NEWS SUMMARY

This week, members of Congress debated a range of topics including student aid policy and FY15 appropriations for the Departments of Agriculture, State, Defense, Energy, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development as well as for the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The annual appropriations process is expected to take its course over the rest of the year.

The National Science Board is seeking nominations for its:
• Vannevar Bush Award (for life-long leaders who have made exceptional contributions toward the welfare of humankind and the nation through public service activities in science, technology, and public policy); and
• Public Service Award (for individuals and groups that have made substantial contributions to increasing public understanding of science and engineering in the United States).

On Saturday, President Obama gave the commencement speech at University of California-Irvine. The topic of the speech centered on climate change.

President Obama has nominated the following individuals to his Administration:
• John Anderson, President of the Illinois Institute of Technology, to be a member of the National Science Board (NSB) at the NSF;
• Roger Beachy, founding Executive Director of the World Food Center at the University of California-Davis, to be a member of the NSB (Dr. Beachy received a Ph.D. from MSU);
• Vicki Chandler, Chief Program Officer for the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation’s Science Program, to be a member of the NSB;
• Sue Clark, a Regents Professor of Chemistry at Washington State University, to be a member of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board;
• Robert Groves, Provost and Gerard Campbell SJ Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at Georgetown University, to be a member of the NSB;
• Brent Hartley, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, to
be Ambassador to the Republic of Slovenia;

- Donald Heflin, Managing Director of the Visa Office in the State Department’s Bureau of Consular Affairs, to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Cabo Verde;
- James Jackson, Director of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan, to be a member of the NSB;
- Earl Miller, Consul General at the U.S. Consulate General in Johannesburg, South Africa; to be Ambassador to the Republic of Botswana;
- Linda Nozick, Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Cornell University, to be a member of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board;
- Sethuraman Panchanathan, Senior Vice President of the Office of Knowledge Enterprise Development at Arizona State University, to be a member of the NSB;
- Kenneth Peddicord, the Director of the Nuclear Power Institute at Texas A&M University, to be a member of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board;
- David Pressman, Counselor to the Permanent Representative at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (UN), to be the Alternate Representative of the United States for Special Political Affairs in the UN;
- Erica Barks Ruggles, Consul General at the U.S. Consulate in Cape Town, South Africa, to be the Ambassador to Rwanda; and
- Paul Turinsky, Chief Scientist at the Innovation Hub for Modeling and Simulation of Nuclear Reactors at the Department of Energy, to be a member of the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board.

NEWS ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Table of Contents

AGRICULTURE
- BIO-BASED CHEMICALS GET FOCUS
- OBAMA ORDERS PROTECTIONS FOR BEES
- THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGE POSED BY DECLINING POLLINATOR POPULATIONS
- GOP LEADERSHIP SHUFFLE STALLS [HOUSE] AG BILL
- AGRICULTURE SPENDING BILL STRANDED IN SENATE

BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES
- NSF AND NIH COLLABORATE TO ACCELERATE ADVANCE OF BIOMEDICAL INNOVATIONS INTO THE MARKETPLACE
- NIH LAUNCHES 3D PRINT EXCHANGE FOR RESEARCHERS, STUDENTS
- FROM LAB BENCH TO BEDSIDE: ACCELERATING THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF BIOMEDICAL INNOVATIONS
- NATIONAL CHILDREN’S STUDY HAS GREAT POTENTIAL TO EXPAND UNDERSTANDING OF CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, BUT KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS NEED FURTHER DEVELOPMENT FOR STUDY TO BE SUCCESSFUL
- PRESIDENT’S BIOETHICS COMMISSION MEETS ON ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF NEUROSCIENCE ADVANCES
**FEDERAL BUDGET PROCESS**
- Path for Appropriations in Senate getting rockier
- Reid Parks 'minibus' spending bill in amendment dispute
- Senate Appropriators try to pick up the pieces
- Capitol's spending bosses rare bipartisan success

**HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY**
- Senate bill to renew Higher Education Act is Democrats' wish list
- Top Senate Republican seeks to block college ratings
- Online-learning groups warn against federal action on 'state authorization'
- 'Tough love' for higher ed
- Federal panel hears calls for major changes in accreditation process

**INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES**
- USAID launches new coastal programs to conserve oceans and food sources
- International collaboration opportunities related to the NSF investments in understanding the brain

**LIBRARIES**
- What to watch for today: E-rate

**PHYSICAL SCIENCES & ENGINEERING**
- Leading at home and internationally to protect our ocean and coasts
- DOE examines energy-water connection
- Obama announces new advanced manufacturing moves
- Obama to join inventors at White House Maker Faire
- U.S. Senate panel would give slight boost to energy science budget
- Just one proposal per year, please, NSF tells astronomers
- Announcement of change to the Division of Chemical, Bioengineering, Environmental, and Transport Systems unsolicited proposal submission window to October 1 through November 5, 2014
- Materials Genome Initiative turns three, continues path to revitalize American manufacturing

**RESEARCH FUNDING**
- National Science Foundation Toolkit highlights impact of NSF investments
- Business coalition holds Washington fly-in to bolster federal research funding

**RESEARCH POLICY**
- House Science subcommittees hold hearing on administrative burden on research

**RESEARCH TRENDS**
- Defense Sciences Office: at the edge of science and national security

**SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICY**
- Changes to campus safety rules
- U.S. Department of Education announces action to help colleges keep campuses safe
SUMMARIES OF NEWS ARTICLES OF INTEREST

(Please click on the Title to link to the entire article.)

AGRICULTURE

BIO-BASED CHEMICALS GET FOCUS
By Philip Brashner, CQ.com, June 17, 2014

Senate Agriculture Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., is putting the spotlight today on development of bio-based products, an issue she championed in the farm bill. Executives from Coca-Cola Co., Cargill Inc., Lear Corp. and Novozymes North America Inc. will be among the witnesses at a hearing this morning, and the panel will afterward host a fair of sorts to highlight technologies developed by 30 innovators. DuPont, Ford Motor Co. and The Sherwin-Williams Co. will be among the companies displaying their innovations, along with the companies that have witnesses at the hearing. “These manufacturing plants can drive development in some of our most economically underserved areas, bringing new businesses, restaurants and tax revenue to our communities. And because America’s biomass availability is so big, the potential for biomanufacturing is equally as big,” Adam Monroe, president of Novozymes North America, says in testimony prepared for the hearing. Novozymes is a leader in making enzymes that can convert plant material into chemicals. Monroe will talk about the company’s partnership with Chemtex in North Carolina to grow energy crops for biofuels. Stabenow got a section in the farm bill (PL 113-79) that will allow biochemicals to qualify for USDA loan guarantees that previously had been reserved for biofuels. The chemicals industry is now looking for a production tax credit similar to one that’s been available for cellulosic biofuels.

* This is the complete news article.

OBAMA ORDERS PROTECTIONS FOR BEES
By Philip Brashner, CQ.com, June 20, 2014

President Barack Obama Friday ordered federal agencies to take a range of immediate and long-
term actions to reverse the decline in pollinators, including directing the EPA to consider curbs on pesticides. A six-page executive memorandum also directs agencies to take steps to expand habitat for bees and other pollinators both on public and private lands, starting with this growing season. The European Union has banned some neonicotinoid pesticides because of their impact on bees. Obama’s memorandum stops short of that, telling the EPA instead to evaluate the effect of the chemicals and “take action, as appropriate, to protect pollinators.” The memorandum repeats an earlier administration finding that honeybee losses are due to a range of factors, including pesticides, pathogens, parasites, loss of habitat and poor nutrition. Among other actions the president ordered:

- The departments of Agriculture and Interior must develop best management practices for enhancing pollinator habitat on federal lands and establish a reserve of native seed mixes.
- USDA is told to “substantially increase” the acreage and quality of pollinator habitat on land enrolled in the department’s conservation programs, including the 26-million-acre Conservation Reserve Program.
- The Department of Transportation must find ways to increase pollinator habitat along highways, and the Department of Defense is told to use pollinator-friendly landscapes on military bases and minimize the use of harmful pesticides.

USDA and EPA will head up together a governmentwide task force that will have six months to develop a national strategy for protecting pollinators. “The continued loss of commercial honey bee colonies poses a threat to the economic stability of commercial beekeeping and pollination operations in the United States, which could have profound implications for agriculture and food,” the memorandum says. “Severe yearly declines create concern that bee colony losses could reach a point from which the commercial pollination industry would not be able to adequately recover.” The concerns also extend to Monarch butterflies. The memorandum warns that Monarch population dropped to its lowest recorded level in 2013-14 and faces “an imminent risk of failed migration.” The issue has been getting increasing attention in Congress. It has no chance of passing this year, but a bill (HR 2692) to temporarily ban neonicotinoid pesticides now has 65 co-sponsors. Meanwhile, the new farm bill (PL 113-79) directed USDA to find strategies addressing bee declines, and ordered the department to work with the EPA to publish “guidance on enhancing pollinator health.” The White House convened a meeting in April that drew 60 attendees from academia to the chemical industry.

An economic fact sheet that the White House released along with the memorandum says pollinators contribute $24 billion to the U.S. economy, including $15 billion through their critical role in fruit, vegetable and nut production.

* This is the complete news article.

**THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGE POSED BY DECLINING POLLINATOR POPULATIONS**

White House Fact Sheet, June 20, 2014

Pollinators contribute substantially to the economy of the United States and are vital to keeping fruits, nuts, and vegetables in our diets. Over the past few decades, there has been a significant loss of pollinators—including honey bees, native bees, birds, bats, and butterflies—from the environment. The problem is serious and poses a significant challenge that needs to be
addressed to ensure the sustainability of our food production systems, avoid additional economic impacts on the agricultural sector, and protect the health of the environment.

**GOP LEADERSHIP SHUFFLE STALLS [HOUSE] AG BILL**
By Jenny Hopkinson, *Politico’s Morning Agriculture*, June 16, 2014

One that won’t likely, however, is the resumption of the fiscal 2015 agriculture appropriations bill debate in the House. As Pro’s Bill Tomson reports: "The House GOP’s focus on finding a replacement for Majority Leader Eric Cantor has postponed a vote on a controversial agriculture spending bill, meaning the anticipation over whether the House will back controversial school nutrition waiver language will continue longer than expected, House and Senate aides have told POLITICO. "The House was on track to approve the spending bill Wednesday when debate was cut off and postponed until Tuesday, June 17. House aides now say action on the bill has been postponed yet again until after a Thursday, June 19, vote on who will be the next majority leader following Cantor's decision to step down from the post. "That means the fiscal 2015 spending bill vote will be pushed back until the following week at minimum, and the Senate appears likely to consider its version of the legislation first."

* This is the complete news article.

**AGRICULTURE SPENDING BILL STRANDED IN SENATE**
By Philip Brasher, *CQ.com*, June 19, 2014

The Senate was unable to move ahead Thursday afternoon on its “minibus” spending measure when Republicans objected to Majority Leader Harry Reid’s planned restrictions on amendments. Reid, D-Nev., wanted to require 60-vote thresholds for all amendments to the bill (HR 4660), which includes Agriculture as well as Commerce-Justice-Science and Transportation-HUD. He refused a request by Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., to drop the restriction on amendments and then moved to a sportsmen’s bill (S 2363), sponsored by Kay Hagen, D-N.C. Reid’s restriction on the minibus would make it much easier for Democrats to block amendments like one filed by John Hoeven, R-N.D., to waive a new whole-grains standard for school meals. Other amendments that have been filed for the minibus include one proposed by Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vt., to block the Food and Drug Administration from restricting the use of wood boards for aging cheese. Another amendment, filed by Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., would gut the sugar program. “Our country’s broken sugar program is forcing taxpayers to foot the bill for a sweet deal to a select group of sugar growers and processors,” Shaheen said. A similar amendment was rejected in the House Appropriations Committee when it marked up its version of the Agriculture bill (HR 4800). A third amendment, sponsored by John Thune, R-S.D., would accelerate environmental reviews of emergency haying and grazing proposals on land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program. Filing Amendments May be Academic Exercise. Reid’s move to pull the minibus puts the appropriations process in doubt. The Energy-Water bill also is sidetracked after Democrats dropped plans for the markup Thursday amid concerns that Republicans would use it to block the administration’s climate regulations. “This is an hour-by-hour, day-by-day unfolding strategy,” Appropriations Chairwoman Barbara A. Mikulski, D-Md.,
said earlier Thursday. “We haven’t been on the floor and moving bills for three years. We’re sorting out a lot of our methods on how to move forward where we can actually move forward.” She said she didn’t know when the Energy-Water bill would move now, or what would happen with what she called the other three “ugly stepsisters” of the appropriations process: Labor-HHS-Education, Interior-Environment and Financial Services. Yanking the Energy-Water bill blocked Republicans from offering an amendment to block the Obama administration’s proposed rule to define the reach of the Clean Water Act, an issue that’s unpopular for many congressional Democrats.

* This is the complete news article.

**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

**NSF AND NIH COLLABORATE TO ACCELERATE ADVANCE OF BIOMEDICAL INNOVATIONS INTO THE MARKETPLACE**

NSF Press Release, June 18, 2014

A new collaboration between the NSF and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) will give NIH-funded researchers training to help them evaluate their scientific discoveries for commercial potential with the aim of accelerating the translation of biomedical innovations into applied health technologies. I-Corps™ at NIH is a pilot of the NSF Innovation Corps™ (I-Corps™) program specially tailored for biomedical research. Academic researchers and entrepreneurs with Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) "phase one" awards--awards that establish feasibility of proof of concept for commercializable technology--from participating NIH institutes will be eligible to apply to I-Corps™ at NIH. NIH will hold a June 25 program briefing at the 2014 BIO International Convention in San Diego and a webinar on July 2 to begin its outreach to the small business research community.

**NIH LAUNCHES 3D PRINT EXCHANGE FOR RESEARCHERS, STUDENTS**

NIH Press Release, June 18, 2014

The NIH has launched the NIH 3D Print Exchange, a public website that enables users to share, download and edit 3D print files related to health and science. These files can be used, for example, to print custom laboratory equipment and models of bacteria and human anatomy.

**FROM LAB BENCH TO BEDSIDE: ACCELERATING THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF BIOMEDICAL INNOVATIONS**

By Tom Kalil and Sally Rockey, Rock Talk, June 19, 2014

We are delighted to announce a new collaboration between the NIH and the NSF to empower entrepreneurial scientists and advance the Lab-to-Market priorities set forth in the President’s Management Agenda. The Federal government invests over $130 billion on research and
development each year, and the President’s 2015 budget supports a sustained commitment to accelerate the transfer of promising Federally-funded technologies from the laboratory to the commercial marketplace.

NATIONAL CHILDREN’S STUDY HAS GREAT POTENTIAL TO EXPAND UNDERSTANDING OF CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, BUT KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS NEED FURTHER DEVELOPMENT FOR STUDY TO BE SUCCESSFUL
National Academies News Release, June 16, 2014

While the National Children’s Study could add immensely to knowledge about children’s health and development, and while the study’s proposed design has several strengths, the design needs stronger scientific rationale and further development of several key aspects such as sampling and measurement strategies, says a new congressionally mandated report from the National Research Council and Institute of Medicine.

PRESIDENT’S BIOETHICS COMMISSION MEETS ON ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF NEUROSCIENCE ADVANCES
Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) Report, June 16, 2014

The Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues held a meeting on June 9 and 10 that focused on the ethical and moral implications of advances in neuroscience research. President Obama charged the Commission with considering these topics in light of the Administration's Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies Initiative.

FEDERAL BUDGET PROCESS

PATH FOR APPROPRIATIONS IN SENATE GETTING ROCKIER
By Tamar Hallerman, CQ.com, July 19, 2014

The long shadow of the November elections is beginning to neutralize much of the political momentum for appropriations bills that had built up since the budget deal late last year. Early fiscal 2015 appropriations work lost significant steam in the chamber late Wednesday, after the Senate Appropriations Committee said it would punt on the markup of the traditionally noncontroversial Energy-Water spending bill, the second such delay in a week. Last week, the panel delayed a planned markup of the more controversial Labor-HHS-Education measure. Meanwhile, on the Senate floor, Maryland Democrat Barbara A. Mikulski, is still struggling to strike a deal with Senate Republicans on amendments and other floor procedure for the three-in-one spending package (HR 4660) she’s managing, leaving the fate of the $126.2 billion measure hanging in the balance. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., said Wednesday morning that he hopes senators can come up with an amendment agreement in the next few hours so they can proceed to a package of spending bills before 1 p.m. today. The Appropriations Committee did not announce its reasoning for postponing its markup of the
$34.2 billion Energy-Water spending title, which had moved through subcommittee without objection on Tuesday and was scheduled for a full committee markup on Thursday morning. But the action allows Democrats to sidestep two uncomfortable votes on likely GOP amendments on Obama administration regulations aimed at regulating carbon emissions from existing power plants and sharpening the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act (PL 95-217). The earlier delay of the $156.8 billion Labor-HHS-Education measure, was much less surprising, given that measure’s role in funding in part the implementation of the 2010 health care law (PL 111-148, PL 111-152). The Energy-Water bill, however, funds a slew of politically popular programs such as Army Corps of Engineers water projects, the national lab system and nuclear weapons nonproliferation that often help carry it through with bipartisan support. Taken together, the developments of the last week suggest that despite the significant political heft of Mikulski, who’s pushed forward aggressively on her goal to pass and conference all 12 annual spending bills with the House before the October 1 start of the fiscal year, political maneuvering ahead of the elections is trumping other priorities in the Senate. That does not bode well for the larger fiscal 2015 appropriations process in the chamber, and particularly for the three-bill “minibus” Mikulski hopes to pass in the coming days. Senate Republicans say they are already suspicious that Reid will quickly move to trump an open amendment debate on the spending package. And the postponement of tough votes for two bills at the committee level does not instill much confidence for what will be allowed on the floor.

* This is the complete news article.

REID PARKS ‘MINIBUS’ SPENDING BILL IN AMENDMENT DISPUTE
By Niels Lesniewski, CQ.com, June 19, 2014

Well, so much for that idea. The Senate’s appropriations process seemed to fall apart Thursday afternoon as the first fiscal 2015 “minibus” found itself with flat tires. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., had one of their all-too-familiar floor exchanges Thursday afternoon, during which Reid proposed an agreement to take up the three-bill spending package with an amendment process that would require 60 votes for amendments to be adopted. “We’ve waited all week to get a simple agreement to move forward on appropriation bills the way we’ve always done it and if it had been just one appropriation bill, we wouldn’t need consent but we put three of them together, and that was the right thing to do,” Reid said. “But it seems to me that we spend all week doing so much of the time nothing. Sadly, I’m sorry this is the norm around here, where every single matter... requires a full play of the cloture rule to advance.” On a day-to-day basis, the supermajority requirement would not be out of the ordinary in the modern Senate. Reid pointed to a series of statements by McConnell that signaled support for requiring significant votes needing 60 senators, though appropriations bills are supposed to operate under a unique set of rules that preclude the offering of amendments that aren’t germane. McConnell rejected Reid’s proposed rules. “It was my hope we could get forward on this appropriation bill with a full and open amendment process and a reasonable number of amendments from both sides. The only restrictions on amendments to this bill are those in the standing rules of the Senate,” McConnell said. McConnell noted that amendments that are substantively legislative would in any case need to be germane to the corresponding House
version. That could have been a point of contention. The House has yet to pass a fiscal 2015 Agriculture-FDA measure, meaning the very nature of the House position could be in dispute. The Senate Appropriations Committee met earlier in the day to approve spending bills for the legislative branch and State-Foreign Operations, but the panel indefinitely deferred action on the Energy-Water measure. McConnell was planning a contentious amendment to that bill taking aim at the Environmental Protection Agency’s regulation of carbon emissions. For the measure on the floor, Reid needed consent because attempting to add the Agriculture-FDA and Transportation-HUD spending measures to the Senate’s Commerce-Justice-Science bill piggybacked on the House’s CJS legislation runs afoul of the germaneness rule that ordinarily applies to spending measures. Without an agreement, the bill would fall apart. The sparring played out as most attention was on the other side of the Capitol Rotunda, as leadership voting was underway within the House Republican Conference. After facing an objection from McConnell, Reid moved to proceed to a bipartisan sportsmen’s bill championed by North Carolina Democrat Kay Hagan, effectively shelving the appropriations debate for another day.

* This is the complete news article.

SENATE APPROPRIATORS TRY TO PICK UP THE PIECES
By Tamar Hallerman, CQ.com, June 20, 2014

Senate action on spending bills appeared to hit a brick wall on Thursday, but Senate appropriators insist that they have not given up yet on the fiscal 2015 cycle. “It’s a shame that we couldn’t get an agreement today from the other side to move forward but it’s only a little bump in the road and we intend to roll up our sleeves and come back at this again next week,” a Senate Appropriations aide said in an emailed statement Thursday evening. Appropriations and leadership aides are expected to continue meeting ahead of the July 4 recess in an attempt to salvage work on the trio of spending bills (HR 4660). A popular $71.9 billion Military Construction-VA spending bill Senate appropriators reported last month could also be brought into the mix, according to one Democratic aide. But if leaders cannot not find a path forward on three of the less contentious spending bills, the outlook for other, more politically prickly spending bills, such as those that fund the EPA and the Department of Health and Human Services, would not be favorable. “If this is going to happen with bills that ordinarily are much easier to push forward, if we can’t even come to an agreement on that, it does make it more questionable that the other bills, which are much more difficult to get through, can move,” said Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard of California, a Democratic appropriator. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada yanked the $126.2 billion, three-bill spending package from the floor Thursday afternoon after he could not strike a deal with Republicans over amendments. That lack of consensus has stalled work — at least for now — on a group of bipartisan, relatively noncontroversial spending bills that would fund federal housing, science and crime-fighting agencies, among other programs. It has also seemingly stalled an appropriations process that until this week had been marked with considerable momentum and bipartisan optimism since the December budget deal (PL 113-67). Stopgap May be Needed: Inaction on the floor — as well as a major setback moving the Senate Energy-Water spending bill in committee earlier on Thursday — underscored the impact that the November elections are having on decision-making on both sides of the aisle. While House lawmakers have moved forward rapidly on
passing spending bills — the chamber is expected to pass its fifth fiscal 2015 spending bill on Friday — if they have no Senate versions to conference with, their measures will likely sit and collect dust as the October 1 start of the next fiscal year approaches. If Senate aides are unable to pick up the pieces in the weeks ahead, a continuing resolution may be needed for all 12 of the annual spending bills. That would likely extend until after the November elections in order to give lawmakers in both chambers time to campaign. In that case, the best-case scenario, some lawmakers said, is for appropriators to return after the November elections and hammer out a massive, year-end omnibus, much like they did in January for fiscal 2014 work (PL 113-76). “We’ll probably be conferencing chairman’s marks on some of those things,” said Rep. Mike Simpson of Idaho, a senior GOP appropriator. Appropriators Look Inward: As higher level negotiations continue in the Senate next week, the Appropriations Committee will also turn inward, aiming to move as many of the six remaining spending bills through the panel as possible with bipartisan support. Even if appropriations work breaks down on the floor, committee action could help Senate appropriators establish a better foothold for any potential omnibus negotiations with the House in the lame duck. The committee plans to mark up its Homeland Security and Financial Services spending bills next week. But the panel may have difficulty moving forward on what Mikulski on Thursday described as the four “ugly stepsister” nondefense spending bills, a list that includes Financial Services, Energy-Water, Interior-Environment and Labor-HHS-Education. Not all lawmakers were ready to declare this week’s Senate actions as indicative of a doomed fiscal 2015 appropriations process. “I think this is a temporary setback,” said House Appropriations Chairman Harold Rogers, R-Ky. “That’s the Senate. They’ll eventually do the right thing,” Rogers added.

* This is the complete news article.

**CAPITOL’S SPENDING BOSSES RARE BIPARTISAN SUCCESS**
Associated Press, June 17, 2014

On the face of it, one of the most powerful pairings in Washington is a hopeless mismatch — a former social worker and liberal Democrat from Baltimore’s working-class Fells Point neighborhood and an old-school, cigar-chomping GOP conservative raised in a dry county in the mountains of southeastern Kentucky. But in a bitterly divided Congress, the odd couple of Sen. Barbara Mikulski and Rep. Harold Rogers is a rare bipartisan success story.

**HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY**

**SENATE BILL TO RENEW HIGHER EDUCATION ACT IS DEMOCRATS’ WISH LIST**

Senate Democrats are poised to introduce a bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act that would create a unit-record system for tracking individual students, allow borrowers to refinance their student-loan debt, and reverse some recent cuts in the Pell Grant program, according to several sources who have previewed a draft of the measure. The bill, which lawmakers are
expected to introduce next week, would also crack down on for-profit colleges, make the accreditation process more transparent, and create grant programs to encourage innovation and dual enrollment, the sources said.

**TOP SENATE REPUBLICAN SEEKS TO BLOCK COLLEGE RATINGS**
*Inside Higher Ed, June 13, 2014*

Senator Lamar Alexander said Thursday that he plans to attach an amendment to the labor, health, and education appropriations bill that would stop the Obama administration from moving ahead with its college ratings system. Alexander, the top Republican on the Senate’s education committee, said in a speech on the Senate floor Thursday that the amendment would prohibit the U.S. Department of Education from “using any federal funding to develop, refine, publish or implement a college ratings system.”

**ONLINE-LEARNING GROUPS WARN AGAINST FEDERAL ACTION ON ‘STATE AUTHORIZATION’**
*By Dan Bauman, The Chronicle of Higher Education, June 14, 2014*

As the U.S. Education Department considers new rules for the oversight of distance-learning programs, online-education advocates say in a letter to be released on Monday that the toughening of regulations could hurt students instead of helping them. In the letter, addressed to Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, leaders of three online-education groups call on the department to move away from a more-stringent method of awarding federal student aid based on state authorization.

**‘TOUGH LOVE’ FOR HIGHER ED**
*By Michael Stratford, Inside Higher Ed, June 18, 2014*

As policy makers here ponder new ways to hold colleges more accountable for how well they serve students, they should start by laying down some tougher minimum standards that institutions must meet to receive federal benefits, according to a new report published Wednesday by the Education Trust.

**FEDERAL PANEL HEARS CALLS FOR MAJOR CHANGES IN ACCREDITATION PROCESS**
*By Eric Kelderman, The Chronicle of Higher Education, June 19, 2014*

More than two years ago, a federal panel that advises the education secretary on accreditation issues recommended a series of modest changes in the nation's system of higher-education accreditation. On Wednesday the panel heard from higher-education experts that a major overhaul will be needed for that system to survive.

**INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES**
USAID LAUNCHES NEW COASTAL PROGRAMS TO CONSERVE OCEANS AND FOOD SOURCES
USAID Press Release, June 17, 2014

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) today announced new coastal programs, valued at more than $170 million, to benefit coastal communities, which are among some of the most vulnerable, poor, and marginalized groups. The announcement took place at the “Our Ocean” Conference hosted by Secretary of State John Kerry. These programs will support marine conservation, sustainable fisheries, coastal adaptation and efforts to combat illegal fishing and wildlife trafficking in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pacific.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES RELATED TO THE NSF INVESTMENTS IN UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN
NSF Dear Colleague, June 16, 2014

NSF has recently established a Foundation-wide effort to enable scientific understanding of the full complexity of the brain through targeted, cross-disciplinary investments in research, technology, and workforce development. This broad multi-year effort includes NSF’s participation in the multi-agency Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative (see thematic areas at http://nsf.gov/understandingthebrain). A growing number of complementary international activities are underway, such as the European Union’s Human Brain Project, that are designed to enable discoveries that will change our fundamental understanding of the structure and function of the brain. NSF is interested in promoting international scientific cooperation that links scientists and engineers from a range of disciplines and organizations across international borders. The purpose of this Dear Colleague Letter is to identify existing NSF funding opportunities that are available for U.S. researchers working in cognitive science, neuroscience, and other related areas of brain research and technology development to enhance their research through international collaboration. Such partnerships may be bilateral or multilateral. The U.S. team’s international counterparts should have support or obtain funding through their own national or regional sources.

LIBRARIES

WHAT TO WATCH FOR TODAY: E-RATE
By Caitlin Emma, Politico’s Morning Education, June 20, 2014

Federal Communications Commission Chairman Tom Wheeler must circulate his plan for revamping the E-Rate program among fellow commissioners today if he wants it on the commission’s July 11 agenda. Today is the "white copy" date for telling commissioners about upcoming items, exactly three weeks prior to the meeting. Wheeler told The New York Times
last week that he wants the item up for discussion on July 11. And he said the commission must take action this summer so updates to the program can take effect by the 2015 school year.

* This is the complete news article.

**PHYSICAL SCIENCES & ENGINEERING**

**LEADING AT HOME AND INTERNATIONALLY TO PROTECT OUR OCEAN AND COASTS**
White House Fact Sheet, June 17, 2014

President Obama is committed to protecting the ocean and its marine ecosystems. Americans all over the country depend on the ocean for food, jobs, and recreation... *National Strategic Plan for Federal Aquaculture Research*: Aquaculture is an increasingly integral source of safe, nutritious, sustainable seafood for consumers in the United States and worldwide. Today, the interagency National Science & Technology Council’s Committee on Science is releasing a new National Strategic Plan for Federal Aquaculture Research to provide a framework for coordination and collaboration across agencies on research related to this important agricultural domain and to guide Federal agencies going forward as they prioritize their aquaculture-related research and development activities.

**DOE EXAMINES ENERGY-WATER CONNECTION**
By Randy Leonard, CQ.com, June 18, 2014

The Energy Department is looking to address issues stemming from the nexus between energy and water, as examined in a report released Wednesday. White House adviser John Holdren will discuss the issue Thursday as part of the department’s Quadrennial Energy Review, according to a release from the department. “The interdependencies between our water and energy systems are clear — and becoming more prominent. Water is used in all phases of energy production and electricity generation, and energy is required to extract, convey and deliver water and to treat wastewaters prior to their return to the environment. When severe drought affected more than a third of the United States in 2012, limited water availability constrained the operation of some power plants and other energy production infrastructure. When Hurricane Sandy struck that same year, we saw firsthand the major problems that arise when vital water infrastructure and facilities lose power. And the recent boom in domestic unconventional oil and gas development, brought on by hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling, has added complexity to the national dialogue about the relationship between energy and water resources.” Legislation sponsored by Senate Energy and Water Committee Ranking Republican Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and former Chairman Ron Wyden, D-Ore., would address the connection between energy and water.

* This is the complete news article.
OBAMA ANNOUNCES NEW ADVANCED MANUFACTURING MOVES
By Erin Mershon, Politico’s Morning Tech, June 17, 2014

The president is headed to Pittsburgh today for a stop at TechShop, a firm that helps entrepreneurs build cash-conscious prototypes of hardware they've designed. While he's out there, he'll announce a trio of executive actions designed to bolster the administration's work on boosting advanced manufacturing and innovation. Among those moves: The White House is making available to innovators $5 billion worth of a federal R&D facilities like NASA's National Center for Advanced Manufacturing, and it's also getting 90 mayors and local leaders to provide more space for innovative manufacturing in their communities.

* This is the complete news article.

OBAMA TO JOIN INVENTORS AT WHITE HOUSE MAKER FAIRE
By Stacy Anderson, Associated Press, June 18, 2014

Entrepreneurs, students and inventors are heading to the White House to show off their innovations at the White House's first "Maker Faire." The White House says more than 100 "makers" from 25 states will join President Barack Obama on Wednesday as he highlights entrepreneurship and promotes new tools to help fledgling businesses create and market their products. The event is part of the president's effort to focus attention on U.S. manufacturing and the need for science and math education in the U.S.

U.S. SENATE PANEL WOULD GIVE SLIGHT BOOST TO ENERGY SCIENCE BUDGET
By David Malakoff, ScienceInsider, June 17, 2014

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) science program would see a slight budget increase under a spending bill approved today by a U.S. Senate appropriations subcommittee. The bill would provide $5.086 billion for DOE's Office of Science in the 2015 fiscal year that begins October 1. That is about $20 million above current spending levels and about $25 million less than requested by President Barack Obama. The details of the bill, which is scheduled to go before the full Senate Appropriations Committee on Thursday, are not yet available.

JUST ONE PROPOSAL PER YEAR, PLEASE, NSF TELLS ASTRONOMERS
By Jeffrey Mervis, Science, June 2014

Gary Ferland, a theoretical astrophysicist at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, is old enough to remember when he and his colleagues had a 50-50 chance of winning a research grant from the astronomy division of the NSF. Now, success rates are at 15% (see graph), creating a situation he compares to playing the lottery. “If you're trying to support your family on lottery winnings,” says the 63-year-old Ferland, “you need to buy a lot of tickets.” For many astronomers, that means submitting multiple proposals to NSF every year. The strategy has paid off for Ferland: In 2011, he submitted three proposals and snared two awards; this year, he
won another grant by submitting the same proposal to two different NSF programs (with the agency’s permission). Now, Ferland will need to come up with a new approach: Later this summer, NSF’s astronomy division intends to announce a new policy that will “strongly encourage” scientists to submit just a single proposal for each annual funding cycle. The voluntary cap is designed to boost success rates, which would please applicants. It’s also meant to ease the workload and frustration levels of peer reviewers poring over proposals that they know have little chance of getting funded.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHANGE TO THE DIVISION OF CHEMICAL, BIOENGINEERING, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND TRANSPORT SYSTEMS UNSOLICITED PROPOSAL SUBMISSION WINDOW TO OCTOBER 1 THROUGH NOVEMBER 5, 2014
NSF Dear Colleague, June 17, 2014

The Directorate for Engineering, Division of Chemical, Bioengineering, Environmental, and Transport Systems has changed the unsolicited proposal submission window for all 17 programs to one single submission window, October 1 through November 5, 2014, by 5 pm submitter's local time. The window changes are effective immediately and will continue annually, with future deadline dates (TBD) in either October or November. The new window dates do not apply to proposals sent to the Division in response to Foundation-wide solicitations with their own target or deadline dates, such as Faculty Early Career Development and Major Research Instrumentation.

MATERIALS GENOME INITIATIVE TURNS THREE, CONTINUES PATH TO REVITALIZE AMERICAN MANUFACTURING
By Cyrus Wadia and Meredith Drosback, White House Office of Science and Technology Blog, June 19, 2014

This week marks the third anniversary of the launch by President Obama of the Materials Genome Initiative —a commitment to work across sectors toward the goal of doubling the pace of advanced materials discovery, innovation, manufacture, and commercialization.

RESEARCH TRENDS

DEFENSE SCIENCES OFFICE: AT THE EDGE OF SCIENCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Scientists and engineers in DARPA’s Defense Sciences Office (DSO) promote and exploit new discoveries across the frontiers of physics, chemistry, and mathematics to identify and accelerate potentially game-changing technologies for U.S. national security. After recently spinning off biological technologies into a new office, DSO’s investment portfolio, which continues to create new materials and explore the boundaries of physical phenomena, is expanding to include novel approaches to understanding, predicting, designing, and developing
engineered complex systems.

**RESEARCH FUNDING**

**NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION TOOLKIT HIGHLIGHTS IMPACT OF NSF INVESTMENTS**
NSF Press Release, June 20, 2014

Today the NSF released a robust toolkit that includes new videos, infographics, fact sheets and brochures that describe NSF investments in fundamental research and how they contribute to the nation's science and engineering enterprise. "NSF's toolkit offers a range of information about the vital work of the Foundation in a compelling way using modern communications methods," said NSF's Office of Legislative and Public Affairs Director Judith Gan. "We encourage the NSF community and the general public to explore the materials we're releasing today to learn more about how the agency helps our nation remain at the competitive forefront of discovery and innovation." Part of the toolkit package is an animated, NSF-produced video describing the agency's rigorous merit review process. The agency also developed infographics called, "Data by Design: Snapshot of NSF's Programs, Processes, Funding & Impact." These colorful charts showcase the Foundation's role in building tomorrow's workforce, driving innovation, influencing national and international discoveries, and facilitating interdisciplinary collaborations.

**BUSINESS COALITION HOLDS WASHINGTON FLY-IN TO BOLSTER FEDERAL RESEARCH FUNDING**
*Association of American Universities (AAU) Weekly Update, June 13, 2014*

A delegation of business representatives from around the country, led by the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, came to Washington, DC on June 9 to meet with legislators about the importance of strong, sustained support for federally funded research. The Chamber’s press release is available here. Members of the Business for Federal Research coalition urged Washington lawmakers to support a strong innovation economy by providing steady growth above inflation for federal research programs across the government, beginning with the FY15 appropriations process. They cited such agencies as the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, NASA, and the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Energy, and Homeland Security. The Business for Federal Research Funding is a national coalition of 57 chambers of commerce and business groups that was formed earlier this year through the leadership of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce. The delegation that participated in the Washington, DC fly-in included participants from the CEO Council for Growth (PA, NJ, DE), the Dayton Development Coalition (OH), and the Atlanta, Pittsburgh, and Centre County (PA) chambers, in addition to Greater Boston.

* This is the complete news article.

**RESEARCH POLICY**
HOUSE SCIENCE SUBCOMMITTEES HOLD HEARING ON ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN ON RESEARCH

AAU Weekly Update, June 13, 2014

Two subcommittees of the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee held a hearing yesterday, June 12, to examine the administrative workload for those conducting federally funded research. Oversight Subcommittee Chairman Paul Broun (R-GA) and Research and Technology Chairman Larry Bucshon (R-IN) both expressed support for efforts to eliminate red tape and harmonize and streamline requirements, while still preserving research accountability. Rep. Dan Maffei (D-NY) noted that with an 80-percent rejection rate for federal research grants, scientists can spend significant time reapplying for grant funding. Rep. Daniel Lipinski (D-IL) added that both grant-writing and too-frequent progress reports delay progress in science, but he said it was important to ensure that researchers are not wasting the public’s money and are taking appropriate safeguards in their research, such as in protecting human subjects. Witnesses for the hearing were Arthur Bienenstock, chair of the NSB’s task force on administrative burden; Susan Wyatt Sedwick, chair of the Federal Demonstration Partnership; Gina Lee-Glauser, Vice President for Research at Syracuse University; and Allison Lerner, Inspector General of the NSF. Dr. Bienenstock said that a key recommendation of the NSB’s report on reducing investigators’ administrative workload, was to have research proposals focus only on the science and delay submission of budgets and mentoring plans until the projects had been approved for funding. He said the federal government should establish a permanent, high-level, inter-sector, and inter-agency committee with the goal of reducing the regulatory burden on universities. Dr. Sedwick said that transparency and accountability are paramount and emphasized the need for a holistic approach to reform. Dr. Lee-Glauser said the competition for grants between equally qualified proposals creates a discouraging atmosphere for scientists. She added, in response to a question, that the administrative workload is a result of both governmental and institutional requirements, and that she would also like to streamline the latter. Dr. Lerner emphasized the value of effort reporting and audits to ensure accountability and to combat fraud, waste, and abuse, but she added that having multiple auditors for the same institution was unnecessary.

SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICY

CHANGES TO CAMPUS SAFETY RULES
By Jake New, Inside Higher Ed, June 20, 2014

In a continuing effort to curb campus sexual assaults, the Department of Education officially proposed a new rule Thursday that requires colleges and universities to compile statistics for incidents of dating violence, domestic violence and stalking. The rule, which would implement changes to the Clery Act under the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, is an attempt at providing a clearer picture of the environment in which sexual assaults of students take place, the department said. The Obama administration is currently investigating more than
60 institutions for their handling of sexual assault cases.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ANNOUNCES ACTION TO HELP COLLEGES KEEP CAMPUSES SAFE**
Department of Education News Release, June 19, 2014

The Obama Administration today announced new steps to address growing concerns about sexual violence on college campuses by requiring institutions of higher education to comply with new campus safety and security related requirements aimed at curbing sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. The proposed rule, which will be formally published in tomorrow's Federal Register, would implement changes to the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) under the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 signed by President Obama in March of last year.

**SOCIAL SCIENCES & THE HUMANITIES**

**GROUP CRITICIZES QUALITY OF MOST TEACHER ED PROGRAMS**
*Inside Higher Ed*, June 17, 2014

The National Council on Teacher Quality -- a group whose evaluations of teacher education programs have been praised by some political leaders but whose methodology has been questioned by teacher educators -- is out with a new set of rankings. While more programs are evaluated, relatively few meet the NCTQ's standards. Of 1,668 programs (at 836 institutions), 26 elementary programs and 81 secondary programs made the council's list of "top ranked programs." And 17 states lack a single top ranked program. Generally, the council found elementary programs to be "weaker" than their secondary counterparts.

* This is the complete news article.

**STATUS OF THE HUMANITIES: ‘WE HAVEN’T QUITE RECOVERED FROM THE RECESSION’**

The economy may be showing signs of recovery from the great economic downturn of 2008, but financial support for the humanities hasn’t bounced back to its prerecession levels. That’s one of the findings in a report being released on Thursday by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

**OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS REQUESTS NOMINATIONS FOR ADVISORY BOARD**
*COSSA Washington Update*, June 16, 2014
The Office of Justice Programs, which oversees the National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Statistics, has issued a notice soliciting nominations for its Science Advisory Board. The Board was established by the Attorney General in 2010 and is tasked with providing advice "in the areas of science and statistics and for the purpose of enhancing the overall impact and performance of its programs and activities." The Board currently operates in six subcommittees: National Institute of Justice; Bureau of Justice Statistics; Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; Bureau of Justice Assistance; Quality and Protection of Science; and Evidence Translation/Integration. Nominations will be accepted through August 29, 2014. Please contact Phelan Wyrick at phelan.wyrick@usdoj.gov for more information or to make a nomination.

* This is the complete news article.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES HOLDS DISCUSSION ON INTEGRATED STEM EDUCATION
COSSA Washington Update, June 16, 2014

On June 12, the National Academy of Sciences hosted a discussion on the "Integration in K-12 STEM Education in the United States." The discussion included a combination of researchers and practitioners and centered on outcomes, implementation, and research as they related to integrated STEM education. The National Academies also used this event to launch a new report and public relations campaign.

* This is the complete news article.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ANNOUNCES TWO APPLICATIONS FOR NEW AWARDS
COSSA Washington Update, June 16, 2014

The Department of Education released a call for applications for new awards in the Language Resource Centers (LRCs) Program. The LRC program provides grants to institutions of higher education for "establishing, strengthening, and operating centers that serve as resources for improving the Nation's capacity for teaching and learning foreign languages." This call for applications includes priority preferences for a variety of languages (the full list is available through the announcement here), and a preference for "significant and sustained collaborative activities with one or more Minority-Serving Institution or with one or more community college." The deadline for applications is July 9, 2014, and applications are available at grants.gov. The second call is for applications in the Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program. This program provides grants for "planning, developing and carrying out programs to strengthen and improve undergraduate instruction in international studies and foreign languages in the United States." This call for applications includes the same priority preferences as the previous solicitation. More information is available here, and the deadline is July 28, 2014 with applications available at grants.gov.

* This is the complete news article.
STUDENT AID

BILL WOULD SHORTEN FINANCIAL AID APP, EXPAND GRANT ACCESS

On top of the tests, forms and essays that go into the college application process, prospective students are also often tripped up by the complicated federal financial aid application – and many stumble. But a bipartisan team of senators on Thursday introduced a plan to simplify the process by eliminating the Free Application for Financial Student Aid, or FAFSA, in its current form and replacing it with a postcard asking just two questions: the student's family size and household income two years prior. The Financial Aid Simplification and Transparency Act, introduced by Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., and Sen. Michael Bennet, D-Colo., would also allow families to know about their financial aid prospects sooner, enable students to use Pell Grants year-round and simplify aspects of the federal student loan program.