

News & Notes

On July 19, the House Appropriations Committee approved (28-22) a Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education funding bill for fiscal 2018. The measure provides \$66 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Education and represents a \$2.4 billion reduction compared with the current fiscal year. The bill provides level funding for Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and extends a \$200 million increase for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act State Grants program. Perhaps the biggest surprise was the committee's elimination of over \$2 billion for educator and leader professional development (Title II), a cut that coincides with the Trump administration's request. Funding for other Department of Education (ED) and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) programs are included in table 1, with proposed increases over the prior year in green, decreases in red, and level funding in the center.

The full House is unlikely to consider this legislation until later in the year and

then only as part of a larger omnibus package. The Senate Appropriations Committee has yet to take action on the ED or HHS budgets.

The House approved bipartisan legislation (H.R. 2353) to update the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, which supports students' academic and career and technical skill building. Although the bill does not depart substantially from current law, it simplifies the process for applying for federal funds and provides more flexibility. The legislation also strives to better align CTE programs with "in-demand jobs" and build stronger community and business partnerships.

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee's CTE work, however, is moving more slowly. Progress on a companion measure has been impeded by Chairman Lamar Alexander's call to significantly limit the secretary of education's regulatory authority over CTE and lingering partisan damage within the committee related to the secretary's confirmation. If health reform falls to the

wayside after the August recess, Chairman Alexander may have more time to allocate to Perkins and other education priorities.

ED's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education has been providing feedback to states that submitted plans this spring and in September begins reviewing plans from the remaining 34. Some Republicans, including Chairman Alexander, criticized the department for being too prescriptive, when, for example, it deemed Delaware's student achievement goals insufficiently ambitious.

The department also recently released a Dear Colleague Letter that gives states and districts until the 2018-19 school year to begin reporting ESSA's mandatory per-pupil expenditures on their accountability report cards. In a related note, at the end of July Secretary Betsy DeVos remained the only confirmed political appointee at ED.

For further information, contact Reg Leichy at Reg.Leichy@flpadvisors.com.

Table 1. Funding for Select Programs, House Bill for FY18 versus FY17 Appropriations

	-	FUNDING	+
Perkins Career and Technical Education		\$1.2 billion	
Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants		\$500 million	+\$100 million
State Assessments		\$369 million	
State Longitudinal Data Systems		\$32 million	
21st Century Community Learning Centers	-\$191 million	\$1 billion	
Charter School Grants		\$342 million	+\$27 million
Teacher and School Leader Incentive Grants		\$200 million	
Education Innovation and Research	-\$100 million	\$0	
Head Start		\$9.3 billion	+\$22 million
Child Care and Development Block Grant		\$2.8 billion	+\$4 million
Preschool Development Grant		\$250 million	