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*Happy Holidays
From
The
TSAC
Staff!*



Federal Legislative Update

The Republican takeover of the House and gains in the Senate will certainly increase the influence of the GOP in all facets of policymaking, including education. The results of the Mid-Term elections will have an impact on the legislative activities related to higher education coming out of the 112th Congress—both in terms of ‘major players’ and their policy objectives.

It is all but certain the Education and Labor Committee, which Republicans may again rename the Education and Workforce Committee, will be chaired by Rep. John Kline (R-MN). Rep. George Miller (CA) will be the Ranking Democrat. The leadership of the Higher Education Subcommittee remains a question mark, probably not decided until January. There will be at least 15 new Republican members of the Committee, or at least half, unless the size of the Committee is reduced.

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) will likely remain the chair of the HELP Com-

mittee and the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee. Sen. Thad Cochran (R-MS) will most likely retain his post as the Ranking Member on the full Senate Appropriations Committee as well as the Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee, but most official Committee assignments (in both the House and Senate) will not be announced until January.

There are two major higher education issues that will carryover into the next Congress—funding for Pell Grants and the regulation of for-profit colleges. The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA aka No Child Left Behind) is also a major focus. There has been some talk in the press and blogosphere of a possible “grand bargain” between Democrats and Republicans with a deal to ease up on the proprietary school regulations proposed by the Obama Administration in exchange for bipartisan ESEA reform this year.

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TSAC offices will be closed for the Holidays on Friday, December 24; Monday, December 27; Friday, December 31; and Monday, January 3. If you need to contact a TSAC staff member plan to do so either before or after these scheduled state holidays.

New Aid Officers Registration Extended

The deadline for reserving your space has been extended to December 7, 2010 for the New Aid Officers training on Friday, December 10, 2010. The sessions for the day include an Overview of 2011-2012 FAFSA, Verification Process, Student Eligibility, Questions and Answers (questions you always wanted to ask but were afraid of the answer), and Grant and Scholarship Updates. Upon your request, a basic e*GRandS training session will be offered concurrent with the Lottery Scholarship Update.

Please R.S.V.P. to Karen Myers, your plans for you or your staff to attend the workshop. A light breakfast will be served from 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and the workshop sessions will begin at 9:00 a.m. and conclude at 3:30 p.m. Lunch will be provided. Karen can be contacted by calling 866.291.2675 ext. 150 or at her direct line 615.253.7473. Her e-mail address is karen.myers@tn.gov.

Federal Legislative Update

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Of course, many of those speaking of a major compromise were doing so hopefully. At a recent event, the American Enterprise Institute's (AEI) Bethany Little, a senior education advisor for Chairman Harkin, was specifically dismissive of the notion. She argued that the regulations proposed by the Obama administration could not be furthered "watered down" and said that Harkin "is not going to back away from an investigation that has brought to light really startling things."

Many have suggested a scenario of dueling legislation where the House Republicans would move to pull back on the gainful employment regulations with Harkin and Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL) moving to press ahead with their plans to further regulate the industry. However, for-profit colleges have many Democratic supporters and other lawmakers from both sides of the aisle expressing dismay at the findings of the recent GAO investigation into the sector. Notably, many Republicans (and some Democrats) have questioned whether the "problems" with higher education, particularly related to student outcomes, are limited to the proprietary sector.

In terms of Pell Grant funding, the pressing issue is a \$5.7 billion shortfall for the 2011-2012 academic year. Pell Grants are funded in a complex way, making use of both mandatory and discretionary funding streams. In order to achieve the "increases" promised by the SAFRA and CCRAA bills, discretionary funding must comprise a "base award" of \$4,860. As the number of Pell-eligible students continues to increase, there is a \$5.7 billion shortfall between FY2010 discretionary Pell spending and estimates to maintain the base award in FY2011.

Lawmakers from both parties are supportive of the Pell program, but this shortfall has been a thorny issue in the current fiscal climate. At the present time, it is unknown whether Congress will attempt to move an omnibus appropriations bill, which could possibly include funding for the Pell shortfall, or if they will simply pass a "continuing resolution" (CR) which keeps the government operating at current levels for a certain period of time and is much less likely to serve as a legislative vehicle for the shortfall funding. Appropriators continue to work on individual spending bills in preparation for combining them into an omnibus bill for FY2011, but Senate Republicans may move to block such a measure, instead opting for a CR which would allow a newly Republican controlled House some say on spending in this fiscal year.

Additional information on the AEI event on education in the 112th Congress is available online: <http://www.aei.org/event/100321>



College Goal Sunday Volunteers Needed

Each year many of you have volunteered to offer your financial aid expertise to help us have a successful College Goal Sunday (CGS) program. It takes hundreds of volunteers to staff the CGS events. The feedback that we've received from our evaluations indicates that the appreciation shown by the students and parents make your participation worthwhile. With this announcement we're welcoming back our repeat volunteers and looking for new ones to staff the 2011 CGS events across the state.

Volunteer registration will begin December 10th on the Tennessee College Goal Sunday website. If you have questions about being a volunteer or need additional information about which site location needs the most assistance, please contact Darolyn Porter at darolyn.porter@tn.gov or call her at 615.253.7410.



CGS Sites for: January 30, 2011

Athens	TTC at Athens
Blountville	Northeast State CC
Clarksville	Austin Peay State University
Cleveland	Cleveland State CC
Columbia	Columbia State CC
Crump	TTC at Crump
Dyersburg	Dyersburg State CC
Harrogate	Lincoln Memorial University
Lebanon	Cumberland University
Lynchburg	Motlow State CC
McKenzie	Bethel University
McMinnville	TTC at McMinnville
Memphis	Lemoyne-Owen College
Milligan	Milligan College
Murfreesboro	Middle TN State University
Nashville	Belmont University
Nashville	Lipscomb University
Parsons	UT Martin at Parsons
Whiteville	TTC at Whiteville

CGS Sites for: February 13, 2011

Chattanooga	Chattanooga State CC
Cookeville	TN Tech University
Covington	TTC at Covington
Franklin	Columbia State CC
Gallatin	Volunteer State CC
Jackson	TTC at Jackson
Knoxville	Pellissippi State CC
Knoxville	YMCA
Memphis	Southwest TN CC
Nashville	Nashville State CC
Nashville	Nashville College Connection
Oak Ridge	Roane State CC

Tremendous Support for Fall Workshops

We have received much support from so many of you for the training workshops we've conducted this Fall. The collaboration between TSAC, TASFAA, and THEC to provide training opportunities for financial aid administrators, high school counselors, and mentors has proven to be a successful strategy for all involved. Participation in the Fall 2010 workshops far exceeded our expectations. We had approximately 400 high school counselors and 200 financial aid administrators to register for the workshops. Our thanks to all of the institutions that opened their doors to have us on their campuses, the financial aid administrators that served as our trainers, and everyone that worked so hard to make the workshops possible.