
FEDERAL AFFAIRS

Higher Education Act and the Budget

The Committee on Education and Labor has not had a hearing on higher education since April. The likelihood of the Higher Education Act, which has not been reauthorized in over a decade, occurring during the 116th Congress is extremely remote. There is, however, some good news. Congressional leaders and the White House reached a budget deal that would raise the debt ceiling ahead of looming September deadlines for both the budget and the debt limit. Most of the major organizations supporting higher education also supported this bi-partisan budget deal. The budget deal would avert steep budget cuts slated to take effect October 1, 2019, under a 2011 law known as the Budget Control Act. Failure to have passed this deal, which was signed into law by the Administration, would have continued to enforce the sequester. The deal will raise overall federal spending by \$320 billion over the next two years, compared with budget caps set to take effect in October. Overall, nondefense discretionary spending would increase by 4.5 percent as compared to Fiscal Year 2019 levels.

Under the terms of the agreement, the budget cap for discretionary spending will rise to \$1.37 trillion in 2020 and \$1.375 trillion in 2021 -- which doesn't include the cost of programs like Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security that are automatically funded as they are entitlement programs. That's an increase from \$1.321 trillion this year.

Republicans were pushing for more defense spending and managed to secure \$738 billion in 2020 and \$741 billion in 2021, including funds for overseas operations that aren't subject to budget caps. Democrats secured \$632 billion in 2020 and \$635 billion in 2021 for domestic spending. Democrats also won an extra \$2.5 billion in 2020 above the spending cap for carrying out the 2020 census. The overall \$320 billion boost in spending over two years is \$30 billion less than Democrats sought. President Trump would get only about half of the \$150 billion in savings his administration sought.

All is not well, however, as there is still the risk of a government shutdown on October 1, 2019. Congress must still pass spending bills adhering to the spending caps to fund the government in the new fiscal year. A fight over border wall funding led to the longest government shutdown in modern history that ended early this year.

The Treasury Department has been using so-called extraordinary measures to meet debt obligations since March 2, 2019, when the U.S. reached its \$22 trillion limit on borrowing. Under one of the Treasury Department's most conservative estimates, the U.S. would have risked defaulting before lawmakers are scheduled to return from their recess on September 9, 2019. A default on interest payments or federal salaries would have severe economic ramifications, shaking confidence in the U.S. government sending shock waves through global markets.

The "Public Charge" Rule and Higher Education

The Administration recently published a final rule making it harder for immigrants who have received certain public benefits such as Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), most forms of Medicaid and housing assistance, to obtain permanent resident status. The rules outline criteria the Department of Homeland Security will use in denying applications for admission

to the United States or adjustments of immigration status for individuals who are already living here and are deemed “likely to become a public charge” in the future.

Opponents of the rule say it constitutes an attempt to circumvent Congress to reduce legal immigration levels by providing expansive new grounds on which DHS and consular officials at the Department of State can deny applications for immigration petitions and visas, respectively. Higher ed experts and college administrators say the rule could have a chilling effect on immigrant students accessing benefits for which they're eligible and could deter foreign students from coming to study here.

The Administration argues that the new rule will enforce a law that's long been on the books, specifically, a provision of the Immigration and Nationality Act deeming immigrants inadmissible if they are likely to become a “public charge.” In the past, officials have defined “public charge” narrowly to apply to individuals who are “primarily dependent on the government for subsistence, as demonstrated by either the receipt of public cash assistance for income maintenance or institutionalization for long-term care at government expense.”

The new rule expands the types of government benefits that are taken into consideration to include certain noncash benefits. It also identifies a series of factors -- including age, health, household size, income, assets, debts and education and skill levels -- officials will use in making forward-looking judgments about whether would-be immigrants are likely to need public assistance in the future.

The effects of the rule, which is scheduled to go into effect October 15, 2019, will stretch far beyond higher education, but advocates for immigrant students say they will be among those affected. The rule does not include Pell Grants and other forms of educational assistance among the types of benefits that immigrants will be penalized for receiving. But higher education groups previously expressed concern that confusion over the question of what benefits would and would not count against them would discourage some immigrant students from applying for Pell or other federal financial aid.

Higher education groups have also expressed concerns about the implications for international students and scholars on nonimmigrant visas. International students already have to demonstrate that they have funds to pay for tuition and living costs as part of their visa applications. We will continue to work with our URC partners and other organizations to determine the best response regarding this action by the Administration when Congress returns after Labor Day.

New Washington, D.C. Office Location

After more than two decades in the same office, the Washington, D.C. office has moved. The new space, while smaller, is more modern, near public transportation, and is a significant savings over our previous office. This also marks the first time the University Research Corridor schools (Wayne State University, the University of Michigan and Michigan State University) are no longer housed in the same facility. Our new location is in the heart of downtown Washington, D.C., and is a sub-lease from our current lobbying team.

2019 University Research Corridor (URC) Congressional Research Tour

The URC Congressional Research Tour took place Monday, August 19 – Thursday, August 22, 2019. Eighteen staff members from offices of the Michigan Congressional delegation were on hand for the tour. WSU's portion of the tour began with a dinner on Tuesday evening at The Whitney Restaurant, attended by President Wilson, Provost Whitfield, Deans Clabo and Foutohi, and other WSU representatives. Wednesday's agenda consisted of a day of tours on campus:

- Presentation and Simulation Lab demonstration at the College of Nursing
- Tour of the CAR Lab—Weisong Shi
- Welcome and Tours at the College of Engineering
 - o Tour of the Transportation Lab—Steve Remias
 - o Tour of the Renewable Energy and Electrification Lab—Caisheng Wang
- Presentations and Tours at the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS)
 - o Presentation and Tour of the Planetarium
 - o Presentation and Tour of the Anthropology Museum
 - o Presentation and Tour of Chemistry Labs and Lumigen Facility
- Presentations at IBio
 - o Cardiovascular Research Institute
 - Preventing Ischemia-Reperfusion Damage to Brain and Heart via Noninvasive Mitochondria-Targeted Therapy
 - Patient-Specific Engineered Vascular Grafts for Cardiovascular Repair and Replacement
 - o PHOENIX – Population Health Outcomes and Information Exchange

The next URC Congressional Tour is scheduled for August 2021.

STATE AFFAIRS

WSU Receives Opioid Grant

On June 17, 2019, Governor Gretchen Whitmer and the Michigan Opioid Partnership announced a unique strategy that combines public and private funds to support innovative and evidence-based treatment programs for people with opioid use disorder. Called a "no wrong door approach," the strategy removes the barriers to entry for those needing treatment for opioid addiction and helps them get on a path to successful recovery.

The Michigan Opioid Partnership is a public-private collaborative with a mission to decrease opioid overdoses and deaths through prevention, treatment, harm reduction and sustained recovery. The partnership is made up of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation, the Community

Foundation for Southeast Michigan, the Ethel and James Flinn Foundation, The Jewish Fund, the Michigan Health Endowment Fund and the Superior Health Foundation.

Grants announced during a news conference held at Wayne State University, will fund planning, training and coordination of treatment for opioid use disorder. The collaborative will make funds available to support the use of medication-assisted treatment (MAT), from the first point of medical contact in a hospital or emergency room to continued treatment in a community-based program. Funds will also assist jails using a continuity of care approach focused on long-term treatment of opioid use disorder. MAT is an evidence-based treatment for opioid addiction that usually includes both medication and behavioral therapy.

\$1.5 million of the funds will be committed to expanding medication-assisted treatment and enhance identification of substance use disorders at jail intake. Wayne State University's Center for Behavioral Health and Justice will receive a grant to coordinate the effort. County jails will also be selected for funding, to work in partnership with the WSU team to serve inmates with addiction.

The 16-month project will build a lasting partnership between the criminal justice and substance abuse treatment communities. The plan is to accomplish this by supporting county-level implementation coupled with data-driven technical assistance to demonstrate need and generate solutions that will increase access to needed treatment. Once trained, community stakeholders will use administrative data to assess the success of their invention, as well as improve the quality of data within each county.

Gov. Whitmer to Host Reception and Briefing with Governing Board Members & Institutional Leaders

Governor Whitmer will convene with the members of the state university governing boards and university leaders on Wednesday, September 4, from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at Michigan State University's University Club in East Lansing. The purpose of the reception is for Governor Whitmer to provide a briefing on the state budget and her top policy priorities, with a particular emphasis on her 60 by 30 postsecondary educational attainment goal/agenda. She will also be inviting other members of her administration and cabinet. The presidents and chancellors and state relations officers of the public universities will join governing board members in attending the reception. President Stanley at Michigan State University will host this event and Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) will serve as a sponsor.

GOVERNMENT HEALTH AFFAIRS

Graduate Medical Education (GME) Reform – MIDOCs

WSU and other members of the MIDOCs consortium received \$5 million for FY19 in direct state appropriations. Those funds, however, are to be used to leverage federal dollars, for a total of \$20 million. The federal government approved the State's plan of how it will use those funds and how we will flow the money to the residency programs. For FY20, the Governor recommended to fund the program at \$1.3 million. The House recommended the same level of reduced funding and the Senate recommended the full \$5 million.

We are conducting meetings to discuss funding for the FY20 Budget with the State House, Senate, and State Budget Office. We have received positive feedback during these meetings and plan to continue meeting with the legislature in Lansing to provide information on the program and secure future funding. We will provide updates as appropriate.

The Michigan Poison Center

The Poison Center made a successful transition to WSU and operations began on August 1. We are happy to report that the state approved \$580,000 in supplemental appropriation funding for FY19 allowing us to make the transition. We are currently planning an official launch event for this fall. We are working with Governor Whitmer's office to determine if she is interested in attending the event.

The Michigan Poison Center receives more than 65,000 calls per year related to emergencies (most involving children). Tenet Corporation and DMC hosted the Center for more than 60 years, but it no longer fits into their scope of services plan. This is a significant opportunity for Wayne State to demonstrate our public health mission and expertise across the entire state. The Poison Center serves all counties in Michigan.

African World Festival

The 37th Annual African World Festival took place Friday, August 16 to Sunday, August 18. The School of Medicine provided a sponsorship for the Health is Wealth tent. The tent hosted basic health care screenings and provided educational materials to festival attendees. Some of the participating organizations included the Horizon's Clinic, First Aid First, the Karmanos Cancer Institute, and the Corktown Health Center.

The Festival, located on the grounds of The Wright Museum, brings in more than 150,000 attendees. Each year, the festival hosts performances and more than 125 vendors are featured, selling authentic foods, apparel, art, and other products.

Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC)

The partnership between MDOC and WSU is now more than a year old and functioning at a very high level. We have had multiple calls with MDOC leadership and have received consistently positive feedback on the performance of Drs. McIntyre, Blessman, and Hussain. We are currently in an 18-month contract, which reflects on how well the relationship is performing. We have begun work on negotiations for the next contract renewal. The discussions are going well, but it is not yet clear if we will continue the contract after this current period.

We are also working with MDOC on a project to access discount drug pricing for the prisoner population. The project could potentially save the State more than \$10 million per year, which could be used to improve health outcomes and help support prisoner health as they transition back out of prison.

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

Planning is underway for a number of DGCA events including the Thanksgiving Preview Party, Spirit of Community Awards, and Warrior Day. We have been working closely with the Center for the Study of Citizenship, DOSO and OED in planning for the 2019 Civic Festival and naturalization ceremony on campus on Tuesday, September 17. We are also working closely with the student senate on a number of initiatives around student civic engagement and the 2020 elections. We'll be holding our fall meeting of community engagement officers on September 10. Additional details will be provided on each of these initiatives in the coming months.