Thursday, February 11, 2021

Join CEF's happy hour today from 5-6pm ET – CEF Zoom happy hour. Put down your spreadsheets and join us for some fun conversation! It's a nice way to meet new CEF members and chat with your old friends!

I. Policy Intelligence and Education News

- **Budget reconciliation: House Energy and Commerce marks up $7.6 billion for expanded e-rate program –** At 11am ET today, the House Energy and Commerce Committee is marking up its part of the budget reconciliation bill, which includes $7.6 billion for a new Emergency Connectivity Fund within the e-rate program. It will provide funding for elementary and secondary schools and for libraries to buy devices and connectivity services for students and individuals to use for remote learning. The e-rate program currently doesn't pay for devices, Wi-Fi hotspots, or other connectivity to be used except at schools or libraries, and this new funding allows people to get connectivity elsewhere. The details are on pages 6-11 of the committee print. The webcast will be here.

- **Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee staff changes** – Mike Gentile is staying on as a Majority staff member for the Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee, now working for the Democratic staff. He will handle higher education and Mark Laisch will handle elementary and secondary education. The new education staffer for Ranking Member Roy Blunt (R-MO) is Emily Slack, who most recently worked in the Department of Education but previously spent six years working for the House Education and Workforce Committee. Senate Democrats have not yet settled who will chair all the Appropriations subcommittees due to a new caucus rule designed to give less senior members a chance at chairing subcommittees. Because Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) is now chairing the HELP Committee, it's possible she may not be chairing the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee if another member wants that position.

II. Events

- **CEF's upcoming schedule -**
  - **Today! Thursday, Feb. 11** – 5-6:00 p.m. ET – CEF Zoom happy hour. Put down your spreadsheets and join us for some fun conversation! It's a nice way to meet new CEF members and chat with your old friends!
  - **Tomorrow - Friday, Feb. 12** – 9:30-11:00 a.m. ET, Zoom Friday meeting. Guest speakers: Amanda Beaumont and Bryce McKibben, Senate HELP Committee.
  - **Friday, Feb. 19** – No CEF Meeting during the congressional recess.
  - **(tentative) Thursday, Feb. 25** – Zoom Hill reception (details to come).
  - **Friday, Feb. 26** – 9:30-11:00 a.m. ET, Zoom Friday meeting. Guest speaker TBD.

- **Friday, March 5** - 9:30-11:00 a.m. ET, Zoom Friday meeting. Guest speaker TBD.