



Florida School Boards Association FEDERAL NEWS & INFORMATION

March 28, 2022

BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS

Last week, Senate hearings on Supreme Court nominee Ketanji Brown Jackson made headlines, as the Judiciary Committee hosted three days of questioning. Also in the Senate, Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) brought competitiveness legislation to the floor for a series of votes that will formally start the House-Senate negotiations on a bill that will be a compromise between the provisions of the House-passed America COMPETES bill and the Senate-passed U.S. Innovation and Competition Act.

In a letter to his Democratic colleagues describing plans for the March-April work period, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) said of the competitiveness legislation, “One of the best ways to address inflation is to secure our supply chains for critical components like semiconductors and microchips that are essential to domestic manufacturing. With the Senate now scheduled to amend the America COMPETES Act of 2022 with its own version and send it back to us, the House will vote to go to conference this work period. Together, we are moving one step closer to securing the enactment of a bipartisan innovation bill that will secure our supply chains and help bring costs down while ramping innovation up. I hope that House and Senate conferees will work quickly to resolve differences so that we can come together and approve a conference report that builds on the enactment of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and achieves many of the goals of the Make It In America plan. Whenever a final version is ready for consideration, the House will take action alongside the Senate to send an innovation, manufacturing, and jobs bill to President Biden for his signature.”

The bills include a number of provisions important to the STEM education community — provisions that are not among the controversial proposals that are likely to take some time to negotiate. Observers are hopeful that a compromise package might reach the White House by July 4.

Advocates are getting ready for President Joe Biden’s FY 2023 budget request, which will be released on Monday. The Department of Education (ED) will issue its customary budget summary booklet on Monday, but the detailed congressional justifications are not expected to be ready until several days later. ED will hold an in-person briefing at its offices for the first time since the pandemic started. (The briefing will also be available [virtually](#).) The House and Senate Budget Committees are hosting hearings on the request; Office of Management and Budget Director Shalanda Young will appear before the House panel on [Tuesday](#) and the Senate on [Wednesday](#). Other committees will hold hearings with agency heads as well.

The next few months will be busy for advocates who will be engaging lawmakers on FY 2023 spending, as well as the competitiveness bill. The legislative calendar will start to feel some pressure as the weather warms and the 2022 elections near.

SENATE COMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

On Wednesday, March 23, the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) committee hosted a hearing titled, “Strengthening Federal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Programs: Opportunities, Challenges, and Emerging Issues.” Witnesses included Dr. Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, assistant secretary for mental health and substance use, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Carole Johnson, administrator, Health Resources and Services Administration; Dr. Joshua A. Gordon, director, National Institute of Mental Health, National Institutes of Health; and Dr. Nora D. Volkow, director, National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institutes of Health. In her opening remarks, Chairwoman Patty Murray (D-WA), noted that the committee is committed to work on “bipartisan



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legislation to reauthorize and improve federal programs on mental health and substance use disorder.” Agreeing, Ranking Member Richard Burr (R-NC) highlighted prior work done by the committee to address challenges heightened due to the pandemic, such as the [Dr. Lorna Breen Health Care Provider Protection Act](#). Witnesses highlighted priorities of the Biden-Harris administration, including preventing overdose, enhancing access to suicide prevention in crisis care, promoting children and youth behavioral health to focus on efforts to improve mental health for American youth, and integrating primary care and behavioral health. To view a recording of the hearing, click [here](#).