

January 13, 2017

BETSY DEVOS NOMINATED FOR SECRETARY OF EDUCATION

In December, President-Elect Donald Trump nominated Betsy DeVos for Secretary of Education. The Senate Health Education Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee has scheduled a hearing for the week on January 17, 2017. Ms. DeVos is a businessperson, philanthropist and education policy advisor from Michigan. She is the founder of the *Dick and Betsy Family Foundation*, which has focused on advocating for school vouchers and charter schools in the K-12 system. She is actively involved with The Windquest Group, a Michigan-based, privately held investment management firm with diversified projects in technology, manufacturing, clean-tech industry, hospitality, and nonprofit solutions. The upcoming Senate HELP Committee hearing should provide an opportunity to hear her positions on and ideas for the U.S. Department of Education’s role in postsecondary education.

ROB GOAD, WHITE HOUSE DOMESTIC POLCY COUNCIL ADVISOR

In January, President-Elect Trump announced Rob Goad would serve as the Education Policy Advisor for the White House Domestic Policy Council. Mr. Goad currently serves on the Presidential Transition Team as the education lead for the implementation of the President-elect’s education policy agenda. Mr. Goad served as a Senior Policy Advisor to House Policy Committee Chair Luke Messer focusing on education issues. He also served as Director of the Congressional School Choice Caucus.

DINA HABIB POWELL, SENIOR ADVISOR FOR ECONOMIC INITIATIVES

On January 12, 2017, Dina Powell was named Assistant to President-Elect Trump and Senior Advisor for Economic Initiatives. Ms. Powell is currently the head of Goldman Sachs’ Impact Investing business, global head of corporate engagement and President of the Goldman Sachs Foundation. Powell previously served as Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Deputy Undersecretary of Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy for the United States, and as the Assistant to the President for Presidential Personnel, a senior staff member at the White House. In her role with the Trump Administration, Ms. Powell will focus on entrepreneurship, small business growth and the global economic empowerment of women.

SENATE AND HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the United States Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) was announced for the 115th Congress. Lamar Alexander (R-Tennessee) remains the chair and Patty Murray (D-Washington) remains the ranking member. Senators Todd Young (R-Indiana), Tim Kaine (D-Virginia) and Maggie Hassan (D-New Hampshire) were added to the committee.

Republicans by Rank

Lamar Alexander (TN)
Michael B. Enzi (WY)
Richard Burr (NC)
Johnny Isakson (GA)
Rand Paul (KY)
Susan Collins (ME)

Bill Cassidy, M.D. (LA)
Todd Young (IN)
Orrin Hatch (UT)
Pat Roberts (KS)
Lisa Murkowski (AK)
Tim Scott (SC)

Democrats by Rank

Patty Murray (WA)
Bernie Sanders (VT)
Robert P. Casey, Jr (PA)
Al Franken (MN)
Michael F. Bennet (CO)
Sheldon Whitehouse (RI)

Tammy Baldwin (WI)
Christopher S. Murphy (CT)
Elizabeth Warren (MA)
Tim Kaine (VA)
Maggie Hassan (NH)

In the House, the Education and Workforce Committee has a new chair for the 115th Congress. Virginia Foxx (R-North Carolina) takes over for John Kline (R-Minnesota) who did not seek re-

election to the House in 2016. Foxx was the chair of the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training in the 114th Congress. Bobby Scott (D-Virginia) will once again serve as the Ranking Member. The full House committee has yet to be announced.

BILLS OF INTEREST

With the inauguration of President-Elect Donald Trump just days away, there are a number of questions about the new administration's higher education policies as well as the measures that Congress will introduce and send on to the President. Just before the 115th Congress convened at noon on January 6, 2017, several bills were introduced near the close of the 114th Congress session that were intended to continue President Obama's policy known as the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). These measures did not move forward before the end of the session; however, it was just announced, that a bipartisan group of senators will introduce a measure to offer legal protection for undocumented immigrants brought into the country as children to address the potential changes if President Obama's executive order is rescinded. Similar legislation was introduced in December and is again led by Senators Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) and Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.). Although language is not yet available, the legislation is expected to provide "provisional protected status" to DACA recipients and allow undocumented immigrants who are DACA-eligible to apply for the temporary protected status if they pay a fee and undergo a background check. As was the measure introduced in December, this legislation will be known as the Bar Removal of Individuals who Dream and Grow Our Economy Act, or BRIDGE Act, and would expire after three years. Sens. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), Chuck Schumer (N.Y.) and Kamala Harris (D-Calif.) are backing the Senate legislation.

Several other higher education bills have been announced and are focused on student veterans' issues. There are also measures on Pell grants, higher education employee's healthcare, and prohibiting a national registry. However, several of these bills were announced, but the full text is unavailable. These measures are summarized below.

HR 43 (Mullin R-Oklahoma)

HR 43 authorizes the use of Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to pursue independent study programs at certain educational institutions that are not institutions of higher learning. Veterans have been denied the use of their benefits for career and technical programs not under a college that has a distance-learning component.

HR 60 (Denham R- California) ENLIST Act

HR 60 authorizes the enlistment in the Armed Forces of aliens unlawfully present in the United States on December 31, 2012, who: (1) Have been continuously present in the United States since such date, (2) were younger than 15 years of age when they initially entered the United States, and (3) are otherwise eligible for original enlistment in a regular component of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard.

HR 245 (Cook R-California) Veterans' Education Equity Act.

HR 245 changes the way the Department of Veteran's Affairs calculates the basic allowance for housing (BAH) stipend provided by the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Currently, the amount is based on the zip code where the department certified the college. This is not always the same zip code that a student attends classes in; creating a discrepancy between what a student needs to pay for housing and what they receive in their housing stipend. HR 245 changes the calculation to use the zip code where a student attends classes. Rep. Mark Takano (D-California) is a co-sponsor.

HR 254 (Davis D- Illinois)

HR 254 reinstates Federal Pell Grant eligibility for individuals incarcerated in Federal and State penal institutions. Barbara Lee (D-California) is a co-sponsor. While this measure has been announced, the full text of this bill is unavailable at this time.

HR 287 (Turner R- Ohio)

HR 287 would exempt student workers for purposes of determining a higher education institution's employer health care shared responsibility. While this measure has been announced, the full text of this bill is unavailable at this time.

S. 54 (Booker D- New Jersey) ENLIST Act

S. 54 prohibits the creation of an immigration-related registry program that classifies people on the basis of religion, race, age, gender, ethnicity, national origin, nationality, or citizenship. While this measure has been announced, the full text of this bill is unavailable at this time.