
FEDERAL AFFAIRS

Insurrection in Washington, DC

Following the January 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol, approximately 20,000 members of the National Guard have been deployed to Washington, and 13 metro stations were closed for at least a week in anticipation of further violence leading up to Inauguration Day, Wednesday, January 20, 2021. The National Mall was closed on Inauguration Day. On Friday, January 15, 2021, Senators Rev. Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff were seated for the 117th Congress. The new Democratic majority in the Senate means Sen. Debbie Stabenow is the Chairwoman of the Agriculture Committee, and Sen. Gary Peters is Chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee.

D.C. National Guard troops reportedly will remain at the U.S. Capitol through the end of April 2021 at the earliest. One U.S. Capitol Police officer was killed, two others committed suicide, and over 140 were injured during the insurrection.

The American Rescue Plan

President Biden released his \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief proposal. Among its recommendations, which range from expanded vaccine and testing programs to extension of the eviction moratorium and additional \$1,400 checks to U.S. households are:

- A \$35 billion expansion of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) for public health protocols, distance learning plans and emergency grants to students in need. The funds would go to public institutions (including community colleges) and public and private Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Serving Institutions. This funding will provide millions of students up to an additional \$1,700 in financial assistance from their colleges and universities, and
- A \$5 billion Hardest Hit Education fund for governors to allocate to educational programs and learning needs of student significantly impacted by COVID-19, whether K-12, higher education or early childhood education programs.

President Biden's legislation will also, among other things, provide funding for cities, counties and state governments to back-fill their budgets and additional funds for research universities. Wayne State University could receive up to a little over \$56 million for COVID-19 funds through the American Rescue Plan. This bill was approved without a single House or Senate Republican voting in support on final passage, which was swiftly signed into law by President Biden.

Michigan Delegation Changes

Senator Gary Peters (D-MI) has been chosen to lead the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, and is the Chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee. Senator Debbie Stabenow is the Chairwoman of the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Rep. Lisa McClain (R-MI 10th District) has been named to the House Armed Services and Education and Labor Committees.

Cabinet of the United States

The President's cabinet has many firsts – the first Black woman and Asian-American/Pacific Islander (AAPI), the first Native American as Secretary of the Interior, and former Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm as the Secretary of Energy (former Michigan Senator Spence Abraham also served as Secretary of Energy).

President Biden's Cabinet, by order of succession, includes:

- Kamala Harris, Vice President
- Antony Blinken, Secretary of State
- Dr. Janet Yellen, Secretary of the Treasury
- Lloyd Austin, Secretary of Defense
- Merrick Garland, Attorney General
- Deb Haaland, Secretary of the Interior
- Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture
- Gina Raimondo, Secretary of Commerce
- Marty Walsh, Secretary of Labor
- Xavier Becerra, Secretary of Health And Human Services
- Marcia Fudge, Secretary of Housing And Urban Development
- Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of Transportation
- Jennifer Granholm, Secretary of Energy
- Dr. Miguel Cardona, Secretary of Education
- Denis McDonough, Secretary of Veterans Affairs
- Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary of Homeland Security
- Michael Regan, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
- Avril Haines, Director of National Intelligence
- Katherine Tai, United States Trade Representative
- Linda Thomas-Greenfield, United States Ambassador to the United Nations
- Dr. Cecilia Rouse, Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers
- Isabel Guzman, Administrator of the Small Business Administration
- Ron Klain, Chief of Staff

House Appropriations Committee

Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI 14th District) has been named vice chair of the House Appropriations Committee – the number two position on the whole Committee. Atypical of other Committees, the Appropriations Committee ranks members by their ability to get things done, not necessarily by seniority (although seniority does matter). She is also on the Commerce/Justice/Science, Labor/HHS/Education and Financial Services Subcommittees. Her selection on Labor/HHS/Education will be key as Congress reauthorizes the Higher Education Act and our work

to get the Centers for Excellence up and running. Michigan also has Rep. John Moolenaar (R) who serves on this Committee. This is the first time Michigan has two members of Congress serving on this powerful Committee at one time since 2008.

The Return of Earmarks

Speaker Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer announced the return of earmarks (now called “community-focused grants”) on a very limited level. Congressional Republicans are still deciding if they want to support earmarks, but it is a very strong likelihood they will. It is expected that each Member of Congress on the Committee will receive ten (10) requests; Members who are not on the Committee will receive less than ten. Even with Members on the Committee receiving ten, in all likelihood, three or less will be funded this fiscal year. Earmarks have a one (1) year life. Only city, county, state, non-profit organizations, hospitals and universities are eligible for earmarks.

Executive Orders

President Biden continues to issue [executive orders](#) (EOs) ranging from requiring the federal government to “strengthen requirements for procuring goods and services from sources supporting U.S. businesses and workers” to ending the ban on transgender military service. The President has issued Executive Orders regarding Buy American, Equity, Climate, Health Care and others.

President Biden observed a national [moment of silence](#) to mark reaching the milestone of 500,000 COVID-19 deaths in the United States, and also [visited the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine manufacturing facility](#) in Portage, MI.

Filibuster Reform

The Senate has two important pieces of legislation before it: H.R. 1, the “For the People Act” which will expand voting rights, change campaign finance laws to reduce the influence of money in politics, limit partisan gerrymandering, and create new ethics rules for federal officeholders, and H.R. 4, the “John Lewis Voting Rights Act” which establishes new criteria for determining which states and political subdivisions must obtain preclearance before changes to voting practices in these areas may take effect. (Preclearance is the process of receiving preapproval from the Department of Justice or the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia before making legal changes that would affect voting rights. This provision of the 1965 Voting Rights Act was not renewed when it expired under former Speaker John Boehner and has been held up in the Senate under then Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.)

The current issue? Will the filibuster survive in its current form? There have been talks of filibuster reform (going back to the old version in which a Senator had to actually stand on the floor of the Senate and speak until exhaustion, versus merely asking for a filibuster and demanding 60 votes before a bill can proceed). The filibuster has been eliminated for all Federal judges.

STATE AFFAIRS

Budget Update and Projections

Governor Whitmer introduced her proposed budget on February 11, 2021. She highlighted investments in a few key areas, with the continued overarching theme of getting our state beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. The Executive's highlighted items included: K-12 funding; infrastructure with a particular focus on local roads and bridges; public health; the environment specifically with regard to water infrastructure; and support for families and businesses through investments in community college degree or certificate access as well as support for businesses impacted by the pandemic.

The Executive recommended a one-time 2% increase in the Higher Education budget, coupled with allocation of funds to satisfy federal Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements. WSU is supportive of the 2% increase in base funding, but has advocated that investments in higher education should be long term and sustainable. In addition, the Governor did not propose utilizing performance funding metrics but did retain a 4.2% tuition restraint.

The House and Senate are actively working on their proposed budget recommendations. Following their approval by each respective chamber, they will move to Conference Committee to rectify differences and finally to the Governor for final action. Please note, the Governor has the power to line item veto budgetary items.

Active FY '21 Budget Advocacy:

WSU is actively advocating for investments across the University including but not limited to funding for the National De-Escalation Training Center, the Lycacki-Young Program, the Frontline Strong initiative, MiDOCS, the Poison Center and broad reiteration of the importance of full funding for the University as a whole. A number of these items were included in the Governor's proposed budget, and we continue to advocate for their retention as the Legislature prepares their budget recommendations. Further, we are advocating for items like the NDTC and Frontline Strong, which were not included in the Governor's budget but are strong contenders for legislative support. A completed budget is statutorily required by June 30, but given the current relationships between the legislature and the administration it is unlikely that a signed budget will be finalized by that deadline.

Legislation

WSU DGCA continues to monitor state legislation and regulations that could affect our students, our faculty, our community, and our ability to carry out our mission. When formulating a university position, we work with internal subject matter experts to both craft the best position and to provide feedback to legislators. Further, we work collaboratively with both our URC partners and all 15 public universities to leverage our collective positions and create favorable outcomes as often as possible. We are currently monitoring, and actively engaging, on several pieces of legislation including:

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- House Bill 4045 (Whiteford) requiring mental health discharge planning for individuals who are receiving mental health services and are leaving the criminal justice system. WSU supports this legislation.
 - House Bill 4046 (Whiteford) creating the interstate nurse licensure compact which would allow nurses to practice in states other than their home licensed state under certain circumstances. WSU supports this legislation.
 - House Bills 4055-4056 (Anthony and VanSingel) modifying eligibility for competitive scholarships from 10 semesters to 12 semesters. WSU supports this legislation.
 - House Bill 4512 (Hornberger) clarifying the removal procedures for University board members. WSU is monitoring this legislation.
 - House Bill 4526 (Berman) requiring allocation of higher education dollars to be made on a fiscal year equated student (FYES) basis, with FYES being defined as resident undergraduate students. WSU is opposed to this legislation and any legislation that would have the practical effect of reducing investments in public higher education.
 - Senate Joint Resolution F (McBroom) requiring university board meetings to have open meetings. This is a constitutional amendment proposal requiring a heightened 2/3 vote of both chambers before being put onto the ballot during the next general election for approval by the people. WSU is monitoring this initiative.
 - Community College 4-Year Degree Programs. WSU is anticipating the reintroduction of legislation that failed last term, which would have allowed for a community college to offer a 4-year bachelor of science in nursing degree program. WSU opposed this legislation.
 - Prohibitions on Research. WSU is anticipating the reintroduction of legislation that seeks to prohibit certain types of research, specifically animal research. This legislation has been introduced several times, without success. WSU opposes this legislation.

GOVERNMENT HEALTH AFFAIRS

Graduate Medical Education (GME) Reform – MIDOCs

WSU and other members of the MIDOCs consortium will have its third cohort of residents starting this July. As a reminder, this program is funded through direct state appropriations, which are then leveraged to receive federal dollars. 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. The first cohort contains 8 residents, the second cohort contains 24, and the third contains 20. Last year, the state appropriated \$5.1 million for the program. MIDOCs will leverage this funding, along with a funds contributed from the consortium, to receive a federal match totaling \$16 million. We are requesting \$6.4 million from the legislature for Fiscal Year 22 so that we can bring the resident number back up to 24. There is widespread support for this program and we hope to see the increased dollar amount as budget conversations continue at the state.

Lycaki-Young Fund

The Lycaki-Young fund was first introduced in the mid 1990's. Since that time, WSU has received more than \$100 million in state funds to support care for the mentally ill and those affect by

substance abuse. WSU has been a leader in providing critically important services to those affected in Wayne County and beyond. For example, we host one of the largest Methadone clinics in the country.

The program received the requested appropriation of \$5.6 million from the FY21. This funding provides psychiatric services to over 47,000 patients annually. We are requesting \$5.6 million for Fiscal Year 2022.

The Michigan Poison Center

The Michigan Poison Center (PC) 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. The PC continues to play an active role in outreach on the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, they are focusing educational efforts on opioid overdoses and lead poisoning across the state.

The end of March marked National Poison Prevention Week. The Poison Center held a few virtual events through Facebook Live to raise awareness in the community.

Opioid Task Force

The Opioid Task Force has reconvened in 2021 to coordinate work being done across campus on the Opioid epidemic. The Task Force has identified a NaloxBox Pilot Program as a main priority. The Pilot Program would place doses of Naloxone around midtown in weatherproof boxes for individuals to access to reverse an overdose. The School of Medicine has approved the Pilot Project, and the Task Force is in the planning stages. The hope is to get the small amount of funding needed through a grant from the City of Detroit or the Mayor's office.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

The process to fill the open position of Director of Community Affairs is in progress.