



Monday, October 4, 2021

I. Policy Intelligence and Education News

- **Education-related funding still pending in Congress** – The Senate is in session this week but the House isn't scheduled to hold votes again until Tuesday, October 19 – a schedule that could change if the House needs to vote on legislation to raise or suspend the debt limit before then. At the end of last week, Congress passed short-term funding that extended two pressing deadlines:
 - **Government funding was extended through December 3** – Fiscal year (FY) 2021 ended at midnight on September 30 but Congress extended government funding at FY 2021 levels through December 3, giving itself time to complete work on legislation providing full-year funding. The House has passed 9 of the 12 funding bills for FY 2022 but the Senate has not produced any. The House-passed Labor-HHS-Education bill includes a 41% increase for Education Department programs as well as increased for education-related programs in other agencies.
 - **Extending highway funding through the end of October** – This weekend Congress extended federal highway and transit funding through the end of October. This authorization also expired at the end of FY 2021. The full 5-year reauthorization is part of the bipartisan infrastructure package the Senate has passed but that is being held up in the House because Democrats have intertwined its passage with that of the Build Back Better Act – the reconciliation bill with hundreds of billions of dollars of proposed education investments. House moderates and progressives each want a different bill to move first or at the same time.

Congress must act on a third pressing issue very quickly, and Democrats want to act on a fourth bill:

- **Raising or suspending the debt ceiling** – Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said that Treasury will not be able to meet its obligations beyond October 18 if Congress does not suspend or raise the debt ceiling by then. Republicans have said they will not vote for to change the debt ceiling and so far have resisted Senate Democrats' request for unanimous consent to take up a bill that Democrats could pass with just their own votes. This impasse is now the most pressing fiscal issue, and while it's not education funding it has implications for student loans, as well as for the domestic and international economies in general.
- **Reconciliation bill** – As mentioned earlier, the fate of the Build Back Better Act reconciliation bill has been linked by House Democrats to passage of the infrastructure bill (there is no official linkage between the two). The House Budget Committee has reported out the proposals of 13 House committees, several of which included education

investments. Senate committees have not marked up and are not likely to do so. Instead, Democratic leaders are negotiating what could pass in the Senate, which requires all 50 Democratic votes and which must comply with the Senate's "Byrd Rule" that limits what can be included in a reconciliation bill. So far, cost objections from two Democratic Senators (Joe Manchin of WV and Kyrsten Sinema of AZ) have been key stumbling blocks. Last week Politico published an [outline by Senator Manchin from the summer](#) listing his requirements that includes a cost of no more than \$1.5 trillion – a spending limit that could lead Democrats to drastically pare back the Biden Administration's proposals and those in the House Budget Committee bill. As behind-the-scenes deliberations continue, the education community must continue to make the case for why it's vital to retain the education investments in the Build Back Better agenda. CEF will be active, and will continue to share advocacy information.

- **Education-related hearing this week –**
 - **Hearing on "Homecoming: The Historical Roots and Continued Contributions of HBCUs"** on [Wednesday, October 6 at noon ET](#)– House Education and Labor Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Investment.
- **Staff change at the House Education and Labor Committee** – Lakeisha Steel, the senior education policy advisory for K-12 education, has departed the House Education and Labor Committee democratic staff.

II. CEF member items

- **Board nominations for CEF's 2022 Board of Directors** – Later this week we will begin seeking nominations from people interested in serving on CEF's Board of Directors for 2022. In December, CEF members will elect 8 members to CEF's Board: three officers who will serve a one-year term and five other Board members who will serve two-year terms. The new president will appoint two additional members. I encourage those interested in playing an active role in CEF to consider submitting a nomination for a position on next year's Board.
- **Updating CEF's membership directory** – We are updating CEF's 2021 membership directory (sent this spring to everyone and on the member-only part of CEF's website). Everyone will have a chance to note any change in staffing, contact information, etc. If you have changes, you can send them to me now and I'll incorporate them in the review draft we'll send to everyone later this week.
- **Membership satisfaction survey** – As we do each fall, CEF will send out a survey seeking our members' input and suggestions on the information, activities, and analysis that we provide. We will circulate a link to the anonymous survey in the coming weeks.

III. Events

- **Wrap-up of last week's great outdoor CEF gala** – Thanks to everyone who attended, sponsored, or watched the livestream of the award ceremony at Tuesday's outdoor gala! It was wonderful to see so many colleagues and friends after such a long time, and to make new contacts in the education community. Close to 100 people attended in-person, including about 15 Hill and Department of Education staffers. This is CEF's one fundraiser, and thanks to the generosity of the Gala sponsors it

raised a considerable amount that CEF will put towards advocacy on behalf of greater investments in education. Note: if you left a set of purple reading glasses at the venue, we have them for you! This week we will post a number of great photos to the gala webpage. Meanwhile, there are gala items you can view at the following links:

- [Livestream of award ceremony with Senator Markey](#) – includes video acceptance speeches from Reps. Bobby Scott and Grace Meng, and announcement of the creation of CEF’s Joel Packer Spotlight on Advocacy series for next summer
 - [Gala program](#)
 - Gala photos to be posted soon
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- **CEF’s upcoming schedule -**
 - **Friday, October 8** -- 9:30-10:45 a.m. ET, [Zoom Friday meeting](#). Guest speaker TBD.
 - **Friday, October 15** - no CEF Friday meeting.
 - **Friday, October 22** – 9:30-10:45 a.m. ET, [Zoom Friday meeting](#). Guest speaker TBD.
 - **Tuesday, October 26** – 2-3:30 p.m. ET – Zoom Hill briefing on historic underfunding of education and long-term needs. Speaker details and webinar link to come.
 - **Friday, October 29** – 9:30-10:45 a.m. ET, [Zoom Friday meeting](#). Guest speaker TBD.
 - **Friday, November 5** - 9:30-10:45 a.m. ET, [Zoom Friday meeting](#). Guest speaker TBD.