



SUNY Federal Relations Update Monday, June 30, 2008

Congress has made some progress on FY 2009 appropriations legislation. As details have become available, we have individually contacted campuses with information regarding their federal appropriations requests. If you have not heard from our office or if you have any questions about the status of your college or university's request(s) please feel free to contact our office. The process is far from complete (see more information below) as of twelve appropriations bills that must be completed by each chamber, the House Appropriations Committee has reported out five spending bills; the Senate Appropriations Committee so far has reported out three.

See below for more information on:

- **President Bush Signs Supplemental Spending Bill with GI Bill Expansion**
- **Future Progress on FY 2009 Appropriations Unclear**
- **Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act**
- **SAVE THE DATE: SUNY Federal Relations Summit**
- **REMINDER: 2nd Quarter Federal Lobbying Report Forms Due Soon**
- **The Office of Naval Research (ONR) 2008 Naval Science & Technology Partnership Conference**

President Bush Signs Supplemental Spending Bill with GI Bill Expansion

President Bush today signed a \$186.5 billion supplemental spending bill that provides funding for another year of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan while greatly expanding GI Bill education benefits for veterans of the two wars. The Senate cleared the bill June 26, a week after the House had voted on it. The new law provides \$161.8 billion to support operations related to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and will fund war operations through next June.

The bill also provides \$24.7 billion for domestic programs, including veterans' education benefits. The GI Bill expansion, sponsored by Sen. Jim Webb (D-VA), updates and expands the Montgomery GI Bill and provides current veterans with college tuition, room and board. Veterans who have served on active duty for three years since Sept.

11, 2001, are eligible for a full four-year college education. More than 1.6 million veterans have served since 2001 and about 450,000 veterans are expected to make use of the new GI bill, which will take effect when signed by Bush. Veterans will be able to transfer their education benefits to their spouses and children under a provision added to garner additional support.

Also within the funds for domestic priorities, there is \$400 million for science agencies, divided as follows: \$150 million for NIH and \$62.5 million each for NSF, the DOE Office of Science, and NASA. The remaining \$62.5 million will fund DOE environmental management activities.

Future Progress on FY 2009 Appropriations Unclear

As CQ reported today, "House Appropriations Chairman David R. Obey, D-Wis., was furious after Republicans on June 26 tried to force votes on oil drilling and other energy-related amendments by offering the Interior spending bill as a substitute to Obey's Labor-HHS-Education measure." The markup was suspended and Chairman Obey threatened to shut down the appropriations process. Congress is currently in recess for the 4th of July holiday and it is yet to be seen whether the Chairman will reconvene the Committee.

Appropriators had always planned to report out all 12 spending bills, so much of the work would be done, despite acknowledging that they had no intention of finalizing the bills until after the November elections. To date, House Appropriations has reported out five of the 10 bills leaders had earlier expected would be reported by this time. Senate Appropriations Chairman Robert C. Byrd, D.-W.Va., continues to state that he intends for the Senate Appropriations Committee to complete all 12 spending bills by the end of July.

On Reauthorization of the the Higher Education Act

Before leaving for the July 4 recess, Congress has approved another one-month extension of the Higher Education Act (HEA) (S. 3180) to provide additional time for House and Senate negotiators to complete the conference on the HEA reauthorization bill (H.R. 4137, S. 1642). The extension, which the Senate approved on June 23 and the House on June 25, authorizes HEA programs through July 31.

SAVE THE DATE: SUNY Federal Relations Summit

The annual SUNY Federal Relations Summit, a meeting for SUNY campus-based federal relations contacts, has been scheduled for September 15-16, 2008 in Albany, NY. Details are forthcoming.

REMINDER: 2nd Quarter Federal Lobbying Report

SUNY's 2nd quarter federal lobbying report is due in July. A message from Michael Trunzo to campus presidents and federal relations representatives requested that completed forms be sent to mike.spencer@suny.edu by Friday, July 11, 2008. Please contact liz.clark@suny.edu if you have any questions.

The Office of Naval Research (ONR) 2008 Naval Science & Technology Partnership Conference

The Office of Naval Research (ONR) is hosting the 2008 Naval Science & Technology Partnership Conference at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, DC, 12-14 August.

The theme for this eighth annual conference is 'Sustaining the Edge: Serving the Next Generation Warfighter, Now.' The primary objectives for this conference are to broaden our Science and Technology partnership base, deepen existing relations and explore new ideas with small business, industry and academia by providing unprecedented access to ONR's program officers.

Click on this link to learn more about the unique features of this year's conference including our \$1 million dollar CNR Challenge and request an appointment to meet with a program officer. <http://www.onr.navy.mil/>