* News Summary

Before breaking for respective Democratic and Republican Retreats, Members of Congress debated topics ranging from immigration policy to FY15 funding for the Department of Homeland Security.

John Podesta, Counselor to President Obama, will step down next month.

* News Articles of Interest

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_Summaries of News Articles of Interest_
(Please click on the Title to link to the entire article.)
KANSANS TAKE TOP SENATE AG SPOTS
By Ellyn Ferguson, CQ.com, January 14, 2015

Jerry Moran is the new chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development and Food and Drug Administration, Appropriator John Hoeven tells CQ Roll Call. Moran’s selection as chairman means Kansas lawmakers will be setting spending and policy priorities that affect rural and farm areas. Pat Roberts, the state’s senior senator, is chairman of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee. Senate Republicans confirmed Roberts’ selection last week. He announced key committee staff shortly afterward with Joel Leftwich, a former staffer who worked most recently as a PepsiCo lobbyist, becoming committee staff director. Moran has been active on agricultural trade issues, introducing an appropriations amendment in 2011 to allow Cuban buyers to make direct cash payments to U.S. financial institutions for U.S. farm goods. The amendment would have ended a restriction added by President George W. Bush’s administration that required that payments be routed through a third party in a foreign country. Moran recently said he plans to work with agriculture groups that want Congress to build on changes to financing of goods to Cuba announced by the Obama administration.

* This is the complete news article.

OREGONIAN ON AG APPROPRIATIONS
By Ellyn Ferguson, CQ.com, January 9, 2015

Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., will be ranking member on the Senate Agriculture Appropriations subcommittee in the 114th Congress. Barbara Mikulski, the ranking Democrat on the full Appropriations Committee, announced the selection today. Merkley, a subcommittee member in the last Congress, is interested in timber, rural infrastructure improvements, crop insurance for organic crop growers and funding for specialty crops. He is starting his second term in the Senate after winning reelection in November. He spent part of his childhood in rural southwestern Oregon where his father worked in a wood mill until a weak timber economy led the family to move to Portland. His father worked as an equipment mechanic. Jon Tester, a Montana organic farmer who appeared likely to become the ranking Democrat for agriculture, will be the top member of his party on the Appropriations subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. Senate Appropriations Chairman Thad Cochran could announce subcommittee chairmen next week.

* This is the complete news article.

USDA PRAISED FOR [REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM] RCPP GRANTS
By Jenny Hopkinson, Politico's Morning Agriculture, January 15, 2015
The announcement Wednesday that U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is awarding $370 million to conservation projects as part of a new Farm Bill program seemed to go down well with environmental and conservation groups. In a statement, Mark Tercek, president and CEO of the Nature Conservancy, hailed the move as "a vast improvement over business as usual. This type of directed public investment in conservation on private lands can be tremendously more effective than the old 'random acts of conservation' approach." The 2014 Farm Bill authorized $1.2 billion to be spent over five years on the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, which allows states, agriculture and conservation groups to submit proposals that could have a large impact on the environment. Of the projects awarded Wednesday, the bulk - 70 percent - deal with water quality and drought. The projects are expected to leverage about $400 million in matching funds through partnerships. More on the program announcement here: http://politico.pro/1iygWmG A list of the projects that received funding is here: http://1.usa.gov/1ykMmZ4 [MSU will participate as a partner in the Saginaw Bay Watershed project.]

* This is the complete news article.

**USDA ANNOUNCES MORE THAN $18 MILLION TO SUPPORT TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR BEGINNING FARMERS AND RANCHERS**

USDA Press Release, January 12, 2015

USDA Deputy Secretary Krysta Harden today announced the availability of more than $18 million in funding to help educate, mentor and enhance the sustainability of the next generation of farmers. This support is available through the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, administered by USDA’s National Institute for Food and Agriculture... Fiscal Year 2015 applications for BFRDP are due March 13, 2015.

**ATHLETICS**

**COLLEGE SPORTS TAKES CENTER STAGE**


More than 3,000 college sports staff and athletes are gathering outside Washington for this week's National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) convention, which kicks into high gear with the opening business session and President Mark Emmert's annual "State of the Association" address. (Watch the 4:30 p.m. ET livestream here: http://bit.ly/1zeqnpC.) White House officials said they held what is a typical stakeholder meeting with athletic directors and NCAA executives Wednesday to discuss relevant topics including the It's On Us sexual assault prevention campaign. But as USA Today reported [http://usat.ly/1FI7oas], the discussion also coincides with talk about a conference commissioner-led "Coalition to Save College Sports," and a presidential commission to review the state and direction of institutional athletics.

* This is the complete news article.
PLAYERS ASSOCIATIONS HEAD TO HILL  
By Adam Sneed, *Politico Influence (PI)*, January 15, 2015

The National College Players Association is holding a lobby day on Capitol Hill to push for an athletes' rights meeting with Senate staff. The blitz, which coincides with the NCAA convention, follows a summit at the National Football Players Association on Wednesday where reps met to come up with a strategy to push back on efforts they believe will strip players of their rights under labor and antitrust laws. Ramogi Huma told PI that they have been making the "rounds up here to make sure that some of the lawmakers understand what we’re doing, what our goals are, and anticipating an attack on players' rights."

* This is the complete news article.

**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

**CAN WE FIND CURES FOR 7,000 DISEASES?**  
By Congressman Fred Upton (R-MI) and Congresswoman Diana DeGette (D-CO), *CNN*, January 13, 2015

Despite the conventional wisdom that Washington is a frozen island of partisanship, a hopeful thaw is underway. or the past year, we have been spearheading a bipartisan effort to update the process of discovering, developing and delivering medical therapies to help people live longer and better lives...Our review revealed several areas of reform that will close the gap between the science of medicine and the regulations that impact the volume and fate of new therapies.

**ARE YOUNG SCIENTISTS GETTING ENOUGH HELP FROM THE NIH?**  

For four straight years recently, despite annual budget cutbacks, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) managed to record steady gains in a critical measure: the share of its main grant awards won by new scientists. Through a combination of new award programs and tweaks to existing policies, the agency fought to protect the young scientists it considered crucial to the long-term success of the nation’s biomedical enterprise. But that four-year rise ended in 2010, and in the four years since then the percentage of grants won by new researchers has flattened out. And once again the NIH is left scrambling to figure out new approaches to avert what it fears could be a hollowing out of the nation’s medical-research capabilities.

**CAMPUS DOCS AND ENGINEERS FORGE NEW PATH TO INNOVATION AND PROFITS**  


Some of the nation's leading research universities [want] to create...greater collaboration between engineering and medical school faculties to foster next-generation technologies. The goal is to not only advance the practice of medicine, but to improve the patient experience and foster a more efficient healthcare system, which has usually been beyond the purview of university-based scientists. The NIH has begun putting the financial muscle of the federal government behind the new approach. Its National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences will spend much of its $635 million budget this fiscal year on projects to help move scientific advances from bench to bedside.

**FASEB RELEASES SUSTAINING DISCOVERY IN BIOLOGICAL AND MEDICAL SCIENCE**  

This week, the FASEB released an analysis of the threats to continued progress in biological and medical science research. Sustaining Discovery in Biological and Medical Science: A Framework for Discussion examines the challenges facing researchers and presents a series of recommendations to alleviate them. Sustaining Discovery in Biological and Medical Science: A Framework for Discussion documents how shortfalls in federal funding and rising regulatory costs have constrained research budgets. At the same time, scientific opportunities have expanded and more individuals are seeking funding.

**A ONE-GRANT LIMIT: NIH INSTITUTE PUTS SQUEEZE ON FLUSH INVESTIGATORS**  

In the latest example of budget stretching at the NIH, the agency's basic science institute is imposing a strict one-grant limit on scientists who already have plentiful no-strings support. The move could free up at least $6 million, or 25 grants for other scientists.

**SACHRP SEEKS NOMINATIONS FOR NEW MEMBERS**  

The Secretary's Advisory Committee on Human Research Protections (SACHRP), the advisory body of the Office of Human Research Protections, is seeking nominations to fill two spots that will become vacant in July 2015. The Committee provides guidance on matters "relating to the responsible conduct of research involving human subjects with particular emphasis on special populations such as neonates and children, prisoners, the decisionally impaired, pregnant women, embryos and fetuses, individuals and populations in international studies, populations in which there are individually identifiable samples, data or information; and investigator conflicts of interest." Qualified candidates will possess expertise and experience in a field relevant to human subjects protection, including "public health and medicine, behavioral and social sciences, health administration, and biomedical ethics." Nominations should consist of a letter of nomination as well as the candidate’s CV and contact information. They must be
received by February 12, 2015. More information is available in the Federal Register notice.

* This is the complete news article.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS AND REGISTRATION FOR: “INNOVATIONS IN MEASURING AND MANAGING ADDICTION TREATMENT QUALITY” CHALLENGE**

*Federal Register, January 14, 2015*

Through the “Innovations in Measuring and Managing Addiction Treatment Quality” Challenge (the “Challenge”), the National Institute on Drug Abuse, a component of the NIH, challenges the general public to make concrete advances toward improving the quality of addiction treatment. Specifically, through this Challenge, NIDA hopes to incentivize the development of innovative concepts for quality measurement and quality management systems based on the latest science of addiction and its treatment and of quality measurement and management.

**HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY**

**OBAMA EDUCATION LEGACY: POMP AND FIZZLE?**

*By Stephanie Simon, *Politico*, January 9, 2015*

President Barack Obama’s proposal to give millions of students free tuition at community colleges made a big splash on Friday, as the administration had intended. But the moment also exposed the limits of Obama’s power on education, as his ambitions for big, legacy-defining initiatives run smack into a buzzsaw of opposition from across the political spectrum.

**EXPERIMENTING WITH COMPETENCY**


The U.S. Department of Education will allow at least 40 colleges to experiment with competency-based education and prior learning assessment, granting them a waiver from certain rules that govern federal financial aid.

**IMMIGRATION**

**BIPARTISAN SENATE BILL EYES IMMIGRATION REFORM FOR TECH WORKERS**

*By Julian Hattem, *The Hill*, January 13, 2015*

A bipartisan team of senators lent a helping hand to the tech sector on Tuesday by introducing legislation to reform the immigration system for high-skilled workers.
**HOUSE VOTES TO ROLL BACK OBAMA'S IMMIGRATION ACTIONS**  
By Seung Min Kim, *Politico*, January 14, 2015

House Republicans mounted a furious assault on four years of President Barack Obama’s immigration policies Wednesday — satisfying hard-liners on the issue but prompting resistance among some moderates concerned that the party’s leadership has gone too far...But given the qualms of moderates in the Senate and a presidential veto threat, the all-out rollback doesn’t stand a chance of becoming law.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

**WHITE HOUSE RELEASES PLAN TO ENCOURAGE PUBLIC PRIVATE PROJECTS**  
By David Harrison, CQ.com, January 16, 2015

The Obama administration announced efforts to encourage public-private partnerships Friday morning, including a new borrowing program designed to bring down the cost of financing the projects. The announcement furthers the administration’s efforts to push policy priorities through executive action rather than legislation. Earlier this month, President Barack Obama announced moves to help first-time homebuyers and community college students. The administration said it is creating new qualified public infrastructure bonds to extend the tax benefits of municipal bonds to public-private transportation, water, and other projects. The bonds would expand the existing private activity bond program, which has helped finance about $10 billion in projects. Unlike the PAB’s, however, the new program will include financing for airports, ports, public transit and solid waste projects. The White House said the bond program would have no expiration date, no cap on the interest rate and the bonds won’t be subject to the alternative minimum tax. The White House said it would discuss the bonds in more detail in its budget release next month. The administration also wants the departments of Commerce, Transportation, Homeland Security, Agriculture and Housing and Urban Developments to work together to ease the planning and review process before construction starts on infrastructure projects. The administration is also rolling out an initiative from the Environmental Protection Agency to attract private sector funding to drinking water and waste water projects as well as a U.S. Department of Agriculture effort to expand private sector investment in rural water, energy and broadband projects. The White House said it would host an event in March to match investors with public projects in need of financing. Friday’s announcement builds on a previous move in July, which sought to bring investors and worthy public projects together. As part of that effort, the president asked Treasury Secretary Jacob J. Lew and Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx to come up with recommendations for easing public private projects. Friday’s announcement is a result of those recommendations. Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr., is scheduled to promote the new initiatives during a visit a clean water project on the Anacostia River in Washington, D.C., Friday, which will reduce the amount of sewage pumped into the river.

* This is the complete news article.
INCREASING INVESTMENT IN U.S. ROADS, PORTS AND DRINKING WATER SYSTEMS THROUGH INNOVATIVE FINANCING
White House Fact Sheet, January 16, 2015

Building a 21st-century infrastructure is a critical component of the Administration’s efforts to accelerate economic growth, expand opportunity, create jobs and improve the competitiveness of the American economy. As part of this effort, President Obama launched the Build America Investment Initiative in July 2014, calling on federal agencies to find new ways to increase investment in ports, roads, bridges, broadband networks, drinking water and sewer systems and other projects by facilitating partnerships between federal, state and local governments and private sector investors.

INTERNET POLICY

CONGRESSIONAL PROPOSAL OFFERS INTERNET RULES OF THE ROAD
By John Thune and Fred Upton, Reuters, January 14, 2015

For the past decade, a debate has raged in Washington and across the country about the best way to protect an open, unfettered Internet. The increasing use of smartphones and web-connected products and services make finding the right answer more important than ever. The House of Representatives and the Senate, working together, have come up with a working proposal. We plan to begin a public discussion of it this week.

REPUBLICANS ARE READY TO TACKLE NET NEUTRALITY
By Kate Tummarello and Erin Mershon, Político’s Morning Tech, January 15, 2015

The top Republicans in telecom are laying out net neutrality principles and committing to double-header net neutrality hearings next week, as they continue their work to craft their own bill before the FCC hands down its new rules next month. Late on Wednesday, Senate Commerce Chairman John Thune and Rep. Greg Walden, chairman of the House Energy and Commerce subcommittee on communications, announced that they will each hold a hearing on the issue next Wednesday. Thune also identified 11 principles that the lawmakers are following as they craft legislation, which include banning blocking, throttling and paid prioritization, requiring transparency and allowing for reasonable network management and specialized services. The principles would apply to both wireline and wireless networks and would also prohibit the FCC from reclassifying broadband as a Title II service or using Section 706 to create new rules. The principles - which would restore and go further than the FCC's 2010 rules but also rule out reclassification - represent a big compromise for Republicans, who have largely criticized Democrats for wanting any net neutrality rules at all. And Goodlatte is on board: House Judiciary Chairman Bob Goodlatte still thinks antitrust law is the best way to protect the open Internet - a point he made during a hearing last year and when he laid out the committee’s agenda on Wednesday -- but he’s open to working with other Republicans as they
craft a net neutrality bill. Goodlatte looks forward to working with the Commerce Republicans as they move ahead with a recently announced public process to discuss their net neutrality proposal, according to a House Judiciary aide. "The House Judiciary Committee has a significant role to play in this effort because of its jurisdiction over antitrust laws," the aide said. "Strong and vigilant enforcement of the antitrust laws is an effective tool to protect net neutrality principles."

* This is the complete news article.

**SECURING CYBERSPACE - PRESIDENT OBAMA ANNOUNCES NEW CYBERSECURITY LEGISLATIVE PROPOSAL AND OTHER CYBERSECURITY EFFORTS**
White House Press Release, January 13, 2015

...Today, at a time when public and private networks are facing an unprecedented threat from rogue hackers as well as organized crime and even state actors, the President is unveiling the next steps in his plan to defend the nation’s systems. These include a new legislative proposal, building on important work in Congress, to solve the challenges of information sharing that can cripple response to a cyberattack. They also include revisions to those provisions of our 2011 legislative proposal on which Congress has yet to take action, and along with them, the President is extending an invitation to work in a bipartisan, bicameral manner to advance this urgent priority for the American people.

**PHYSICAL SCIENCES & ENGINEERING**

**ENERGY DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES $8 MILLION TO DEVELOP ADVANCED COMPONENTS FOR WAVE, TIDAL, AND CURRENT ENERGY SYSTEMS**
Department of Energy News Release, January 12, 2015

The Energy Department today announced $8 million in available funding to spur innovation in next-generation marine and hydrokinetic (MHK) control and component technologies. In the United States, waves, tides, and ocean currents represent a largely untapped renewable energy resource that could provide clean, affordable energy to homes and businesses across the country’s coastal regions. Advancements in MHK technologies will help these devices harness even more sustainable energy from marine environments. Through this funding opportunity, the Energy Department plans to select up to five projects to improve the performance and reduce the technical risk of MHK technologies. Research and development supported by this funding will advance the following types of controls and components for use with MHK systems under development for commercial application:

- **Advanced controls**: Selected projects will design, develop, and validate components capable of monitoring and controlling the interaction of the device with the water resource for increased power production and efficiency.
- **Crosscutting power take-off components**: Selected projects will design, develop, and validate components for the "power take-off" systems of a broad variety of MHK devices,
reducing the costs of deployments and increasing efficiency and availability. A power take-off is the MHK sub-system that includes the hardware needed to convert mechanical motion into electrical power.

- **Innovative structures**: Selected projects will design, develop, and validate advanced materials and structures for increased power production, availability, and greater manufacturability.

**STEM + COMPUTING PARTNERSHIPS (STEM+C)**  
National Science Foundation (NSF) Program Solicitation, January 13, 2015

STEM+C invites creative and innovative proposals that address emerging challenges in the learning and teaching of STEM and computing. The program offers proposers two tracks: (1) Integration of Computing in STEM Education and (2) Computing Education Knowledge and Capacity Building. The second track is discipline-specific and may be expanded to include additional disciplines in future releases of the solicitation.

**U.S.-UNITED KINGDOM CYBERSECURITY COOPERATION**  
White House Fact Sheet, January 16, 2015

...The governments of both the United States and the United Kingdom have agreed to provide funding to support a new Fulbright Cyber Security Award. This program will provide an opportunity for some of the brightest scholars in both countries to conduct cybersecurity research for up to six months. The first cohort is expected to start in the 2016-17 academic year, and the U.S.-UK Fulbright Commission will seek applications for this cohort later this year.

**CRUZ: U.S. MUST GO DEEPER INTO SPACE**  

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, the new head of the Senate's subcommittee on space, wants to go where no man has gone before. Cruz was installed as the chairman of the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Space, Science and Competitiveness last week. Texas is a major hub of the U.S. space industry, and Cruz seems ready to defend the agency's gradually shrinking budget.

**RESEARCH FUNDING TRENDS**

**A PRIMER ON RECENT TRENDS IN FEDERAL R&D BUDGETS**  
By Matt Hourihan, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), January 15, 2015

With a new Congress now seated and a new appropriations cycle set to commence once again, AAAS has produced a short summary of some of the big trends in federal R&D budgets over the past several years. The goal was to keep this overview short, so there is quite a bit of detail that
had to be left out (much of which can be explored on the historical data page), but we hope it's still a useful introduction.

**RESEARCH POLICY**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PRESIDENTS OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES AND HEADS OF OTHER NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION GRANTEE ORGANIZATIONS**

NSF Notice, January 13, 2015

Over the last year, the NSF has taken new steps to enhance transparency and accountability. This notice focuses on efforts to clarify NSF’s award abstracts, which serve a different purpose than the project summary that is submitted as part of a proposal. Effective December 26, 2014, NSF’s updated Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide (PAPPG) (NSF 15-1) includes the following statement about award abstracts: "Should a proposal be recommended for award, the PI (Principal Investigator) may be contacted by the NSF Program Officer for assistance in preparation of the public award abstract and its title. An NSF award abstract, with its title, is an NSF document that describes the project and justifies the expenditure of Federal funds."

**JAMES: NEW RESEARCH NEEDED TO KEEP TECHNOLOGICAL EDGE**


The Pentagon is focusing on new technological research to avoid losing its place as the most advanced military in the world, [Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James] said at the Atlantic Council in Washington. [T]oo few technological advancements have been made, so the Pentagon needs to "double down" on research. While much of the problem is attributable to costs, the military services need to find new ways to be creative and effective in using the money they do have, James said.

**NO, THE GOP IS NOT AT WAR WITH SCIENCE**


Since our founding, America’s economic strength and national security have depended on scientists and innovators to promote growth and prosperity. Both public and private investments in research and development fuel the economy, create jobs and lead to new technologies that benefit Americans’ daily lives. But to remain a world leader, the United States must ensure that our investments are funding not just any science but the best science. Our national debt is more than $18 trillion, and the American taxpayer is hurting. If we, as a country, have decided to spend taxpayers’ hard-earned dollars on funding science and research, then we need to spend wisely.

**SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICY**
DECLINING THE AAU SURVEY
By Michael Stratford, Inside Higher Ed, January 13, 2015

More than a dozen of the nation's top research universities have declined an offer by the Association of American Universities (AAU) to anonymously survey their students about the prevalence of sexual assault on campus. Fifteen of the AAU's 60 U.S. members told Inside Higher Ed on Monday that they had decided against participating in the association's survey project, which some victims' advocates and sexual violence researchers had criticized.

SOCIAL SCIENCES & THE HUMANITIES

HUMANITIES FOR AMERICA

The head of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) said Thursday that he wants to push humanities scholarship to become more directly connected to helping address the nation's contemporary problems. Making the case for why the nation should continue its longstanding investments in the humanities, NEH Chairman William (Bro) Adams said his agency would be launching an effort to encourage humanities scholars to focus on topics that that are relevant to Americans' daily lives. The initiative -- dubbed “The Common Good: The Humanities in the Public Square” -- will use the agency’s grant making and new projects to emphasize the link between the humanities and public life.

HUMANITIES OPEN BOOK: UNLOCKING GREAT BOOKS
NEH Press Release, January 15, 2015

A new joint grant program by the NEH and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation seeks to give a second life to outstanding out-of-print books in the humanities by turning them into freely accessible e-books...The application deadline for the first cycle of Humanities Open Book grants is June 10, 2015.

NRC ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSES NEED FOR IMPROVED PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH
COSSA Washington Update, January 13, 2015

On January 8, the National Research Council (NRC) Roundtable on the Application of Social and Behavioral Science (SBS) Research convened its first meeting. Chaired by Arthur "Skip" Lupia from the University of Michigan, the Roundtable brings together a diverse set of stakeholders in the social and behavioral science community to discuss ways to improve public understanding of social science research as well as the research community's understanding of the uses of
research by various sectors, such as industry, military, or public health. Membership includes "those who create SBS research, those who use it, and those who know how to communicate about it." COSSA Executive Director Wendy Naus made a presentation to the Roundtable at the January meeting, setting the political context for social and behavioral science research, particularly in the Congress.

* This is the complete news article.

**NIJ: FORENSIC SCIENCE AND ELDER ABUSE**
*COSSA Washington Update, January 13, 2015*

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has issued a solicitation for proposals on research and development in forensic science for criminal justice purposes. The agency is looking to fund research that will "(1) Increase the body of knowledge to guide and inform forensic science policy and practice or; (2) Result in the production of useful materials, devices, systems, or methods that have the potential for forensic application." Proposals examining human factors as they relate to specific disciplines within forensic science will be accepted. More information is available in the full solicitation. The deadline for proposals is April 8, 2015. The Institute is also seeking applications for research and evaluation related to the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of elderly individuals. NIJ is especially interested in proposals that will "(1) determine an estimate of the financial costs associated with elder abuse; (2) develop a taxonomy of case outcomes that can be used to define success from multiple perspectives; and (3) examine theoretical perspectives on elder abuse that move the field toward a better understanding of why perpetrators abuse, neglect, and/or exploit elderly individuals." See the full solicitation for more information. Proposals must be received by April 7, 2015.

* This is the complete news article.

**STUDENT AID**

**QUESTIONING DEBIT CARD DEALS**
*By Michael Stratford, Inside Higher Ed, January 15, 2015*

Federal consumer protection officials want colleges to more thoroughly vet the agreements they make with financial institutions to provide banking products on campus. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau said Tuesday that it will create voluntary guidelines for colleges as they negotiate deals with financial institutions.

**TERRORISM RISK INSURANCE**

**CONGRESS APPROVES TERRORISM RISK INSURANCE REAUTHORIZATION BILL**
Congress approved legislation last week to reauthorize the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (TRIA), which expired December 31. TRIA is a significant issue for universities, especially those with Division I intercollegiate athletic programs or major Department of Defense labs. Originally enacted in 2002, the law created a public-private risk sharing mechanism designed to ensure that colleges and universities can purchase sufficient affordable insurance coverage to protect against losses resulting from a terrorist attack. Without the federal backstop, the cost of such insurance would be prohibitive: Insurers would have to charge very high premiums to protect themselves against a single catastrophic loss. Along with the business community, ACE and other higher organizations have long been on record as strongly supporting the renewal of this law. The bill is now on its way to the president for his expected signature.

* This is the complete news article.