The Midterms are (Almost) Over: What’s Next for Federal Higher Education Policy?

Midwestern Higher Education Compact Annual Meeting
November 15, 2022
Tom Harnisch, Vice President for Government Relations, SHEEO
About SHEEO

National association serving chief executives of statewide governing, policy, and coordinating boards of postsecondary education and their staffs.
About SHEEO

- Advocate for state policy leadership
- Act as a liaison between states and the federal government
- Provide information and analysis on educational and public policy issues
- Recognize that state context matters

1954
61 MEMBERS
50 STATES 2 TERRITORIES + D.C.
SHEEO, together with its members, works to promote an environment that values higher education and its role in ensuring the equitable education of all Americans, regardless of race/ethnicity, gender or socioeconomic factors.
Today’s Presentation

• Election Results/New Committee Chairs
• Student Loan Relief Plan
• Appropriations
• Regulations
• Policy Implementation
Election Results/New Committee Chairs

- **Senate**: 50-50 or 51-49, with Democrats in a slim majority
- **House**: GOP projected to take control by a slim majority

- **Senate HELP Committee**
  - Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) expected to become chair
  - Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) or Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) expected to become ranking member

- **House Education and Workforce Committee**
  - Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-NC) expected to become chair
  - Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA) expected to become ranking member
Senate Committee-Key Policy Position

Senate:

• Sen. Sanders
  – supports free public higher education
  – full cancellation of student debt
  – increased student aid for non-tuition expenses, investments in minority-serving institutions

• Sen. Rand Paul
  – supports ending the U.S. Department of Education, more tax deductions/advantages to pay for college

• Sen. Cassidy
  – supports College Transparency Act, short-term Pell Grants
House Education and Labor

House:

• Oversight on executive actions in the Biden Administration and potential lawsuit of Biden student debt relief plan

• REAL Reforms Act
  – Workforce Pell Grants
  – Risk-sharing
  – Streamline Income-Driven Repayment
  – End PSLF
  – End uncapped borrowing in the GradPlus program, greater institutional discretion over loans
  – Opposed to free college plans
Welcome to StudentAid.gov

Student Loan Debt Relief Is Blocked

Courts have issued orders blocking our student debt relief program. As a result, at this time, we are not accepting applications. We are seeking to overturn those orders.

If you’ve already applied, we’ll hold your application. Subscribe and check back here for updates. We will post information as soon as further updates are available.
Student Loan Forgiveness

House:

• The Biden plan would forgive $10,000 in federally-held student loan debt for those making less than $125,000 annually ($250K married)
• The Administration has collected 26 million applications, approved 16 million
• The plan has been blocked by federal courts
• Pressure is building to extend the loan repayment pause expiring on Dec. 31
Appropriations

• Currently on a continuing resolution until December 16.
• Congress could pass an omnibus spending bill or pass another CR, pushing it off until 2023.
• House has completed its work, and Senate Dems have offered their numbers. Negotiations with GOP remain.
• GOP has lost considerable leverage due to election results. Parties are more likely to make a deal on FY23 in this Congress.
• Key retirements provide incentive to make a deal.
• Sens. Leahy (D-VT) and Shelby (R-AL) are “close” to a top-line deal.
## Appropriations

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<th>Key Programs</th>
<th>FY22 Funding</th>
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Appropriations

FY 2023 Proposals Have Big Education Funding Increases – But Just Return Funding to About the 2011 Inflation-Adjusted Level

(Department of Education Discretionary Funding in Billions of Dollars)

2017, 2019, 2020, 2021 & 2022 totals reflect rescissions of Pell Grant funds
Final Regulations

• 90/10 rule
• Prison Education Programs
• Changes in Institutional Ownership
Final Regulations: Targeted Loan Relief Programs

- Borrower Defense to Repayment
- Prohibiting Mandatory Pre-dispute Arbitration and Class Action Waivers
- Interest Capitalization
- Total and Permanent Disability Discharges
- Closed School Discharges
- Public Service Loan Forgiveness
- False Certification Discharge
Other Regulations

- Title IX (proposed, currently going through comments)
- Gainful Employment (NPRM in April 2023)
- Standards of Administrative Capability (NPRM in April 2023)
- Ability to Benefit (NPRM in April 2023)
Policy Implementation

- FAFSA Simplification
- Chips and Science Act
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
- Inflation Reduction Act

CHIPS and Science Act Authorizations in Historical Context

Questions and Contact Information

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