



July 12, 2010

Federal Relations Update

The Senate and House resume their work this week after a short recess following the July 4th holiday. The Senate completed its work on H.R. 4899, its FY 2010 Supplemental Appropriations bill a few days before the break. On July 1, but not in time for a concurrence vote in the Senate, the House made significant amendments to H.R. 4899, including the education jobs bill and Pell Grant funding. Below are details on these significant votes, plus a status report on the major community college funding passed in the Healthcare and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.

Congressional Action on FY 2010 Supplemental Appropriations

On July 1, the House amended H.R. 4899, the FY 2010 Supplemental Appropriations bill that contains \$45.5 billion in discretionary funding for military spending, disaster relief and several other domestic spending items.

In the amendment most significant to education, the House passed the long awaited education jobs measure and Pell Grant funding. The initial proposals of \$23 billion in funding to each state for the purpose of retaining K-12 education employees, and \$5.7 billion to cover the remaining Pell Grant shortfall have now been reduced to \$10 billion and \$4.95 billion respectively.

It is estimated that the \$10 billion will help keep 140,000 K-12 school employees on the job next year, and while none of these funds go to higher education, the amendment does contain maintenance of effort language that says state spending for education, including higher education should not exceed specified prior year levels.

The \$4.95 billion Pell Grant funding provided by the Supplemental is critical to filling the remaining Pell Grant shortfall. Without this funding, the maximum Pell Grant could be reduced by almost \$850 in the 2011-2012 academic year.

The Federal Relations Office will spend the coming fall providing members of Congress with information regarding the critical importance of Pell grants to California community college students and our efforts to ensure that more students take advantage of Pell grants and all other forms of financial aid.

It is expected that the Senate will hold a concurrence vote on H.R. 4899 sometime this month.

\$2 Billion for Community Colleges in the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 Needs Clarifying Language

After multiple votes and amendments, the Senate adjourned for the July 4th holiday recess without passing the bill to provide extension of unemployment benefits. The “Extenders Bill” includes some important language relevant to community colleges. Specifically, the bill contains clarifying language stating that only public, non-profit educational institutions are eligible for the \$2 billion dollars now available through the Community College and Career Training Grant Program (CCCTG). This program was authorized last year, but not funded until the recent passage of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (Reconciliation).

This \$2 billion in funding is often called “Trade Adjustment Assistance” money, referring to a Department of Labor program providing support to unemployed individuals whose jobs have been transferred overseas. Reconciliation expanded this program and provides that \$2 billion is to come from Trade Adjustment Assistance for community colleges to provide training to displaced and unemployed workers.

Apparently, implementing regulations are currently being developed for the Community College and Career Training Grant Program, and negotiations about the definitions of “unemployed” and “displaced workers” are a central part of the discussions given the moving target of unemployment benefits.

The CCCTG is to be funded at \$500 million each year for 4 years, and each state is guaranteed a minimum of \$2.5 million in funds.

The clarifying amendment of the Tax Extenders bill:

“Trade Adjustment Assistance for Communities – Community College and Career Training Grant Program. Under current law, this Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program provides grants to educational institutions to develop, offer and improve education and career training programs for workers eligible for TAA. In the 2010 Reconciliation, the program received \$500 million a year in mandatory funding for FY2011, FY2012, FY2013 and FY2014. The provisions included in the bill would expand the program by authorizing such grants to also benefit individuals who are eligible for unemployment insurance, who are likely to be eligible for unemployment insurance or who have exhausted their unemployment insurance. Additionally, the bill would: (1) clarify that only public and non-profit educational institutions are eligible for grants; (2) authorize the Department of Labor to spend up to five percent of program funds to administer, evaluate and establish reporting systems for the program; and (3) give the Department of Labor more flexibility by allowing it to obligate grant funds in the year that they are appropriated as well as the subsequent fiscal year.”

PRESIDENT CALLS FOR DREAM ACT AS PART OF COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

In an early July speech on immigration reform, President Obama stated his desire to see the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act or “DREAM Act” included in comprehensive immigration reform. The DREAM Act would provide a path to U.S. citizenship for undocumented immigrants who were brought to this country as children and who seek to attend U.S. colleges. Specific procedures and timelines for how the DREAM Act will move through Congress have not yet been announced. It is possible that the DREAM Act may be considered in separate legislation from that of comprehensive immigration reform.

ANTICIPATED MOVEMENT ON VETERANS EARMARK

Now that Congress has returned from July recess, there is a greater chance that the Appropriations Subcommittees in both houses will begin to make decisions on FY 2011 congressionally-directed spending requests. However, final full committee decisions may come as late as December. The Chancellor’s Office is seeking \$2.915 million to fund

Vets Connect, a program to fund Veterans' Resource Centers on each California community college campus.

Congressman Bob Filner (D-CA), Chair of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, has submitted a request to fund the **Vets Connect** proposal at \$2.915 million. Senator Feinstein (D-CA), has submitted her request to support the proposal at \$500,000. If funded, the final amount is likely to be somewhere between the two requests.

The requested funds will be used to support the systemwide student veterans services initiative administered and guided by the Chancellor's Office which will 1) **expand** existing exemplary Veterans' Resource Centers, 2) **pilot** best practice models on selected community college campuses with the goal of eventually establishing comprehensive Veterans' Resource Centers on each of the 112 California College Campuses, and 3) **construct** a statewide data base to identify student veterans, evaluate their academic progress and support their success.

Bridge Building Collaborations on Veterans Issues

The Federal Relations Office has begun working with several internal and external partners in line with the Board of Governors' commitment to student veterans and the Chancellor's Office initiative to improve services for student veterans. Internally, conversations have begun with the Student Services and Special Programs Division on ways to enhance services for student veterans. Similar conversations have begun with Nursing and Allied Health regarding ways that the Chancellor's Office might work with the State to draw down new federal healthcare workforce dollars. Such funding could be used to create bridge programs to help returning military personnel get trained to transfer their military healthcare skill sets into civilian occupations.

Externally, collaboration with the California Department of Veterans' Affairs (CDVA) has resulted in CDVA's offer to have mobile information vans travel to colleges within the California Community College system. This information resource would be a supplement to the services campuses currently provide student veterans. The Federal Relations Office will continue to work with Student Services and Special Programs to assess how campuses might work with such a resource.

Ongoing Items We Are Watching/Working On:

While there is no new news to report at present, the Federal Relations Office continues to closely monitor the following issues and will provide updated information as it becomes available.

- **Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Reauthorization**
- **White House Summit on Community Colleges**
- **Student Veteran Certification in Multi-Campus Districts**