

From: AACC Office of Government Relations
Date sent: 08/04/2017 12:08:49 pm
Subject: AACC Washington Watch

[Print This](#)

Government Relations and Policy Analysis

[View this email online or in your mobile browser.](#)



Washington Watch

AACC's Federal Policy Update



[AACC Website](#) | [Advocacy](#) | [Resources](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Follow Us:



August 4, 2017

The House Budget Committee approved its FY 2018 budget plan and House appropriators passed all 12 of their FY 2018 appropriations bills prior to adjourning for the August recess. The Senate delayed its recess, adjourning on August 3, with no action yet on a budget resolution or spending bill for Labor-HHS-Education. September will be a high-pressure month for Congress to pass a budget resolution, raise the debt ceiling, advance tax reform legislation, and wrap up appropriations bills before the end of the federal fiscal year.

Congress Approves Expansion of Veterans Education Benefits

On August 2, the Senate passed the Harry W. Colmery Veterans Educational Assistance Act (H.R. 3218), sending the bill to the White House for signature. With strong support from the higher education community as well as broad bipartisan support on the Hill, [this legislation](#) will expand educational opportunities for veterans. It also will provide relief for those veterans who attended schools that closed. For more about this bill, see [CCDaily](#).

Bipartisan Bill to Support Infrastructure Workforce Introduced

On July 20, Senators Tim Kaine (D-VA) and Rob Portman (R-OH) [introduced](#) the Building U.S. Infrastructure by Leveraging Demands for Skills (BUILDS) Act. The BUILDS Act would create grants for local partnerships between industry and other stakeholders in the construction, transportation, and energy sectors to help train workers for infrastructure jobs.

Child Care Access Means Parents in School Act Reauthorization

Earlier this week, U.S. Reps. Katherine Clark (D-MA) and Don Young (R-AK) introduced legislation to reauthorize the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program. Sens. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Patty Murray (D-WA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Bob Casey (D-PA), and Dick Durbin (D-IL) also sponsored a bill to reauthorize CCAMPIS, noting the demand for high-quality, affordable access to on-campus child care for student parents. Unfortunately, the House FY 2018 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill would eliminate funding for this program, but AACC is working to preserve support for this important program.

Key to Economic Success

Last month, the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee issued a report titled [Education: The Foundation For Economic Success](#). While it's been demonstrated that education improves economic outcomes, the report notes, "To ensure that all Americans have a pathway to achieve the American Dream, everyone must have access to the educational institutions that enable Americans to succeed in the labor market, including an affordable college education." The document includes several useful charts and tables.

U.S. Department of Education (ED) News

ED Seeks Comments on Regulations—ED is actively seeking public comments on regulations that could be repealed or modified. A notice was published on June 22 in the [Federal Register](#), with a deadline of August 21. A [good report](#) that summarizes many of the higher education regulatory issues was released by the Senate HELP Committee in 2015. For more about this effort and a copy of AACC's draft comments, contact [David Baime](#).

ED Intends to Improve Student Loan Borrower Services—Secretary DeVos announced plans to improve customer service for student loan borrowers. She indicated that ED's Federal Student Aid processes and servicing would be transformed, providing "a single data processing platform to house all student loan information while at the same time allowing for customer account servicing to be performed either by a single contract servicer or by multiple contract servicers."

What a Difference a Couple of Years Makes—ED's [Data Point](#) was published this week showing a rise in the number of U.S. postsecondary institutions (7,151), particularly of for-profit institutions (3,360), between 2000 and 2014. Since 2014, however, the total number of U.S. institutions [has dropped](#) to 6,606, or 8% less than in 2014.

Policy and Research Briefs

High Rates of Food Insecurity Among Community College Students—According to a recent [Urban Institute study](#), the rate of food insecurity for households with community college students dropped from its peak of 23.8% in 2012, to 13.3% in 2015. This finding by the Urban Institute is dramatically lower than what the Wisconsin Hope Lab reported. The latter found that 67% of survey respondents indicated food insecurity. These two studies used different methodologies, which may account for the different results. The Urban Institute used Census Bureau data from 2001 to 2015. Community college students, particularly those who were parents or heads of households, are particularly susceptible to food insecurity. Yet, the report notes that there are severe eligibility limitations for these students to certain federal assistance programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and cautions against reduction in the Federal Work-Study program funds that help these students.

Well-Paying Jobs Not Requiring a Bachelor's Degree—There is good news for community college graduates earning certificates and associate degrees. According to the latest Georgetown University [Center on Education and the Workforce report](#), there are 30 million non-baccalaureate requiring jobs.

There is a shift in the nature of good jobs, which is defined as those paying on average \$55,000 per year and a minimum of \$35,000. Blue collar jobs are giving way to skill-services industries. Four million more good jobs in the services industries, such as financial and health services compensate for the loss of 2.8 million manufacturing jobs.

2017 Overview of Federal Student Aid—Each year, the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) prepares an overview of federal student financial aid and campus-based programs, providing information on the number of recipients, total volume of awards, funding levels and distribution by family income. According to [the report](#), the number of students applying for federal financial aid has increased substantially, from about 14 million in 2006-07 to nearly 20 million in the 2015-16 award year. The volume of funding is down for all but the smallest FSEOG program.

NASFAA released [another report](#) of the Prior Prior-Year (PPY) Task Force to financial aid administrators on the implementation of the change to using the previous year's tax return in the financial aid application. A majority of survey respondents reported that "they felt the implementation of PPY was generally successful overall, when excluding the unanticipated effects of the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) outage." Moreover, moving the FAFSA application date to October from January did not affect institutional application deadlines for most of the respondents.

Quality Information Critical to Nation's Economy—The importance of workforce and labor market information that is accurate, objective, relevant, timely, and accessible cannot be overstated. The [Workforce Information Advisory Council's report](#) states that "the nation's labor markets cannot function without quality information to support the investment decisions of the workforce development system [made up of federal, state, and local entities] and the investment decisions of business managers, workers, students, jobseekers, and educators." Congress established the Council to advise the secretary of labor on workforce and labor market information matters. The report identified six opportunities for improvement, including information needed to answer the questions of what education, training, and credentials are needed for specific careers and which such programs are offered in a particular area.

Interested in Reading Back Issues of the Washington Watch?

Visit the [AACC website](#).

The AACC Government Relations and Policy Analysis Team:

Senior Vice President: [David Baime](#), ext. 224

Associate Vice President: [Jim Hermes](#), ext. 216

Legislative Resource Associate: [Laurie Quarles](#), ext. 249

Director, Policy Analysis: [Jolanta \(J.J.\) Juskiewicz](#), ext. 258

American Association of Community Colleges
One Dupont Circle, NW | Suite 410 | Washington, DC 20036
(202) 728-0200 | www.aacc.nche.edu