



Friday, December 28, 2007

CORRECTION:

I mistyped the dates of the University Relations Summit in my earlier email. Please note the correction.

Liz

University Relations Summit (SUNY State Relations)
January 24-25, 2008
Albany, NY

SUNY Federal Ethics and Lobbying Briefing
(A part of the University Relations Summit)
January 25, 2008
Albany, NY

Federal Ethics and Lobbying Briefing

We have decided to include a panel on *Federal Ethics and Lobbying* during the 2008 University Relations Summit, which typically focuses only on state relations. The 2008 University Relations Summit is a two day event— Thursday, January 24th and Friday, January 25th. Thursday's session will focus on the 2008-09 NYS budget request, state advocacy strategies, the Commission on Higher Education and include a panel of legislative/higher education experts. Friday's session will be devoted to the impact of the new changes in ethics and lobbying rules both from the state *and* federal perspectives. For more information about the University Relations Summit, contact [Jim Campbell](#), SUNY Director of Legislative Relations.

The session on Federal Ethics and Lobbying is currently scheduled for 9:00 – 10:30am on Friday, January 25. Panelists will include [Melissa Laurenza](#), an Associate with Akin Gump Hauer Strauss & Feld, and [Randy Nuckolls](#), a Partner with McKenna Long and Aldridge. Both are Washington, DC-based attorneys who specialize in government ethics. Our discussion will focus on federal gift, event and travel restrictions and on filing of the federal lobbying report.

SUNY FEDERAL RELATIONS UPDATE

Friday, December 7, 2007

After a short Thanksgiving recess, Congress returned to Capitol Hill this week to work toward finding agreement on a number of issues, not the least of which are the eleven (of twelve) federal fiscal year 2008 spending bills which remain unfinished.

As reported earlier this week by Roll Call, "With President Bush ratcheting up his opposition to spending more than he has requested and agitating for Democrats to give him the "blank check" for Iraq that he so badly wants, the majority could find itself in the uncomfortable position of having to choose whether to provide additional domestic spending for health care, education and veterans or to stand firm against the president on the war." Complicating the debate is consideration of earmarks, which House Appropriations Chairman David Obey (D-WI) has reportedly threatened to simply cut out of the budget agreement in reaction to continued criticism of both earmarks and the process by which they are likely to be included in a final bill.

Democratic leaders yesterday took the initial steps needed in bringing forward a year-end omnibus, which could allow for an eventual year-end deal on both regular fiscal 2008 spending and war spending and the House is expected to consider an appropriations package on Tuesday that combines the 11 of 12 as yet unfinished spending bills. Much of the federal government currently is operating under a continuing resolution (CR) that expires Dec. 14. However, Congress might need to pass another short-term CR if congressional action on the omnibus bill is not completed by Dec. 14.

The House version of the Higher Education Act (HR 4137) continues to be a major concern. It was introduced and passed by committee in November. According to reports from congressional staff, it is likely that the House may take up the bill on the floor sometime in January. While the bill includes some positive changes, there are many concerns for colleges and universities in the legislation, not the least of which include:

- **Accreditation:** The original House bill contained a provision on accreditation that affirmed that colleges and universities are responsible for defining the standards by which student achievement is measured. This was essentially the same language as in the Senate HEA reauthorization bill (S. 1642). The provision was a specific rejection of the Department of Education's proposal during negotiated rulemaking to give the Department and regional accrediting agencies power to set standards for student achievement. Late during House committee consideration of the HEA bill, however, the panel accepted an amendment by eliminating the language. Elimination of this important provision in the House committee-passed bill reopens the door to determination of student achievement measures by

government-sanctioned accrediting agencies, bringing with it the threat of further federalization of higher education accreditation.

- College Cost Watch List: Establishes a “Watch List” for institutions that raise tuition too high, too fast, on a HEPI-based index. There are a number of other college cost-related provisions of concern.
- Teacher Training: Institutions that participate in federal student aid and also have teacher training and certification programs would be required to demonstrate that prescribed quantifiable goals with respect to teacher training and certification have been met as a condition of student aid eligibility.
- Net Price: Institution must provide in their application materials their net price by income quartiles of their current student body.
- Textbook Provisions: Establishes new requirements with respect to textbook information that may be difficult for some institutions to meet.
- Peer to Peer: In addition to simply disclosing to students its policies on copyright infringement on campus networks, campuses are required to develop a plan for offering alternatives to illegal downloading, as well as a plan to explore technology-based deterrents to prevent illegal “peer-to-peer” file-sharing.

Please feel free to bring to my attention any other specific concerns you may have identified in the legislation—it will be helpful as we continue to educate the New York State delegation on these concerns.

Below you will find some information regarding fellowship opportunities in Washington, DC, as well as some interesting political clippings.

Liz

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Deadline for AAAS Science Policy Fellowship Applications Is December 20

The deadline for individuals to apply for the 2008-2009 science and technology fellowships offered by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is Thursday, December 20.

The one-year fellowships for scientists and engineers to participate in public policy activities in congressional offices and federal agencies are offered in six program areas: congressional; diplomacy; national defense and global security; health, education and human services; energy, environment, agriculture and natural resources; and global stewardship.

Additional information about the fellows program is available at:

<http://fellowships.aaas.org>.

Department of Homeland Security Fellowships

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is seeking applications for its fellowship program. Students must be pursuing a field of study in science, technology, engineering or math related to homeland security and conduct research in one of sixteen specified research areas. The fellowships provide students with tuition and a monthly stipend; in return students participate in an internship at DHS and agree to work there after graduation for a certain period of time. Applications are due January 7, 2008. More information is available at <http://www.orau.gov/dhsed/>

A Pregnant Pause

New York Daily News, December 5, 2007

<http://www.nydailynews.com/blogs/dailypolitics/2007/12/a-pregnant-pause.html>

Freshman Democratic Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand, identified as on of the GOP's top targets for 2008, has just announced she is expecting her second child in May.

House Races to Watch

<http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?parm1=11>

Cqpolitics.com has identified a number of "House Races to Watch" for the 2008 elections, including six New York State races. We thought you might be interested in the data posted on their website for these districts:

<http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docID=district-NY-19>

<http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docID=district-NY-20>

<http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docID=district-NY-24>

<http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docID=district-NY-25>

<http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docID=district-NY-29>

<http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docID=district-NY-26>

Friday, December 28, 2007
Part II

On Wednesday, December 26, President Bush signed a \$555 billion spending bill, completing the legislative process necessary to put the Federal FY 2008 in place. Because there is so much information to share about the FY 2008 budget, I am sending FY 2008 budget information in this separate email.

Finishing the appropriations process allows lawmakers to begin focus on the next budget cycle when Congress returns in January. Last year, lawmakers were still working to finish the fiscal 2006 appropriations process when the president submitted his annual budget. President Bush is scheduled to submit his fiscal 2009 budget on Monday, February 4.

The omnibus package—which incorporates all but the already-enacted FY08 Defense appropriations bill—provides \$473.5 billion in discretionary spending, which when combined with the \$459 billion enacted for Defense, totals approximately the President’s FY08 discretionary spending request. The final package also includes \$70 billion for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, \$3.7 billion in “contingent emergency” spending for veterans programs—which the President must formally request by January 18 in order to spend—and about \$7.5 billion in “emergency” spending for such broadly supported needs as border security, drought aid, and home heating assistance.

The bill also contains approximately \$6.3 million in earmarks for nineteen programs at SUNY campuses across New York State. We have already separately contacted those campuses with projects that were included the bill. Please contact Beth Kempter or me if you have any questions regarding the final FY 2008 budget.

Here is a short AP story on the overall FY 2008 budget:

Bush signs \$555 billion spending bill

By BEN FELLER, Associated Press, 12/26/07

http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20071226/ap_on_go_pr_wh/bush

And, here is *Inside Higher Ed's* take on the FY 2008 federal budget:

Federal Budget Blahs

By Doug Lederman, Inside Higher Ed, 12/28/07

What seemed a promising budget year for most federal programs important to colleges ended in relative disappointment this month, as Democratic leaders in Congress blinked in a stare-down with President Bush.

<http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2007/12/28/approps>

CQ has reported that Congress and the White House are already at odds over the FY 2009 budget:

Senate Democrats on Dec. 18 sent a letter to the president noting that an OMB document "indicates that the FY09 Budget will slash funds for domestic homeland security and eliminate grant programs that benefit port security, transit security and emergency management." The senators noted the importance of those programs to homeland security efforts, and concluded "At a time when this administration asks for hundreds of billions of dollars to conduct its war in Iraq, it should also provide adequate support to protect Americans here at home and reject these misguided cuts to vital homeland security programs."

The FY 2008 omnibus package fails to incorporate most of the funding increases for physical sciences and engineering research and education that were proposed by the President and congressional leaders, and provides no real funding increase for NIH. And because of an across-the-board cut in programs funded in the Labor-HHS-Education bill, several higher education programs would be cut from their FY07 levels. The Pell Grant maximum award would be less than the FY07 level if Congress had not provided an increase earlier this year through mandatory spending in the College Cost Reduction Act.

The Labor-HHS-Education portion of the bill contains at least \$600 million in earmarks, which affected funding for the National Institutes of Health and student aid. Earmarks in the Department of Energy Office of Science cut the increase in funding for competitive research programs to less than three percent.

The bill would hold most institutes at the **National Institutes of Health** at or below their funding levels for fiscal year 2007. The omnibus bill would provide \$29.2 billion for NIH, an increase of \$329 million, or 1.3 percent over FY07 funding. However, because a tap from the budget for the Global Aids, funding for international AIDS efforts that comes directly from NIH, would rise from \$99 million in FY07 to \$300 million in FY08, the actual program increase for NIH is about \$129 million, or well under one percent.

Department of Energy Office of Science: The agency would receive \$4 billion, which is \$221 million, or 5.8 percent, above FY07 spending but \$380 million below the FY08 request. (The House-passed bill provided \$4.514 billion; the Senate bill provided \$4.497 billion.) However, the increase includes \$125 million in earmarks, leaving an increase of only \$97 million, or 2.6 percent, for competitive programs.

National Science Foundation (NSF): The science agency would receive \$6.065 billion in FY08, an increase of about \$149 million, or 2.5 percent, over FY07 but \$364 million less than the President's FY08 request. (The total is \$444 million below the House bill and \$488 million below the Senate bill). Research and Related Accounts would receive \$4.821 billion, which is \$56.8 million over FY07 but \$310 million below the FY08 request. Education and Human Resources would receive \$725.6 million, which is \$27.6 million above FY07 funding but \$52.6 million less than the request.

NASA: The space agency would be funded at \$17.3, which is \$1.062 billion above the FY07 level and the same as the FY08 request.

Department of Education/Student Aid Programs

Accreditation Regulations: The bill contains a provision prohibiting the Department of Education from issuing regulations on accreditation until after Congress reauthorizes the Higher Education Act.

Pell Grants: The omnibus provides a modest increase (\$555 million) for the Pell Grant program compared to FY07, but is less than both the House-passed and Senate-passed bills. The modest increase means a cut in the Pell Grant maximum award by \$69, bringing the maximum to \$4,241 (less than the FY07 level of \$4,310). However, because the College Cost Reduction Act provided a mandatory increase of \$490, the maximum Pell Grant would increase to \$4,731 in FY08. Without the mandatory increase, enactment of this legislation would have meant a drop in the Pell Grant maximum award in FY08.

SEOG, Perkins Loan cancellations, and LEAP funding would drop below their FY07 levels because of the 1.747 percent across-the-board cut. SEOG is funded at \$757.47 million, a reduction of \$13.5 million below FY07. Perkins Loan cancellations are funded at \$64.3 million, a cut of \$1.1 million. LEAP is funded at \$63.9 million, a cut of \$1.1 million.

Federal Work-Study funding would increase by \$138,000 over FY07, for total funding of about \$980.5 million.

TRIO and GEAR UP are level-funded at \$828.18 million and \$303.42 million, respectively. The across-the-board cut eliminated the increases provided in both the House- and Senate-passed bills.

Graduate Education Programs: The Javits fellowship and Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need programs are funded below their FY07 levels because of the across-the-board cut. Javits would receive \$9.53 million; GAANN would receive \$29.54 million.

International Education and Foreign Language programs would receive an increase of about \$3 million above FY07, for total funding of \$108.98 million. Domestic programs receive a \$2.4-million, or 2.7 percent, increase above FY07. Overseas programs receive slightly less than \$1 million, or 6.1 percent, above FY07. The Institute for International Public Policy receives a \$.1 million, or 4.4 percent, increase above FY07.

Like other Washington associations, the American Association for the Advancement of Science has expressed its disappointment with the FY 2008 federal research and development funds approved by Congress as part of an omnibus appropriations bill.

"While we recognize that both the Congress and the White House face many competing priorities as they attempt to reach a compromise for final spending limits, we see a missed opportunity to honor the commitment made by both branches of government to support basic research, as articulated in the American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI) and the America COMPETES Act," the AAAS said in a 20 December statement.

According to an analysis by Kei Koizumi, head of the AAAS R& D Budget and Policy Program, federal investment in basic and applied research for 2008 would grow just 1.1 percent to \$57.5 billion, less than inflation and substantially less than earlier congressional proposals. The federal research investment would decline in real terms for the fourth year in a row, according to Koizumi.

For those of you particularly interested in the federal R&D budgets, the AAAS FY 2008 Appropriations Summary will be updated in early January with additional information. The report contains highlights of R&D in final FY 2008 appropriations, highlights of the major R&D funding agencies, and summary tables and charts reflecting final 2008 appropriations actions.

Agency tables reflecting omnibus appropriations for the major R&D funding agencies are now available at the [AAAS R&D web site](http://www.aaas.org/spp/rd/upd1207.htm), and will be supplemented in coming weeks by AAAS R&D Funding Updates on final 2008 appropriations for all the major R&D funding agencies.

(<http://www.aaas.org/spp/rd/upd1207.htm>)

(<http://www.aaas.org/spp/rd/fy08.htm>)

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