
FEDERAL AFFAIRS

The Budget

The House and Senate were able to finally hammer out a budget deal of \$1.4 trillion that will avoid a government shutdown due to an expiring Continuing Resolution passed last month. The bill is estimated to add \$400 billion to the already \$1 trillion.

Key provisions include an expensive repeal of Obama-era taxes on high-cost health plans, help for retired coal miners, and an increase from 18 to 21 in the nationwide legal age to buy tobacco products. Another chip at the Affordable Care Act was the permanent repeal of the tax on medical devices and health insurance plans. The bill exceeds the current budget proposed by the Administration in virtually every domestic category, except for the request for \$8 billion-plus for the U.S.-Mexico wall. It was cut back to \$1.4 billion, equal to last year's appropriation. The measure preserves Trump's ability to use his budget powers to tap other accounts for several times that amount. That's a blow for liberal opponents of the wall but an acceptable trade-off for Democrats who wanted to gain \$27 billion in increases for domestic programs.

Funds were included to increase amounts for Poison Control Centers nation-wide. The hope is language that was included in the Committee Report will direct more to Detroit and Wayne State University.

Impeachment

The House of Representatives, along partisan lines, agreed to impeach the President. Traditionally, when the House votes to impeach, the documents of evidence are sent to the Senate where the facts are produced and considered by Senators acting as jurors overseen by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

But the Senate may not see the impeachment articles any time soon. Speaker Nancy Pelosi has demanded to know the process in the Senate, to ensure it will be a fair and balanced process.

The Senate is dominated by Republicans who, along with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), have sufficient Members to determine the outcome and many have stated that they will not be impartial jurors and, so far, have refused to bring in witnesses Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) requests.

The Higher Education Act: Foreign Reporting of Fund Sources

The Department of Education is stepping up its scrutiny of whether colleges comply with federal reporting requirements regarding disclosures of foreign gifts and contracts. On December 23, 2019, the Department of Education issued a period of public comment, which was set to expire on December 27, 2019, with compliance expected by January 1, 2020, on what is known as Section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Section 117 of the Higher Education Act has long required that institutions report to the federal government any gift or contract with a foreign source valued at \$250,000 or more, "considered alone or in combination with all other gifts from or contracts with that foreign source within a calendar year."

The Department opened investigations earlier this year into whether Georgetown and Texas A&M Universities have fully met all reporting requirements, including in regards to foreign funding associated with their respective campuses in Qatar. Higher education groups say that the law requiring reporting of foreign-sourced gifts and contracts is unclear and requires further clarification from the Education Department.

The scrutiny of foreign gift reporting comes amid broader scrutiny from Washington of American universities' connections with China, including scrutiny of the Confucius Institutes, centers for language education and cultural programming funded by the Chinese government, and of research partnerships with the Chinese telecom company Huawei, which was indicted by the Department of Justice for allegedly stealing trade secrets and violating American sanctions on Iran. Funding for U.S. universities from Saudi sources also came under increased scrutiny following the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Turkey last fall.

The problem is the Department of Education has never made it clear that gifts made to a university foundation must be reported. The American Council on Education, the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities and four other major higher education associations have written two letters to the Department of Education since January seeking clarification of rules regarding federal reporting of foreign funding. Among the questions they've asked are whether gifts made to an affiliated foundation must be reported and when, if ever, colleges have to disclose the name of a specific foreign donor or entity with which a university contracts as opposed to merely noting the country of origin of the gift or contract. They have also sought clarification on how colleges can submit amended or corrected reports.

The associations noted that the department has never issued formal regulations on foreign gift reporting. Instead, it has issued two Dear Colleague letters, the most recent one in 2004. The only response received was the notice for comment.

The Department of Education issued the following statement on December 23, 2019:

"We are also announcing a new reporting system, and, if the associated information collection is approved by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act, institutions will have the option to use either the new or current system for the January 2020 report. The Department encourages institutions opting for January 2020 reporting using the current system to voluntarily supplement using the new system within a reasonable time. However, institutions are not obliged to do so."

Along with our URC colleagues, we are still pushing the members of the Michigan delegation to allow a longer review of the regulations, as we really do not know the positive or negative impact these regulations will achieve.

Office of Women's Health

Federal Affairs is communicating with Dr. Hassan to discuss how we can assist the Office of Women's Health (OWH) in several ways: 1) work to have OWH named as a national center of excellence; 2) identify and pursue agency funding opportunities, 3) increase awareness of the work of OWH, and 4) identify partnership possibilities with other organizations and initiatives. Additional discussions are scheduled with OWH in mid-January in this regard.

STATE AFFAIRS

Capital Outlay

VP Lindsey and Robert Davenport, AVP in FP&M, met with State Budget Director Chris Kolb and his staff to discuss WSU's capital outlay project, the renovation of State Hall. It is unclear whether the administration will recommend new capital outlay funding, as the debt service from last three years of Snyder administration is now hitting the books and adding pressure to an already stressed budget. We will continue our advocacy for the Governor to recommend capital outlay projects.

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 will be used to leverage federal dollars, for a total of \$20 million.

For the FY20 budget, Governor Whitmer and the legislative leaders agreed to supplemental language that includes \$3.75M in funding for MIDOCs. The bill passed both the House and Senate and was sent to the Governor for signature. This new amount of funding will provide us with a total of \$7.45 in state appropriation funds (including what we had left over from last year). We are still working to determine what the total match rate will be coming from the universities, but we anticipate recruiting four to six residents per institution for this coming academic year's cohort. This will total 16-24 new residents in addition to the eight we have that started last year.

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, which allowed us to make the official transition on August 1.

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 in demonstrating our public health mission and expertise across the entire state. The Poison Center serves all counties in Michigan.

We are beginning to work on putting together testimony for the Poison Center, which we hope to present in early 2020. Pending the legislature's schedule, we plan to present the testimony to the HHS Subcommittee and Health Policy Committee. The testimony will focus on the services the Poison Center provides and provide an overview of the funding needs for future years. Dr. Aaron, who is the Director of the Poison Center, will be our witness.

MPAC Lobby Day

On February 4, medical students who are enrolled in WSU's Medical Political Action and Public Health Leadership elective course will visit Lansing for the day. With the assistance of Kelley Cawthorne, we have set up meetings for the students and their representatives, a lunch, and have

invited some representatives to speak. Lobby Day provides the students a hands-on advocacy experience.

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

Spirit of Community Awards

Nominations have closed for the 2020 Spirit of Community Awards. A number of excellent members of the WSU community were nominated for awards in the faculty, staff and project categories, and we will be announcing the winner and runners up in each of the categories as we move closer to the awards ceremony on April 2, 2020.

Thanksgiving Parade Preview

DGCA once again hosted a successful America's Thanksgiving Parade Preview Party to thank our community partners and show our appreciations for their ongoing support and commitment to this institution. More than 120 people attended this year's event, which included remarks from VP Patrick Lindsey, President Wilson, and Tony Michaels, President & CEO of the Parade Company.