
FEDERAL AFFAIRS

House Passes the Build Back Better Act.

The House of Representatives passed the budget reconciliation bill, the *Build Back Better Act* ([H.R. 5376](#)), by a party-line vote of 220-213. No Republicans voted for the bill; one Democrat voted against the bill. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) found the legislation would result in \$2.2 trillion of new spending and would increase the national deficit by \$389 billion.

As a reminder, the Build Back Better Act includes the following education provisions:

- **\$9 billion** for Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs);
 - \$3 billion will be dedicated to research and development infrastructure and the rest (\$6 billion) will go to financial aid for students. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) would be guaranteed \$2 billion in funding from the \$10 billion amount.
- **\$500 million** for retention and completion grants to support students in completing college and earning their degrees;

This is far lower than the \$62 billion originally proposed for the program by President Biden in his American Families Plan.

- **\$112 million** for grants for high-quality teacher residence programs;
- a provision to increase the maximum Pell Grant by **\$550** and ensure students who qualify for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program are eligible for the increased grants;
 - However, the legislation excludes students who attend for-profit universities from accessing these increased Pell Grant amounts.
- **\$5 billion** in new funding for community college and industry partnership grants.
 - This funding will be used to provide grants or cooperative agreements to community colleges to expand workforce development programs.

Sen. Joe Manchin says he is a “no vote” on Build Back Better Act.

On Sunday, December 19, 2021, Sen. Joe Manchin (WV) announced his opposition to the “Build Back Better” Act, a cornerstone of the Biden/Harris Administration. This isn’t the end of Build Back Better. Among other things, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) has said he will schedule a vote on Build Back Better, along with all three version of Voting Rights Legislation, when Congress returns in January.

House Education and Labor Subcommittees Hearing on COVID-19 Education Funding.

In November the House Education and Labor Early Childhood, Elementary and Secondary Education Subcommittee and Higher Education and Workforce Investment Subcommittee held a joint hearing titled “Examining the Implementation of COVID-19 Education Funds.” Broadly, the hearing covered: (1) oversight of pandemic relief funding by the Department of Education;

(2) uses of pandemic relief funding; and (3) support for colleges and universities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Members also touched upon the new Enforcement Office at the Federal Student Aid Office to increase oversight of institutions of higher education.

Members Introduce CURES 2.0.

On Monday, Reps. Diana DeGette (D-CO) and Fred Upton (R-MI) introduced *CURES 2.0* ([H.R. 6000](#)), the follow up to 2016's 21st Century Cures Act ([Pub. L. 114-255](#)). The bill includes \$6.5 billion for the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) and includes provisions to carry out a nationwide study of long COVID-19, increase clinical trial diversity, expand patient experience data collection, establish two new centers of excellence at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and advance federal agency collaboration on telehealth and digital health technology. In addition to these healthcare related provisions, the bill includes the text of the Research Investment to Spark the Economy Act (RISE) Act ([H.R. 869](#)), Rep. DeGette's legislation that was originally introduced in the summer of 2020 to provide \$25 billion in research funding for federal science agencies, research centers, and universities. Both members are planning to hold hearings on the legislation at the Energy and Commerce Committee in the coming months, although Rep. Upton has said he doubts the bill will be seriously considered on the floor before 2022, and others are reporting the bill isn't likely to see floor time until next summer.

Lawmakers Urge President Biden to Take Action on Student Loans.

This week, Democratic Senators and Representatives pushed President Joe Biden to extend the pause on student loan payments and interest accrual, set to expire on January 31, 2022. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-WA) [tweeted](#) about a study from Data for Progress finding 70 percent of voters support extending the pause. Rep. Jamaal Bowman (D-NY) also [sent a letter](#) calling for a new COVID-19 stimulus package in response to the spread of the Omicron variant, which would include the cancellation of all student loans. Late last week, White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki confirmed the President has no plans to extend the current pause, noting "a smooth transition back into repayment is a high priority for the administration." On Thursday, December 23, 2021, President Biden announced a pause in the repayment of student loans until May 1, 2022 and is unable to cancel student loans without an act of Congress.

Education and Labor Committee Republicans Send Letter on PCAs.

Ranking Member of the House Education and Labor Committee Virginia Foxx (R-NC) and Rep. Julia Letlow (R-LA) sent a [letter](#) to the Department of Education's Inspector General Sandra Bruce requesting an investigation into the Department's decision to end their contracts with private collection agencies (PCAs). They argued that the decision to end these contracts will be detrimental to the student borrowers who rely on PCAs to bring them into good standing. In the letter, they also questioned if the Department will have "the necessary expertise, security clearance, and licensing required to complete collections work" as student loan payments resume in February.

President Biden Administration Announces Title IX Reform Timeline.

The Biden Administration [announced](#) it would be releasing new Title IX regulatory proposals and protections for transgender students in April 2022. Rewriting Trump-era Title IX regulations has been a major focus for President Biden since assuming office. In response to the announcement, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Education Catherine Lhamon said the new timeline “reflects the Department's commitment to work as speedily as possible toward appropriate and effective regulation in recognition of the importance of ensuring equal access to education for all students.”

Application for Minority Serving Institutions to be Issued Imminently.

Federal Affairs and WSU personnel are monitoring the Federal Register and the Department of Education’s websites daily for any news regarding issuance of applications for recognition as a minority-serving institution for the next year. The issuance of this application is imminent. A successful application would open the door for significant federal resources to support students.

President Biden Signs Executive Order on Customer Service Delivery of Federal Agencies.

President Biden signed an executive order (EO) titled [Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government](#). Overall, the EO focuses on improving the direct services federal agencies provide to Americans. Regarding the Department of Education, the EO creates a singular website for Direct Loan borrowers to manage and repay all of their loans, streamlines and eliminates some paperwork that is required for individuals to access the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program, and directs the Department to begin offering recommendations for students of other services and programs that will make it easier for them to access higher education, such as broadband funding and healthcare support.

STATE AFFAIRS

Budget Updates

Closing out 2021:

Governor Whitmer signed several significant supplemental budgets at the end of December 2021. One, HB 4398, aimed at traditional book closing measures and some specific funding supporting COVID-19 screening and testing in schools as well as emergency rental assistance among other things. The second, and more discretionary in nature, was SB 85 and its implementation bills SBs 769, 771 and HB 5603. The four bills invest \$1.5 billion dollars in newly created funds and programs administered by the Michigan Strategic Fund and Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity designed to attract businesses to Michigan and avoid losses such as Ford’s decision to invest in Kentucky and Tennessee and Rivian’s decision to invest in Georgia. The economic development supplemental and implementation bills represent a marked difference in the ability of the Administration and Legislative leaders to work together to produce quickly an agreed upon product. The investments should assist in

drawing in large-scale projects to Michigan, and those employers will need the kind of highly trained workforce WSU is educating.

Looking Forward to 2022:

The FY 2023 budget process will likely get underway during the first quarter of 2022, with the Governor issuing her executive budget recommendation in late February/early March. The House of Representatives has a new Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, Rep. Ben Frederick (R-Owosso), who shares his full Appropriations Chair's opinion that there is a need to close the equity gap in higher education funding. What that looks like has yet to be determined but could include an outcomes-based metric approach or revisiting of a per-pupil funding mechanism or something entirely different. Rep. Frederick will most definitely take a measured, detail-oriented approach to the budget process.

In addition to advocating for increased funding for WSU operations, we continue to prioritize a few other opportunities for state investment, both through the traditional budget process and through federal dollar allocations in supplemental budget bills, including:

- Investing \$100 million dollars to support the construction of a new school of medicine building, jointly occupied with Karmanos Cancer Institute.
- Supporting the Michigan Association of State Universities' (MASU's) request for a \$400 million dollar investment in the Michigan Competitive Scholarship.
- Supporting funding to grow the state's social work workforce.
- Supporting funding expanding the C2 pipeline program to allow for mental health training opportunities for both in-school and out- of- school personnel.
- Retaining and growing existing state funded items like MiDOCS, Lycaki-Young, Poison Center, Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner growth, and Frontline Strong Together.

Legislation

WSU DGCA continues to monitor state legislation and regulations that could impact 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, but not limited to, the following:

- House Bill 4512 (Hornberger) clarifying the removal procedures for University board members. WSU is monitoring this legislation.
- House Bill 4615 (Marino) requiring candidates for university boards to file a financial disclosure. WSU is monitoring this legislation.

-
- Senate Joint Resolution F (McBroom) requiring university board meetings to be open to the public. 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.
 - House Joint Resolution K (Hornberger) requiring university board meetings to be open to the public. 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.
 - Senate Bills 637 (Chang) and 638 (Outman) create important opportunities for co-response models and community crisis responses teams to actively engage in the criminal legal process, potentially diverting individuals who would be better served through behavioral health interventions from the traditional criminal justice system. This legislation was actively informed by WSU team members and the WSU Center for Behavioral Health and Justice. WSU is supportive of these bills. They have been presented to the Governor for signature.
 - Senate Bill 582 (Wojno) would prohibit a public body, including a university, from carrying out research involving canines. Legislation that aims to restrict, or arbitrarily eliminate the ability to conduct potentially life-saving research, is not something WSU supports.
 - House Bill 5183 (Tate) which moves up the effective date of legislation signed last term allowing student athletes to be compensated for their name, image, or likeness. WSU is monitoring this legislation.
 - House Bills 5556(Roth)-5557(Damoose) allowing community colleges to offer a four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program. This legislation is a reintroduction and has been consistently reintroduced each legislative session for nearly 18 years. WSU opposes this legislation but is actively working with the bill sponsors to convene a stakeholder workgroup to discuss the issue, non-legislative solutions, and ways the legislature could leverage existing infrastructure to support rural healthcare needs.

Appointments

The Division of Government and Community Affairs monitors and engages in the Gubernatorial Appointment process to ensure that Warrior voices are at the tables where decisions are being made. Recent successes include:

Michigan Early Stage Venture Investment Corporation Board of Directors. Dawn Batts, Ph.D., of Bloomfield, is a capital strategist for TechTown Detroit. She holds a Ph.D. in Business and Cultural Anthropology from Wayne State University, Master of Business Administration from the University of Michigan, and Bachelor of Arts in Accounting from Michigan State University. Dr. Batts is appointed to represent a member of the general public with the requisite knowledge and experience in finance and business investment. She will serve for a term

commencing November 10, 2021 and expiring June 13, 2024. Dr. Batts succeeds Jeb Burns whose term expired June 13, 2021.

Environmental Permit Review Commission. Carol J. Miller, Ph.D., of Ann Arbor, is a professor of civil and environmental engineering Wayne State University and the director of WSU Healthy Urban Waters. She holds a Ph.D., Master of Science, and Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Michigan. Dr. Miller is appointed for a term commencing November 10, 2021 and expiring August 28, 2025. She succeeds Jeffery King whose term expired August 28, 2021.

Legislative Tours and Meetings

The Division is always looking for opportunities to bring legislators to our campus. This fall, we were able to host several meaningful tours of campus and the newly opened STEM Innovation Learning Center. Included in our fall tours were:

- Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist
- State Representative Abraham Aiyash
- State Representative Karen Whitsett
- State Senator Stephanie Chang

When we cannot bring members to campus, we try our best to bring campus leaders to legislators! On October 27, President Wilson joined the DGCA team in Lansing for a full day of meetings with legislative leaders.

Student Legislative Engagement

The Division of Government and Community Affairs partners with students, faculty and staff who have an interest in participating in the legislative process. Recently, members of Science Policy Network-Detroit, a student group at WSU that aims to break down barriers between policy makers and researchers, testified before the House Health Policy Committee regarding the damaging impact lead exposure can have on people.

GOVERNMENT HEALTH AFFAIRS

School of Medicine Lobby Day

On December 2, we hosted 30 medical students for a virtual lobby day. The group of students took part in the MPAC (Medical Political Action) elective over the course of the semester. The course covers topics such as advocacy, health policy, and the political process. The lobby day was originally to be in person, but with the rising number of COVID cases in the state, we switched to a virtual platform. Students met with legislators and spoke about their experience at the School of Medicine and health policy topics important to them. We received a lot of positive feedback from the students and from the state legislators.

Graduate Medical Education (GME) Reform – MIDOCs

WSU and other members of the MIDOCs consortium had its third cohort of residents start in July 2021. 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 eight residents, the second cohort contains 24, and the third contains 20. Last year, the State appropriated \$5.1 million for the program. MIDOCs leveraged this funding, along with a funds contributed from the consortium, to receive a federal match totaling \$16 million. The State appropriated \$6.4 million for FY22. This will allow us to host 24 new residents beginning July 2022. Residency specialties include psychiatry, internal medicine, family medicine, general surgery, OB-GYN, and pediatrics.

Lycaki-Young Fund

The Lycaki-Young fund was first introduced in the mid-1990s. Since that time, WSU has received more than \$100 million in state funds to support care for the mentally ill and those affected 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 State appropriated \$5.6 million for FY22.

The Michigan Poison Center

The Michigan Poison Center (PC) receives more than 65,000 calls per year related to emergencies, most involving children. Tenet Corp. and DMC hosted the Center for more than 60 years, but it no longer fits in 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 PC serves all counties in Michigan and 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 state appropriated \$1.2 million for the program for FY22. We are actively seeking opportunities to increase funding in future years.

School of Medicine Engagement with Community Leaders:

Dean Schweitzer is conducting meetings with community leaders and influencers in Detroit. The meetings are introductory in nature and for the Dean to form connections with key contacts. Thus far, we have focused on scheduling meetings with community health and wellness related organizations, women's health and LGBTQ primary care organizations, Latin, Arab, and Chaldean-American organizations, and religious leaders.

COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

President's Community Advisory Group (PCAG)

On Wednesday, December 15, 2021, the Division of Government and Community Affairs hosted the President's Community Advisory Group (PCAG) meeting via Zoom. PCAG meets quarterly and its purpose is to provide input, feedback, and guidance to President Wilson and

the Division of Government and Community Affairs (DGCA) regarding the University's mission, strategic plan, and priorities. PCAG serves in an advisory capacity, not governance.

The Winter 2021 meeting was held virtually and featured an update from President Wilson on the university's improving graduation rates and an overview of the WSU x KCI Project.

Sponsorships

DGCA is pleased to represent WSU at various community-based events supporting non-profit events and activities. During the past few months, WSU supported the following organizations:

- Black Family Development's Annual Dinner and Awards
- Arab American Women's Business Council Annual Signature Event
- LA SED Holiday Drive
- Fellowship Chapel's upcoming 55th Anniversary.

City Of Detroit Government

On January 4, 2022, Detroit City Council will begin a new session with six new Council Members. At the time of this writing, we anticipate that current President Pro Tem Mary Sheffield will be selected as President for the new term.

In anticipation of this potential scenario, in anticipation of this, Patrick Lindsey and Stacie Clayton met with Member Sheffield in early December to discuss how WSU might work more closely with City Council on research projects in Urban Planning, Political Science, Urban Studies, providing interns and other areas of mutual interest.

Annual Tribute to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Wayne State University Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute was presented to the public on Monday, January 17, the actual day the nation celebrated Rev. Dr. King. The program was completely virtual again this year due to campus health and safety protocols. In addition to it being available at 10am and 5pm on WSU's website, it also could be viewed on Comcast Channel 900 at 2pm and 8pm. The keynote speaker for this year's program was Detroit native and Wayne State University's 2021 Distinguished Alum, Christopher W. Wilson. Mr. Wilson serves as Director of Experience and Design at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. A question and answer session followed with the event host, Greg Bowens of Bowens Co. Public and Media Relations and a WSU alumnus, as well.

Lift Every Voice and Sing and the ***Star-Spangled Banner*** were sung by Detroit's own Ms. Zania Alake', a 2021 finalist on The Voice. Zania also gave a stirring performance of ***A Change is Gonna Come***.

Additionally, the program honored the recipients of the 2022 Dr. Arthur L. Johnson Community Leadership Awards. Honorees were:

Individual Awardee: Jametta Lilly, CEO of Detroit Parent Network,

Organizational Awardee: The Michigan Justice Fund

The honorees exemplify Dr. Johnson's commitment to community and making a positive difference in Detroit and beyond. Also, former Detroit City Council President Brenda Jones received the first Wayne State University Warrior Strong Distinguished Service Award for her 16 years of public service. The entire program and more event details can be viewed at <https://communityoutreach.wayne.edu/mlk>.