urging them to support the Foster-Lujan amendment.

LIEBERMAN-COLLINS WMD BILL WOULD GIVE DHS AUTHORITY OVER CERTAIN LABORATORIES *NEW*

The Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee on November 4 approved legislation that would shift federal regulatory authority over laboratories that handle highly dangerous pathogens from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Agriculture to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The Weapons of Mass Destruction Prevention and Preparedness Act of 2009 ([S. 1649](#)), introduced by Committee Chair Joseph Lieberman (I-CT) and Ranking Member Susan Collins (R-ME), implements [recommendations](#) by the Commission for the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism. The bill would require DHS to develop security standards for laboratories that handle “Tier 1” pathogens, including risk assessments, personnel reliability programs, and physical security.

CQToday reports that Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) was the only member of the Committee to vote against the bill, on the basis that the panel should have taken testimony from additional government agencies before moving the bill. He argued that the measure would diminish the role of HHS in dealing with human pathogens, which he said conflicted with the recommendations of the commission.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

COMMITTEE EXAMINING STUDENT AID REGULATIONS REQUESTS ASSISTANCE FROM CAMPUSES *NEW*

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), enacted last year, authorized the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance to set up a [process](#) to review burdensome, unnecessary, or duplicative higher education regulations.

Last May, the Advisory Committee launched its effort to identify such regulations in student financial aid programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act. (The second phase of the review will examine problematic HEA regulations more broadly.) AAU has encouraged institutions to participate.

Staff of the Advisory Committee have appreciated receiving information from campuses about student aid regulations. They are now seeking to identify several individual campuses—with strong higher education research institutes, for example—to work with in developing case studies. Staff would like to engage faculty with knowledge or expertise in higher education and federal policy, and perhaps Ph.D. students interested in using the regulatory burden as a dissertation topic.

The law requires the Advisory Committee to provide a comprehensive report to Congress no later than two years after completion of the negotiated rulemaking process for HEOA. The Secretary of Education's office has deemed November 2 the end of negotiated rulemaking, since most of the rules were published on that date.

Additional information about the Advisory Committee's request for assistance is available from Megan McClean of the Advisory Committee staff at Megan.McClean@ed.gov.

OMB SITE INCLUDES FAQs ON ARRA REPORTING *NEW*

The White House Office of Management and Budget has posted on its website a series of frequently asked questions ([FAQs](#)) about various aspects of reporting the use of funds provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

OTHER

AAAS SEEKS APPLICANTS FOR 2010 S&T POLICY FELLOWSHIPS *NEW*

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is seeking applicants for its Science & Technology Policy Fellowships for the fall of 2010. The fellowships provide scientists and engineers with an opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills to federal policymaking, both in Congress and in more than 15 federal agencies.

The year-long fellowships—which for 2010 will begin on September 1, 2010, and end August 31, 2011—include a stipend, relocation allowance, health insurance, travel/training, and professional development. The application deadline for next year's program is December 15, 2009.

Details about the program, including the application form, are available on the AAAS website at <http://fellowships.aaas.org>.

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