



November 2007 Federal Update

White House

H.R. 3043 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations measure

Today, the White House announced the veto of the \$606 billion education appropriations bill, noting it is “loaded with 2,000 earmarks,” which President Bush wants stripped from the bill.

Rep. David Obey, the Democratic chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, immediately responded: “This is a bipartisan bill supported by over 50 Republicans... there has been virtually no criticism of its contents. It is clear the only reason the president vetoed this bill is pure politics.”

However, in light of the final vote falling just short of the 2/3 majority needed for a veto override, Rep. Obey had last week suggested that resolution might reside in pulling out all earmarks, bringing the costs closer to the President’s January proposal.

The President’s budget sought almost \$4 billion in cuts, and this measure added \$10 billion to Bush's proposal for the 2008 spending measure. H.R. 3043 includes a 20 percent increase over Bush's request for job training programs; \$1.4 billion more than Bush's request for health research at the National Institutes of Health, a 5 percent increase and among other spending provisions, \$63.6 billion for the Education Department, a 5 percent increase over 2007 spending and 8 percent more than in the President’s budget.

A Continuing Resolution was passed last Friday that extends spending for agencies at the 2007 level to December 15.

Congress

H.R. 4137, The College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007

The “mark-up” for this HEA Reauthorization measure is scheduled for November 14 at **10:15 a.m.** (EST) in room 2175 Rayburn H.O.B. This 747-page proposal contains almost 40 new programs beyond that of the Senate measure (S. 1642) introduced this summer. Much of the discussion will focus on accountability provisions pertaining to reporting requirements regarding college costs. It is expected there will be extended negotiations over the measures to resolve the differences. Should the debate continue into 2008, members will have until March 1 to come to agreement; otherwise, another extension will be needed, by then intruding on campaign season.

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