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Urge The Senate To Pass CTE Reauthorization

By Noelle Ellerson

Just because it's recess doesn't mean important conversations can't be happening on Capitol Hill. In addition to closely following talks about appropriations, AESA is actively engaging members of the Senate to push them to reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins CTE Act.

You may recall that the House passed a unicorn of a bill (a truly bipartisan, well-crafted education policy bill) back in September. This means there's considerable pressure to complete the reauthorization before the expiration of this Congress and avoid starting all over again in 2017.

Adding to the pressure to move this bill to the President's desk is the unknown political dynamics in the next Congress. With the retirement of John Kline, the House will definitely have a new education chairman (most likely North Carolina's Virginia Foxx). The Senate may also have a new Democrat at the top of the Committee as Patty Murray is expected to move onto Democratic leadership. (I'm betting Bernie Sanders will get the top spot.) This means that with new negotiators leading the Committee who are eager to put their own stamp on Perkins, the chance of another major bipartisan win in both chambers is a lot less likely.

Many folks are wondering why the Senate doesn't just adopt the House bill if it passed the House 405-5? That's a great question and it is AESA's hope that the Senate does take that approach: start with the House bill, particularly the accountability and paperwork reduction aspects of the House bill, and then make some tweaks to definitions, federal guardrails, etc.

The main sticking point in moving Senate negotiations forward has to do with Secretarial authority. The House does take away some current authority from the Secretary when it comes to state plan approval, but in light of the Department's far-reaching proposed regulations on ESSA there is a sense among Republicans that more needs to be done to tighten Secretarial control. The truth is that this Administration has not messed with Perkins at all, and in fact, no Secretary has issued Perkins regulations since the mid-1990s. While AESA certainly appreciates efforts to restore more local and state control in education, the truth is we have not seen an abuse of power in Perkins policy from the Secretary like we have with ESEA.

If you care about this important program and want to see a new and improved law, take a few moments to reach out to your Senate offices today. There's a very tiny window to get this reauthorization passed once folks return for the lame-duck. Make sure they know you and other

school leaders care about improving CTE policy. Check out these [talking points](#) to guide you through your conversation.