



CFR WEEKLY WRAP-UP

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CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE *NEW*

The Senate Judiciary Committee met this week to consider the President's nomination of Samuel Alito to serve on the Supreme Court. The committee is expected to vote on the nomination Tuesday, January 17, with the full Senate returning to vote on the nomination on Wednesday, January 18. *CongressDaily* reports that if the nomination is approved next week, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN) "intends to give Senators the following week off and return the week of January 30."

The House remains out of session and will return on Tuesday, January 31, the day of the President's State of the Union address.

CongressDaily further reports that topping the legislative agenda at the beginning of the second session will be reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act, immigration and border security legislation, changes in asbestos litigation rules, and lobbying reform. House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL) also has indicated that the House will vote February 1 on the final budget reconciliation package. Final approval of the package was delayed last month when Senate Democrats succeeded in amending the package—with minor changes that did not affect higher education—after House Members had already left for the holidays. The House must now approve that measure.

BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS

CARD SAYS ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERING RECOMMENDATIONS

OF NATIONAL ACADEMIES' REPORT *NEW*

White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card told an audience at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce January 11 that the Administration is considering how to respond appropriately to recommendations in the National Academy of Sciences report on science and engineering competitiveness. Mr. Card said he had read the document, "Rising above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future," which he found compelling, and encouraged others to do so.

Mr. Card added that the Administration is taking a close look at the report and leaning toward believing this is the right issue to address. Many of the suggestions are appropriate, he said, but they must be put in the context of the budget.

DAVID GIBBONS TO BE NEW CLERK OF HOUSE LABOR-HHS-EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE *NEW*

CongressDaily reported today that the House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee will have a new clerk: David Gibbons, a former HUD official who has handled housing programs for the Transportation-Treasury Appropriations Subcommittee. He replaces Craig Higgins, who will move to the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee. The publication said these moves "are part of an ongoing staff shakeup that began with the panel's reorganization last year under incoming House Appropriations Chairman Lewis."

OTHER CONGRESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

HOUSE LOBBYING DISCLOSURE REPORTS MUST NOW BE FILED ELECTRONICALLY *NEW*

For those institutions that file Lobby Disclosure Act reports with Congress, as of January 1, 2006, the Clerk of the House no longer accepts such reports by mail or in person. They are now accepted only electronically. In order to file electronically with the House, filers will need to apply for and receive a digital signature from an approved vendor specified by the House Clerk. Filers will need to secure the required digital signature before filing their End Year 2005 Lobbying Disclosure Act reports, which must be submitted to Congress on February 14, 2006.

Although the Senate's system for e-filing lobbying documents is not compatible with that of the House, the Secretary of the Senate will accept e-filings using either its own system or the House system (there is a "File with the Senate" button on the House e-filing form). The Senate also will accept paper filings. Further information about filing with the House is available through the Clerk's office at: <http://clerk.house.gov>.

AAU staff are grateful to Kamala Lyon of the University of California for providing this information.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

NIH ISSUES BUDGET POLICY FOR FY06 PROGRAMS

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) on January 9 issued budgetary policy for FY06 research grants and fellowship and traineeship awards that addresses the reality that the agency's FY06 budget, at \$28.3 billion, is about \$34 million below the FY05 enacted level.

For Research Project Grants (RPG), the notice is available at:
<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-06-025.html>.

For the National Research Service Awards (fellowships and training grants), a separate notice is available at: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-06-026.html>.

Questions about the FY06 NIH budget should be directed to NIH officials.

EDUCATION COMMISSION ANNOUNCES FEBRUARY REGIONAL MEETINGS *NEW*

The Secretary of Education's Commission on the Future of Higher Education has announced that the panel will hold two regional meetings early next month: in San Diego on February 2-3 and in Seattle on February 7.

The *Federal Register* notice for the San Diego meeting says the agenda "will include panel presentations discussing five areas of innovation. The five areas are: innovation and the economy, innovative national and international models for delivery, innovative teaching and learning strategies, innovative financing, and innovative public/private sector models. There will also be a panel presentation of nontraditional college students..." Because space is limited, those interested in attending the meeting must register in advance by contacting Carrie Marsh at (202) 205-8741 or by e-mail at Carrie.Marsh@ed.gov. Those interested in providing public comment may do so through the Commission's Web site at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/hiedfuture/index.html>.

The *Federal Register* notice for the San Diego meeting is available at:
<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/06-257.htm>.

The *Federal Register* notice for the Seattle meeting says that the session "will begin with presentations from panels of invited speakers addressing the four areas of focus for the Commission: access, accountability, affordability, and quality. After the presentations by invited speakers, there will be time reserved for comments from the public."

Those interested in providing comments during the public comment period are asked to reserve time on the agenda by e-mail or telephone. As with the San Diego meeting, those who would like to attend and those who would like to speak must register with Carrie Marsh at (202) 205-8741 or by e-mail at Carrie.Marsh@ed.gov.

Participants will be allowed to speak for about three to five minutes and are encouraged to submit four written copies of their comments. Those who are unable to speak during the session may submit written comments. Speakers are asked to consider the following questions:

- (1) How accessible is higher education today: Is this changing?
- (2) Do students have access to the institutions best suited to their needs and abilities?
- (3) What is the real cost of educating college students? How fast is it rising?
- (4) What is the true price of a college education?
- (5) What is the quality of higher education in America?
- (6) How well are universities meeting specific national needs?

The *Federal Register* notice about the Seattle meeting is available at:

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/06-256.htm>

OTHER

NAFSA SURVEY FINDS STRONG PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION *NEW*

Americans overwhelmingly believe that international education is vital for their children to succeed in the global age, according to a new survey released by NAFSA: Association of International Educators. The public not only believes that foreign language skills will help their children compete for jobs but also understand the value of studying abroad and interacting with international students during college.

According to the NAFSA press release on the survey, "Irrespective of age, gender, race, geographic region, household income, or level of education, Americans are remarkably strong in their conviction that international education programs and preparedness for a global society are important." The survey of 1,000 adults showed that 90 percent of those surveyed believe it is "important" or "very important" to prepare future generations of Americans for a global society, while 92 percent agree that knowledge of other languages provides a competitive career advantage.

The press release is available at:

http://www.nafsa.org/press_releases.sec/press_releases.pg/american_public_international.

The survey is available at:

http://www.nafsa.org/ /Document/ /americans_call_for_leadership.pdf.

DUKE UNIVERSITY APPOINTS CHRISTOPHER SIMMONS TO HEAD FEDERAL RELATIONS *NEW*

Duke University announced earlier this week that Christopher Simmons has been appointed associate vice president for federal relations. He replaces Nan Nixon. Since 2002, Mr. Simmons has served as associate director of government affairs at the American Council on Education. He served previously as a senior federal relations officer at AAU.

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