On Tuesday, President Obama gave his State of the Union Address to Congress. Excerpts from the speech include:

- **Higher-Education** – “By the end of this decade, two in three job openings will require some higher education -- two in three. And yet, we still live in a country where too many bright, striving Americans are priced out of the education they need. It’s not fair to them, and it’s sure not smart for our future. That’s why I’m sending this Congress a bold new plan to lower the cost of community college -- to zero...We can use that money to help more families pay for childcare and send their kids to college. We need a tax code that truly helps working Americans trying to get a leg up in the new economy, and we can achieve that together. “

- **Internet Policy** – “I intend to protect a free and open Internet, extend its reach to every classroom, and every community -- (applause) -- and help folks build the fastest networks so that the next generation of digital innovators and entrepreneurs have the platform to keep reshaping our world.”

- **Research** -- "21st century businesses will rely on American science, technology, research and development. I want the country that eliminated polio and mapped the human genome to lead a new era of medicine — one that delivers the right treatment at the right time. In some patients with cystic fibrosis, this approach has reversed a disease once thought unstoppable. Tonight, I’m launching a new Precision Medicine Initiative to bring us closer to curing diseases like cancer and diabetes — and to give all of us access to the personalized information we need to keep ourselves and our families healthier...I want Americans to win the race for the kinds of discoveries that unleash new jobs — converting sunlight into liquid fuel; creating revolutionary prosthetics, so that a veteran who gave his arms for his country can play catch with his kid; pushing out into the Solar System not just to visit, but to stay. Last month, we launched a new spacecraft as part of a re-energized space program that will send American astronauts to Mars. In two months, to prepare us for those missions, Scott Kelly will begin a year-long stay in space. Good luck, Captain — and make sure to Instagram it...Now, the truth is, when it comes to issues like infrastructure and basic research, I know there’s bipartisan support in this chamber. Members of both parties have told me so. Where we too often run onto the
rocks is how to pay for these investments."

This week, Members of Congress debated topics ranging from Keystone XL pipeline to federal abortion policy. Committee hearings included a January 21 House Science, Space and Technology Committee hearing on unmanned aircraft systems research and development.

Craig McLean, deputy assistant administrator for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA’s) Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), has been selected as the new leader of OAR.

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AGRICULTURE

FDA UNVEILS GRANT PROGRAM AIMED AT SMALL FARMERS
By Helena Bottemiller Evich, Politico’s Morning Agriculture, January 16, 2015

The [Food and Drug Administration] FDA is teaming up with [U.S. Department of Agriculture’s] USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture to grant funding to small farmers and food processors to help with Food Safety Modernization Act compliance -- a politically thorny issue as local food proponents remain concerned about the proposed food safety regulations. The wonkily named National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach, and Technical Assistance Program will give priority to submitting grant applications aiming to train "owners and operators of small- and medium-size farms; farmers just starting out in business; socially disadvantaged farmers; small food processors; small fruit and vegetable wholesalers; and farms
that lack access to food safety training and other educational opportunities," the FDA announced late Thursday. The agency said that federal, state, or local agencies; extension services; nonprofits; universities; tribes; and other groups are also eligible for funding. More here: http://1.usa.gov/1sFb72H

* This is the complete news article.

**HEMP HAS FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES, BUT NO CROP INSURANCE**

By Jenny Hopkinson, *Politico’s Morning Agriculture*, January 22, 2015

This could be the year that industrial hemp gets the green light in the United States, but don't expect the cash crop to replace those amber waves of grain in the near term. Rep. Thomas Massie (R-Ky.), along with 46 bipartisan co-sponsors, late on Wednesday introduced the Industrial Hemp Farming Act, H.R. 525, a bill that would make the crop legal to plant by removing it from the federal list of controlled substances. Massie's bill joins a companion, S. 134, introduced January 8 by Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) with three co-sponsors. This isn't the first time Congress will consider the legalization of hemp. The two bills are repeats of measures introduced in the last session. But now industrial hemp has a friend in a more prominent position: Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

* This is the complete news article.

**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

**OBAMA TOUTS PERSONALIZED MEDICINE INITIATIVE**


President Barack Obama announced the launch of a “Precision Medicine Initiative” on Tuesday night but offered few details about what the new effort would entail. Obama said the project is designed “to bring us closer to curing diseases like cancer and diabetes – and to give all of us access to the personalized information we need to keep ourselves and our families healthier.”

The House Energy and Commerce Committee has been working on its own bipartisan initiative to quicken the pace of medical breakthroughs, known as 21st Century Cures, and is expected to release a discussion draft this month. “I want the country that eliminated polio and mapped the human genome to lead a new era of medicine – one that delivers the right treatment at the right time,” Obama said. “In some patients with cystic fibrosis, this approach has reversed a disease once thought unstoppable.” Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., said afterward he wanted more specifics on how Obama intends to get drugs and medical devices more quickly through the Food and Drug Administration reviews. "This is something that both Republicans in Congress and the president believe is important," Alexander said. Obama also praised the U.S. troops, scientists and health care workers who have responded to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, saying that he “could not be prouder of them” and thanking Congress for its support. “But the job is not yet done,” he
said, “and the world needs to use this lesson to build a more effective global effort to prevent the spread of future pandemics, invest in smart development, and eradicate extreme poverty.” Obama also reiterated his commitment to protecting the health care overhaul (PL 111-148, PL 111-152), pledging to veto any bill that puts “the security of families at risk by taking away their health insurance.”

* This is the complete news article.

**PRECISION MEDICINE: IMPROVING HEALTH AND TREATING DISEASE**
By Jo Handelsman, White House Office of Science & Technology Blog, January 21, 2015

Last night, at his 2015 State of the Union Address, President Obama announced that he is launching a new precision medicine initiative that will help deliver the right treatment to the right patient at the right time. Many of you may be wondering: What exactly is “precision medicine,” and how can it transform medicine as it is practiced today?

**ELIZABETH WARREN VS. BIG PHARMA**
By Sam Baker, National Journal, January 22, 2015

Elizabeth Warren took on the pharmaceutical industry Thursday, as she proposed requiring drugmakers to foot more of the bill for federally funded research. Warren said she plans to introduce a bill next week that would require pharmaceutical companies to fund more of the basic research conducted by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Under Warren's proposal, "the biggest and most successful drug companies" would have to contribute to the NIH's budget whenever they settle criminal accusations with the federal government. In addition to the fines that companies already pay, they would have to contribute 1 percent of their annual profits to the NIH for five years.

**APPLICATIONS FOR PCORNET ASPIRIN TRIAL DUE JAN. 30**
*Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Update*, January 21, 2015

Research teams affiliated with the individual networks that comprise PCORnet have until 5 p.m. ET Friday, January 30, to submit their applications for the first clinical trial to be conducted through this national patient-centered clinical research initiative. We're offering up to $10 million to fund this demonstration study focused on determining whether low- or high-dose aspirin is better for patients with coronary artery disease.

**APPLICATIONS FOR LATEST LARGE PRAGMATIC STUDIES FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DUE FEB. 3**
*PCORI Update*, January 21, 2015

Research teams invited to submit applications for the Winter 2015 cycle of our initiative to fund large pragmatic studies to evaluate patient-centered outcomes have until 5 p.m. ET Tuesday,
February 3, to submit their proposals.

**APPLY FOR AHRQ'S 2015 SUMMER INTRAMURAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**  
*Association of American Colleges of Nursing January Policy Beat, January 21, 2015*

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality is soliciting applications for their 2015 Summer Intramural Fellowship Program in Rockville, MD. The program offers multiple positions to eligible candidates who will spend the summer collaborating with leading health services researchers and helping to support and advance the Agency's mission to "produce evidence to make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable, and to work within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and with other partners to make sure that the evidence is understood and used." Eligible applicants should possess a Master's degree or higher with a concentration in health services research, health policy, or a health-related research field. With fifteen topics for research projects spanning from childhood behavior/mental health within the Office of Extramural Research, Education, and Priority Population, to assisting with grant reviews within the Division of Health Information and Technology, the program offers a variety of timely research initiatives to interested candidates. As a junior level fellow, selected applicants will be paired with senior-level researchers. Responsibilities typically include conducting research and performing research-related activities within the team environment. A curriculum will be set for the fellows to ensure a successful experience that includes- but is not limited to- identifying relevant background information, attending Agency seminars and external experiences, and fully understanding AHRQ's research endeavors and goals. Interested applicants must submit their applications by January 27, 2015. For a full list of research topics and more information on the Summer Intramural Fellowship Program please visit, http://www.ahrq.gov/cpi/about/careers/summerfellows.html.

* This is the complete news article.

**INNOVATIONS IN MEASURING AND MANAGING ADDICTION TREATMENT QUALITY CHALLENGE PRIZE COMPETITION**  
*NIH Notice, January 21, 2015*

The National Institute on Drug Abuse is seeking new ideas about how to measure, improve, and manage the quality of addiction treatment. Those with novel ideas in this area are encouraged to visit the www.challenge.gov to learn more about the challenge, and about eligibility, registration, and submission requirements.

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO PUBLISH A FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT FOR REGIONAL MEDICAL LIBRARIES FOR THE NATIONAL NETWORK OF LIBRARIES OF MEDICINE**  
*NIH Notice, January 22, 2015*

The National Library of Medicine intends to promote a new initiative by publishing a Funding
Opportunity Announcement to solicit applications for establishing eight Regional Medical Libraries (RMLs) as part of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine. The goal of the RMLs is to advance the progress of medicine and improve public health by providing U.S. health professionals with equal access to biomedical information and to improve the public’s access to health information enabling them to make informed decisions about their health.

**HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY**

**OBAMA’S FINAL TWO YEARS**

The White House has highlighted a range of higher education policy ideas in the days and weeks leading up to President Obama’s penultimate State of the Union address on Tuesday evening. Some of the proposals — like the free community college plan — are brand-new. And still other higher education proposals, such as the college ratings system, went unmentioned in Tuesday’s speech. But they nonetheless remain a priority for the administration. [Here] is a guide to the Obama administration’s higher education priorities and legislative proposals as the clock ticks on its final two years in office.

**HERE’S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OBAMA’S NEW PLAN TO HELP FAMILIES AFFORD COLLEGE**

In his State of the Union address on Tuesday, president Obama is proposing to simplify the jumbled system of education tax credits to make college more affordable. The White House estimates that the plan could provide students up to $2,500 in annual aid for up to five years. But the administration’s also proposing to take away some existing benefits to pay for its new ideas. Here is everything you need to know about what the White House is proposing.

**6 YEARS IN AND 6 TO GO, ONLY MODEST PROGRESS ON OBAMA’S COLLEGE-COMPLETION GOAL**

Six years ago, in his first address to a joint session of Congress, President Obama set a bold, if daunting, goal: to lead the world in college completion by 2020. At the time, the United States was tied for 12th place worldwide in the percentage of young adults with at least an associate degree. Today, as Obama prepares to deliver his next-to-last State of the Union address to Congress, the nation has moved up only slightly, into a tie for 11th place, and the president’s ambitious goal looks unachievable. While the national college-graduation rate has climbed to 44 percent, the gulf between the United States and some of its competitors remains wide, and the target is moving.
**IMMIGRATION**

**GOP SEEKING PLAN B ON IMMIGRATION**  
By Manu Raju and Seung Min Kim, *Politico*, January 21, 2015

Top Republicans are exploring ways of escaping their political jam on immigration, with steps that could avoid a funding cutoff for the Department of Homeland Security while letting conservatives vent their anger at President Barack Obama.

**HIGHER EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS ENDORSE HIGH SKILLED IMMIGRATION REFORM LEGISLATION, IMMIGRATION INNOVATION (I-SQUARED) ACT**  
*Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Congressional and Governmental Affairs News*, January 23, 2015

APLU joined the higher education community in sending the attached letter of endorsement of the high-skilled immigration reform bill, the Immigration Innovation (I-Squared) Act. The I-Squared bill, offered by Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Chris Coons (D-DE), Jeff Flake (R-AZ), and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), uncaps the exemption from the annual H-1B visa limit for advanced degree graduates of U.S. universities and exempts advanced degree graduates with STEM degrees from the employment-based green card cap among other important related reforms. Importantly, the legislation also defers to the Department of Homeland Security’s STEM list to define STEM. Therefore, unlike the 2013 Senate-passed comprehensive immigration reform bill, agricultural and natural resource sciences are included within the definition of STEM. [MSU is a member of APLU.]

* This is the complete news article.

**INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY LAUNCH FULBRIGHT-NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC DIGITAL STORYTELLING FELLOWSHIP**  
State Department News Release, January 18, 2015

The U.S. Department of State and the National Geographic Society are partnering to launch the inaugural Fulbright-National Geographic Digital Storytelling Fellowship competition. This new component of the Fulbright Program will offer up to five awards to U.S. citizens. Over a nine month period, awardees will create multi-media stories on globally significant social or environmental topics including biodiversity, cities, climate change, cultures, energy, food, oceans, and water... For more information and to apply for the Fulbright-National Geographic Fellowship, visit [http://us.fulbrightonline.org/fulbright-nat-geo-fellowship](http://us.fulbrightonline.org/fulbright-nat-geo-fellowship).
INTERNET POLICY

ABOUT LAST NIGHT: OBAMA SKIMS TECH, TOUCHING ON NET NEUTRALITY, SURVEILLANCE
By Kate Tummarello and Erin Mershon, Politico's Morning Tech, January 21, 2015

Not even the word 'innovation' got as many mentions as usual in last night's State of the Union address, in which President Barack Obama only briefly mentioned many of his tech priorities. A lot of what he pushed last night built off the speeches and proposals he unveiled in the run-up to last night's speech. "I intend to protect a free and open internet, extend its reach to every classroom, and every community, and help folks build the fastest networks, so that the next generation of digital innovators and entrepreneurs have the platform to keep reshaping our world," Obama said. Tesla, Google, Instagram and eBay all got mentions -- and cybersecurity reform and surveillance reform, too, both got at least a paragraph's worth of attention.

* This is the complete news article.

SCOOP: REPUBLICANS THROW DOWN THE GAUNTLET ON NET NEUTRALITY
By Kate Tummarello, Politico's Morning Tech, January 23, 2015

Republicans are challenging the FCC to a transparency test. In a new letter to the agency, Senate Commerce Chairman John Thune and his House counterparts -- Reps. Fred Upton and Greg Walden -- push [Federal Communications Commission] FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler to make public his new net neutrality rules, which are expected to be passed at next month's FCC meeting. "Currently, the general public, as well as Congress, is entirely reliant on press reports and generic, high-level statements regarding the status of the proceeding and the content of the rules," the lawmakers said in a letter Thursday. "Releasing the text allows the public to, at the very least, have an informed opinion and ideally, the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposal the FCC will vote on just over one month from today." Thune, Upton and Walden have a draft bill that would reinstate the FCC's 2010 net neutrality rules but keep the agency from going ahead with Wheeler's plans to reclassify broadband as a utility. The lawmakers have been quick to point to their public-facing process to refine their bill -- including hearings in both chambers this week. Under FCC procedure, the agency won't publish its new rules until after the commission has approved them. "Limited access to information is beneficial to no one - not to the consumers directly affected by commission action, not to the industries regulated by the rules and not to the commissioners seeking to make informed decisions taking public feedback into consideration," the Republicans wrote.

* This is the complete news article.

PALLONE WEIGHS IN [ON NET NEUTRALITY]
By Kate Tummarello and Erin Mershon, Politico's Morning Tech, January 21, 2015
House Energy and Commerce ranking member Frank Pallone has been quiet on net neutrality in the past, but he'll take his first public stand on the issue during today's hearing. In his opening statement, Pallone will welcome the Republican olive branch on net neutrality, but he'll push back on the draft's limits on the FCC and urge the agency to go ahead with its plans to reclassify broadband next month. The FCC "must remain the vigilant cop on the beat, standing ready to act whether it is to protect consumer privacy, to encourage accessibility for Americans with disabilities, or to promote broadband deployment to rural areas. And, just as important, it must maintain the flexibility to keep up with new technology," Pallone will say in his opening statement. The subcommittee's other Democrats will also express concerns. Reps. Anna Eshoo and Doris Matsui will both talk about their problems with the bill's carve out for "specialized services." While the FCC's net neutrality rules have always had exemptions for specialized services, Eshoo will say the bill "creates a huge loophole" in the "loosely defined" specialized services provision. Matsui is set to warn that the provision "could serve as a loophole for paid prioritization schemes and create a two-tiered Internet system." Rep. Peter Welch told MT that he's worried about a bill that would keep the FCC from responding to changing technologies. 'We don't know all of the things that may await us,' he said, adding that he's 'a skeptic' when it comes to the Republican bill. Still, Welch said he is open to working with Republicans on net neutrality. Reps. Greg Walden and Fred Upton are 'really making an effort,' which is 'an indicator that there's openness on their part' to net neutrality protections, he said, noting the recent shift in the net neutrality debate. The Republican bill 'goes a long way from where we were.' Among witnesses, the Republican draft bill will get industry support from NCTA CEO and former FCC Chairman Michael Powell, CTIA President and former FCC Commissioner Meredith Baker and Tom Simmons, senior vice president of midwest ISP Midcontinent Communications. Representatives from Amazon and Etsy are set to say they are encouraged by some parts of the Republican bill and see problems with the bill's limits on the FCC. Public Knowledge President Gene Kimmelman and Jessica Gonzalez of the National Hispanic Media Council will oppose the draft bill and reiterate their support for the FCC moving full speed ahead to reclassify.

* This is the complete news article.

**PHYSICAL SCIENCES & ENGINEERING**

**ENERGY SECRETARY MONIZ UNVEILS MORE THAN $55 MILLION TO ADVANCE FUEL EFFICIENT VEHICLE TECHNOLOGIES**
Department of Energy News Release, January 22, 2015

Following the State of the Union Address on Tuesday, January 20th in which President Obama highlighted the surge in U.S. manufacturing and the strong growth in the auto industry, Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz today announced more than $55 million to develop and deploy cutting-edge vehicle technologies that strengthen the clean energy economy...The funding opportunity announced today will go towards a wide range of research, development, and demonstration projects that aim to reduce the price and improve the efficiency of plug-in electric, alternative fuel, and conventional vehicles. Topics addressed include:

* Advanced batteries (including manufacturing processes) and electric drive R&D
- Lightweight materials
- Advanced combustion engine and enabling technologies R&D
- Fuels technologies (dedicated or dual-fuel natural gas engine technologies)

The Department will fund cost-shared projects with private industry, national laboratories, and university led-teams. For more information and application requirements, please click HERE.

In addition, the Energy Department has announced up to $35 million to advance fuel cell and hydrogen technologies, including enabling the early adoption of fuel cell applications, such as light duty fuel cell electric vehicles. This new funding opportunity announcement will be available in early February.

**AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT NOAA FISHERIES CLIMATE SCIENCE STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**
*Federal Register, January 23, 2015*

NMFS is releasing the draft National Marine Fisheries Service Climate Science Strategy for public review and comment.

**SEA-LEVEL RISE, GEOHAZARDS AMONG PRIORITIES FOR OCEAN SCIENCE RESEARCH**
*National Academies News Release, January 23, 2015*

A new report from the National Research Council identifies priority areas for ocean science research in the next decade, including the rate and impacts of sea-level rise, the effects of climate change on marine ecosystems, greater understanding of marine food webs, and better approaches for forecasting hazards such as mega-earthquakes and tsunamis. The report also recommends that the National Science Foundation rebalance its funding for ocean science research, which in recent years has shifted toward research infrastructure at the expense of core science programs.

* This is the complete news article.

**RESEARCH POLICY**

**CONGRESS SHOULD HELP THE U.S. BY REVERSING ITS RECENT HISTORY OF STARVING BASIC RESEARCH**
*By The Editors, Scientific American, January 20, 2015*

The 114th U.S. Congress, infused with 71 new members elected last fall, will begin to hammer out a federal budget this month. In an era of tight spending and lingering economic malaise, this Congress — and the White House — might be tempted to limit funding for basic science in favor of applied research that has more direct payoffs. Politicians of both major parties have done so before. We urge them not to do it again and to instead renew a law that is vital to basic research.
NATIONAL ACADEMIES LAUNCHES PANEL TO REVIEW RESEARCH REGULATIONS

The National Academies' Committee on Science, Technology, and Law on January 20 announced the launch of its panel to review federal research regulations and reporting requirements that affect universities. The committee, which will hold its first meeting on February 12-13, 2015 in Washington, D.C., will be chaired by Larry Faulkner, president emeritus of the University of Texas at Austin. AAU staff will make a presentation at the meeting that reviews the key points on regulatory reform that the AAU presidents and chancellors discussed at their April 2014 membership meeting.

* This is the complete news article.

RESEARCH AGENCY AWAITS NEW CHIEF, LEGISLATION
By Sarah D. Sparks, Education Week, January 21, 2015

The U.S. Department of Education's research agency continues to wait for new leadership and legislative direction, even as it faces rising demand for education research from practitioners. The Institute of Education Sciences, or IES, is still searching for a researcher-in-chief and statistician-in-chief to replace, respectively, IES Director John Q. Easton and National Center for Education Statistics Commissioner Sean P. "Jack" Buckley, both of whom left last year.

DRONE HEARING TAKEAWAY: 'GET SAUCY WITH IT'
By Heather Caygle, Político’s Morning Transportation, January 22, 2015

Drones may not be able to fly commercially in the U.S., but they can be used to entertain members of Congress. During a House Science hearing Wednesday, committee members got not one but two demos of how the unmanned vehicles work as a $500 drone hovered above lawmakers' heads. During the demonstration, members kept their eyes peeled on the technology, with a few remarking they hope to receive one next Christmas. "Get saucy with it," 3D Robotics Chief Revenue Officer Colin Guinn instructed the drone pilot. So not impressed: But one thing lawmakers weren’t impressed with? The [Federal Aviation Administration's] FAA's inability to produce its commercial drone rules, which were supposed to come out at the end of 2014. Committee Chairman Lamar Smith repeatedly pressed James Williams, the manager of the FAA's drone integration office, on when the agency would finally propose rules governing the commercial use of small drones. "Our goal is to get it out as quickly as we can, as long as we get it right," Williams said. Smith continued to press for a specific date before cutting Williams off when it became clear he wasn’t going to commit to a certain timeline.

* This is the complete news article.
**SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICY**

28 UNIVERSITIES WILL PARTICIPATE IN SEXUAL ASSAULT SURVEY  
*Inside Higher Ed, January 23, 2015*

Fewer than half of the elite research institutions that comprise the AAU will participate in that group's effort to anonymously survey students about the prevalence of sexual assault on campuses. The association said Thursday that 27 of its 60 U.S. members and one non-member college will join the effort. [MSU is participating in the survey.]

**STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS**

STATE OF THE UNION 2015 ANALYSIS: WHAT HE SAID, WHAT HE MEANT  
By David Nather, *Politico, January 20, 2105*

President Barack Obama used his State of the Union speech Tuesday night to set an optimistic tone for the rest of his presidency — but also to drop big hints about the fights that lie ahead. He targeted lines at his Republican critics and talked about the “choices” ahead, a not-so-subtle suggestion that he’ll deal with the GOP Congress by making it tough for them to argue against his agenda — especially with a presidential election right around the corner. But he also had messages for his Democratic critics, especially the ones who oppose trade agreements and are appalled that that’s the one issue where he might be able to cut deals with the Republicans. Here’s a guide to what Obama said in his speech and what he meant.

SCIENCE GETS ITS MOMENT IN OBAMA’S 2015 STATE OF THE UNION  
By David Malakoff, *ScienceInsider, January 20, 2015*

Science rarely makes a major appearance in the president’s annual State of the Union address. Tonight’s speech by President Barack Obama maintained that tradition — but he did take a few moments in the 60-minute address to stake out a strong defense of his administration’s policies to combat climate change, and to preview a new “precision medicine” initiative that aims to tap genetic and other information to improve treatments for human diseases.

**STUDENT AID**

A CALL FOR RESTORING YEAR-ROUND PELL  
*Inside Higher Ed, January 22, 2015*

The 2011 decision to end a short-lived program that let students earn two Pell Grants in a single
academic year was blamed on a range of factors, including that the program's costs raged out of control and that it failed to encourage students to finish their degrees more quickly. A paper published this morning by the New America Foundation (and discussed in this *Inside Higher Ed* essay) argues that many of the reasons put forward to explain the program's demise don't stand up to scrutiny -- and that the program, if restored in modified form, could greatly benefit community college students in particular.

*This is the complete article.

**TAX POLICY**

**TAXES AND EDUCATION**

The *White House Saturday announced a series of tax proposals* that would raise taxes on financial institutions and wealthy individuals, simplify education tax credits and pay for his plan for free community college education.