

Federal Policy and Advocacy Update

UPDATE ON THE BUILD BACK BETTER ACT

On December 19, Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) announced he would not support the Build Back Better Act (BBBA), citing his concerns over rising inflation and the size of the national debt. Due to the evenly split Senate, all 50 Democratic senators are required to approve of the bill to secure its passage, and Sen. Manchin's announcement cast significant doubt on the ability of Democrats to enact President Biden's broad social spending agenda. Despite the setback, the White House intends to continue to negotiate a potential scaled-back version of BBBA that would focus on a smaller number of policy priorities funded for a longer period. As of this writing, Democrats are pursuing voting rights legislation, and it is unclear when a pared back version of BBBA will be drafted and if any higher education spending will be included.

FEDERAL ADVOCACY ENGAGEMENT 2022

In February, the Chancellor's Office and Board of Governors leadership will meet with Members of Congress to elevate the California Community Colleges legislative and budget priorities. These advocacy meetings are an annual effort that coincide with the National Legislative Summit in Washington, DC and done in partnership with the Community College League of California, Foundation for California Community Colleges, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, and most recently, the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges. On January 3, the Office of the Attending Physician of the U.S. Congress issued guidance to urge lawmakers to reduce in-person activities due to the substantial prevalence of the Omicron variant. It has been determined that all advocacy meetings will take place virtually. This delegation will advocate for the expansion and strengthening of federal financial aid programs, expanded protections for undocumented students, and increased funding for federal workforce programs.