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COMMITTEE FOR  
EDUCATION FUNDING

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Monday, November 25, 2019

## I. Policy Intelligence and Education News

- **Agreement reached on totals for FY 2020 appropriations bills** – On Thursday the President signed a second extension of government funding – a continuing resolution, or “CR,” which extends funding at fiscal year (FY) 2019 levels – that lasts until December 20, and on Saturday congressional Appropriations leaders reached agreement on totals for each of the 12 FY 2020 funding bills, paving the way for Congress to pass as many of those bills as possible in the next four weeks. The 12 bill allocations, known as the “302(b)” levels, have not been made public but we expect that the Labor-HHS-Education bill will get a boost above the effective 1% increase that the Senate Appropriations Committee had originally approved this fall but well below the 6.6% (\$11.8 billion) increase in the House bill passed this spring. The House had set its allocations before Congress agreed on new discretionary spending caps that are about \$10 billion below the level the House had been using, which means that all the bills will likely get less funding than in the versions the House passed.
- **What’s next for appropriations** – The top-line agreement does not include specifics for program-level funding, meaning that we don’t yet know how much each education-related program will get for FY 2020. We also don’t know what funding will be provided for construction of a border wall, which had been one of the key sticking points for months in reaching agreement on the funding allocations. It’s possible, therefore, that this agreement does not mean there will be smooth sailing for consideration and passage of all 12 funding bills. It’s unlikely that the bills will be separately passed again in the House and then in the Senate before they are conferenced. Instead, here are some possible scenarios:
  - **A few bills at a time are packaged in “minibus” conference agreements** – There was an earlier agreement that Congress would not pass one omnibus funding bill, which gives only one up or down vote on all the bills together. Instead, there may be a series of minibus packages, each containing several bills. Last year, the Defense and the Labor-HHS-Education bills were packaged together and enacted before the start of FY 2019, which meant those programs were not directly affected when much of the rest of the government shut down when their funding bills were not enacted or extended. That scenario could happen again, although some Members of Congress may worry that passing the two biggest bills leaves less urgency to pass the remaining 10 bills.
  - **Some bills are passed, but agreement on others is stymied** – In addition to coining the term “minibus” for a smaller omnibus appropriations package containing just a few bills, there’s also the term “CRomnibus,” which is a package that includes a full-year CR for some bills along with a full program-by-program funding bills for others. This has happened when Congress couldn’t agree on funding for key programs but didn’t want to hold up the rest of

the bills. In the House, the trickiest programmatic funding issues this year have been the border wall construction in the Homeland Security bill and salaries for Members of Congress in the Legislative Branch bill. In the Senate, there was also no agreement on whether the Military Construction/VA bill would or could include language prohibiting the Administration from transferring approved defense-related construction funding to a border wall – something the Administration did with FY 2019 dollars. However, the veterans funding in the Military Construction/VA bill remains a high priority in Congress, so it seems unlikely that that bill would not be finalized.

- **Not all bills are finalized by December 20, requiring another CR** – The impeachment inquiry brings up a number of obstacles to the appropriations process, including the time it takes and the rancor it causes. If the House is voting on articles of impeachment at about the same time it is scheduled to vote on appropriations bills, the process could stall for many reasons. Last week some in Congress had already broached the possibility that there would need to be a CR into February or March. Even if some bills are finished by December 20, it's likely that others will not.
- **2020 calendar for the House of Representatives** – the House has set its [floor calendar for 2020](#), with the second session of the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress convening on January 7. The Senate has not yet published its 2020 schedule.
- **Final reminder: Please take a moment to complete CEF's brief survey** – Each fall CEF surveys its membership to ensure we are providing the benefits you want and to ask for suggestions for improvement. The survey will take only a few minutes, and all responses are anonymous. Your feedback will help us tailor our activities, advocacy, and information to what you most value. Please take the time to respond and feel free to comment on areas that were not addressed. If you haven't ready, click [HERE](#) to take the survey!
- **CEF job board** – The member area of [CEF's website](#) has a job board that lists openings with our member, including the new one listed below. If you do not have a password to access this section of the website, you can fill out the request on the website and will be granted access if we can recognize your email address. In addition to the job board, this restricted part of the website has previous CEF Updates, an electronic version of the FY 2020 budget book, the current CEF directory, and our calendar.
  - **Association of Community College Trustees** – [Senior Government Relations Associate](#)

## II. Events

- **Mark your calendars - CEF research briefing on Capitol Hill on December 9, 3:30-5:30pm** – CEF is holding a briefing on “The Importance of Education Investments to the Economy and National Security” that is open to all CEF members and congressional staff working on education, defense, and the economy. Representatives Anthony Brown (D-MD) and Robert Wittman (R-VA) – both members of the Armed Services Committee – will open the briefing and then we will have a panel discussion with speakers representing the defense and business communities. Details on panelists still to come. The briefing will be from 3:30pm-5:00pm in 2045 Rayburn House Office Building.

- **Student Aid Alliance 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on December 4** – The presidents of CEF members the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU) and the American Council on Education (ACE) invite you to a breakfast celebration in honor of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Student Aid Alliance with Members of Congress and student aid recipients. The breakfast is 8:30am-10am in 2359 Rayburn House Office Building on December 4. Please RSVP by November 26 to [Cynthia@naicu.edu](mailto:Cynthia@naicu.edu).
- **2019 Higher Education Government Relations Conference on December 4-6** – CEF members the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the American Association of Community Colleges, along with the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education are sponsoring the annual Higher Education Government Relations Conference (HEGRC) on Dec. 4-6 in New Orleans. HEGRC is an educational forum for professionals who foster effective governmental and community relations on behalf of public colleges and universities. You can find information on the program and speakers [here](#).
- **CEF's schedule for the rest of the year –**
  - **Friday, November 29** – No CEF meeting during congressional recess.
  - **Friday, December 6** – 9-11 a.m. at NEA (1201 16<sup>th</sup> St, NW, News Conference Room). Guest speaker: TBD.
  - **Monday, December 9** – 3:30-5:00pm, 2045 Rayburn House Office Building, Capitol Hill briefing: “The Importance of Education Investments to the Economy and National Security.” See details above.
  - **Friday, December 13** – 9-11:30am, CEF's annual meeting and elections at University of California (1608 Rhode Island Ave, NW, auditorium). Attendance is important for elections and preview of CEF's 2020 plans. We'll have a hot breakfast and special guest speakers!