

Good Friday Afternoon! Below you will find the Federal Advocacy & Public Policy Update with the latest on education news from Washington, D.C. Please take time to review this information and contact me if I can be of assistance.

As always, thank you for all you do on behalf of public education in Virginia. Have a safe and relaxing weekend!

Best,

J.T.

Federal Advocacy & Public Policy Update

December 13, 2019

Congressional Update

House and Senate Leaders Announce Funding Deal “In Principle”

With only a handful of days remaining before temporary funding for the U.S. Department of Education and other federal agencies expires, House and Senate appropriations committee leaders have announced an agreement “in principle” on a funding deal for all twelve appropriations bills, and an intent to pass them prior to the expiration of the current continuing resolution next Friday. Following a lengthy meeting with Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin, the leaders announced that they had reached agreement on outstanding issues, and a vote may come in the House as early as Tuesday. No additional details about the funding deal, including levels of funding for the Department of Education or key education funding programs, are yet available, and may not be posted for another few days. It is also unclear how the most difficult issue impeding negotiations – funding for President Trump’s border barrier – was resolved, and as with previous funding fights, it’s not truly over until the President has signed the bill. NSBA is closely monitoring the situation and will report any substantial developments as they are learned.

Senate HELP Committee Holds Vote on Child Abuse, Childcare Background Check Bills

On Thursday, December 12, the Senate HELP Committee approved, by voice vote, several bills, including legislation (S.2971) designed to update the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). Among other provisions, CAPTA authorizes federal funding and technical assistance to States focused on child abuse prevention, assessment, investigation, prosecution, and treatment activities and provides grants to public agencies and nonprofit organizations, including Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations, for demonstration programs and projects. The committee also approved legislation (S.2683) that proposes to establish an Interagency Task Force for Child Safety “to identify, evaluate, and recommend best practices and technical assistance to assist Federal and State agencies” in implementing the background check requirements of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act. The Senate’s passage sets up the possibility of negotiations with the House, and possible final passage for the president’s signature, in 2020.

Congress Passes Simplification of Financial Aid Application Process

The House (319-96) and Senate (voice vote) passed H.R.2486 that – in addition to providing funding to historically black colleges and other minority-serving institutions – will make filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) easier for applicants by reducing and simplifying the numbers of questions. The FAFSA simplification process, a longtime priority for retiring Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN), will also allow sharing of IRS taxpayer information with the Department of Education for purposes of the application. The President is expected to sign the bill.

Administration Update

Department of Education Proposes Expanded Access to TEACH Grants

The Department of Education [proposed a new rule](#), open for public comment, “that would expand access to Teacher Education Assistance for College Higher Education (TEACH) Grants and ensure religious liberty is protected for faith-based higher education institutions and their students.” The proposed regulation is designed to address the program’s burdensome compliance requirements for TEACH grant recipients. Public comments are due by January 10, 2020.

Notable K-12 Bills

[H.R.5397](#) To amend title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965 with respect to partnership grants for the establishment of rural teaching residency programs, and for other purposes. Sponsor: [Rep. Bost, Mike \[R-IL-12\]](#)

[H.R.5363](#) Fostering Undergraduate Talent by Unlocking Resources for Education Act Sponsor: [Rep. Adams, Alma S. \[D-NC-12\]](#)

[H.R.5388](#) To provide that the Secretary of Education may not issue or enforce certain rules that weaken the enforcement of the prohibition of sex discrimination applicable under title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Sponsor: [Rep. Slotkin, Elissa \[D-MI-8\]](#)

[H.R.5294](#) Student Borrower Protections Act of 2019 Sponsor: [Rep. Adams, Alma S. \[D-NC-12\]](#)

[H.R.5287](#) Fair Student Loan Debt Collection Practices Act Sponsor: [Rep. Lawson, Al, Jr. \[D-FL-5\]](#)

[H.R.5368](#) To provide for secure disclosure of tax-return information to carry out the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes. Sponsor: [Rep. DelBene, Suzan K. \[D-WA-1\]](#)

[H.R.2486](#) FUTURE Act Sponsor: [Rep. Adams, Alma S. \[D-NC-12\]](#)

[H.R.5350](#) To remove college cost as a barrier to every student having access to a well-prepared and diverse educator workforce, and for other purposes. Sponsor: [Rep. Garcia, Jesus G. "Chuy" \[D-IL-4\]](#)

[S.3028](#) A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to strengthen Federal-State partnerships in postsecondary education. Sponsor: [Sen. Reed, Jack \[D-RI\]](#)

[H.R.4372](#) MSI STEM Achievement Act Sponsor: [Rep. Johnson, Eddie Bernice \[D-TX-30\]](#)

[S.3011](#) A bill to authorize demonstration projects to improve educational and housing outcomes for children. Sponsor: [Sen. Murray, Patty \[D-WA\]](#)

[S.2996](#) A bill to amend the Head Start Act to authorize block grants to States for prekindergarten education, and for other purposes. Sponsor: [Sen. Lee, Mike \[R-UT\]](#)

2020 NSBA Advocacy Institute

Registration is now open for [NSBA's Advocacy Institute](#), formerly the FRN Conference. This year’s institute will be held **Sunday February 2 through Tuesday February 4 at the Marriott Marquis in Washington, D.C.**

The Advocacy Institute promises to be a great event for all our school boards and our year-round advocacy efforts in the public, legal and legislative arenas. This year’s Keynotes are Pulitzer Prize-winning Columnist Eugene Robinson and Political Advisor Mark McKinnon.

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