



Working for You

Legislative news and information

June 28, 2022

Keep Kids Fed Act

Last week, Senate Agriculture Committee Chairwoman Stabenow (D-MI) and Ranking Member Boozman (R-AR) and House Education and Labor Chairman Scott (D-VA) and Ranking Member Foxx (R-NC) introduced the Keep Kids Fed Act. This rare, bipartisan, bicameral agreement includes \$3 billion to provide relief to school meal programs and other providers beyond the June 30 expiration date of child nutrition waivers without extending all of them. Specifically, the bill would provide the following assistance for SY22-23:

Increase federal reimbursement rates: 40 cents per meal for lunch and 15 cents per meal for breakfast, above the annual inflationary adjustment scheduled for July 1.

Extend no-cost waivers, including those for schools unable to meet nutrition standards due to supply chain disruptions and to reduce administrative and reporting burdens.

Extend all waivers for 2022 summer meal programs.

AESA released a statement with four organizations expressing our support for the package.

Congress must pass this legislation quickly to support access to summer meals. Be sure to tell your congressional delegation to pass the **Keep Kids Fed Act** now and provide schools and summer programs with additional resources to continue serving students and overcome supply chain disruptions, increased costs, and labor shortages.

AESA Joins Coalition Letter Supporting Safer Communities Act

It's a busy month on Capitol Hill, and we are pleased to report that the Senate has passed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. Following outcries for action from across the country, this legislative package represents a commonsense, bipartisan proposal to protect America's children, keep our schools safe, and reduce the threat of violence across our country.

The legislation, introduced by U.S. Senators Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), John Cornyn (R-Texas), Thom Tillis (R- N.C.), and Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) is fully paid for and follows their previously released bipartisan proposal supported by Senate leaders from both parties and a bipartisan group of 20 Senators.

The Bipartisan Safer Communities package includes necessary provisions and investments, including in crisis intervention programs, drug and mental health courts, state implementation of extreme risk Supplement to June 28, 2022 AESA Online News: Working for You Legislative Update

protection orders, further clarification of case law on dealers, and expansion of protections for dating partners. Additionally, the package invests over \$15 billion to support school mental health professionals, resources, and mental health programming. All these evidence-based investments are necessary to avert preventable tragedies in the weeks, months, and years to come.

We are happy to announce that the Senate acted expeditiously to pass this legislation that protects America's children, keep our schools safe, and reduce the threat of violence across our country. We were proud to join a coalition letter of support.

FY23 Appropriations Update

While we may have thought it was enough to be monitoring 2 SCOTUS cases, the Title IX regulations, the Keep Kids Fed Act and the Safer Communities Act, Congress is all about being busy ahead of the July 4 recess. The House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee released its FY23 appropriations bill ahead of today's mark up. We are only going to highlight two take aways here, as it is very early in the process and numbers are subject to change.

This is a place holder in the annual appropriations process, and we need to see how the Senate mark compares, if either of the packages are bipartisan (unlikely) and how the two proposals are reconciled to a final place that can garner the votes necessary to get over the finish line.

So what do you need to know for today? The bill provides a big increase for ED, but less than the even larger increase the President requested. It provides \$86.7 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Education, which is \$1.6 billion less than the President's request and \$11.3 billion (15%) above the net level provided for FY 2022 (it is \$10.3 billion above the gross level provided for FY 2022, but that total included a \$1.0 billion rescission of previously appropriated Pell Grant funding).

Program Highlights (subject to change and update)

- \$3 billion increase for Title I
- \$100 m increase for Title II
- \$75 million increase for Title IV
- \$933 m increase for school based mental health services grants/ mental health services professional demonstration grants
- \$2.95 billion increase for IDEA Part B
- \$45 million increase for CTE state grants
- No increase to rural education where federal funding is not bound by spending caps in the Budget Control Act.