



## **In this issue . . .**

- Congress Passes Budget Plan
  - Panelists Suggest Threat Assessment for Campus Safety
  - House Hears that Better Data Would Improve Teacher Preparation
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## **Congress Passes Budget Plan**

On Thursday, May 17, both the House and Senate debated the FY 2008 budget resolution (S. Con. Res. 21), and both chambers passed the plan within minutes of each other. The House voted 214 to 209, and the Senate voted 52 to 40. The Republican senators of Maine, Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe, voted for the resolution. The following senators did not vote: Brownback (R-Kan.), Coburn (R-Okla.), Dole (N.C.), Hatch (Utah), Johnson (D-S.D.), McCain (R-Ariz.), Smith (R-Ore.), and Sununu (R-N.H.).

Flipping back and forth between C-SPAN and C-SPAN-2, it was evident that both parties in both chambers had coordinated talking points. The Democrats focused on selling their budget resolution as returning to fiscal responsibility while increasing the federal investment on important national priorities like education, veterans' benefits, and health care. The Republicans said the budget plan calls for a tax increase, more spending, and claimed that Democrats want to spend taxpayer's money, while Republicans want Americans to be able to keep their own money.

The budget plan, which the president does not sign into law, includes \$9.5 billion more than the president's budget for the education category. How that amount will be divided up between student aid and K-12 education will be up to the education appropriations subcommittee when they write a bill later this month.

The budget resolution also includes a reconciliation instruction to the education committees to find \$750 million in savings to put towards deficit reduction by September 10, 2007. When the education committees act on this instruction, it will give them an opportunity to make changes to the student loan programs that would shift spending on lender subsidies to student benefits, and possible increased grant aid. How this bill and the other pieces of the Higher Education Act reauthorization come together will play out over the next couple of months.

*For more information, contact Stephanie Giesecke, [stephanie@naicu.edu](mailto:stephanie@naicu.edu)*

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## **Panelists Suggest Threat Assessment for Campus Safety**

Just a few weeks after the Virginia Tech massacre, the House Education and Labor Committee held a hearing on best practices in campus security. One of the hearing's most important messages was about the value of using threat assessment models on campuses.

As the hearing began on May 15, both Chairman George Miller (D-Calif.) and Ranking Member Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-Calif.) made it clear that the committee would not propose any new federal policy or legislation on campus security until it heard from the independent commission appointed by Virginia Governor Timothy Kaine (D) to examine the Virginia Tech shootings. At the same time, they made it clear that they were interested in specific aspects of campus

safety, such as emergency communications technology, the availability of comprehensive mental health services, and that adequate prevention services are in place.

The committee heard from four campus security experts: Steven J. Healy, director of public safety at Princeton University and president of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA); Louanne Kennedy, former provost at California State University at Northridge; Dewey G. Cornell, who directs the Virginia Youth Violence Project in the University of Virginia school of education; and Jan Walbert, vice president for student affairs at Arcadia University and president of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA).

All four spoke to the importance of threat assessment models on college campuses, which Dewey Cornell said allows campus security "to identify troubled students long before they are armed" and intervene before they resort to violence. Discussing the difference between profiling students and threat management, both Cornell and Healy emphasized that the FBI and Secret Service regard profiling inappropriate for a school setting. Both said the behavioral threat assessment approach provides colleges with a system for students to talk with someone anonymously about a threat, follow-up to ensure such reports don't fall through the cracks, and provisions for removing a student when necessary, while minimizing the threat of a lawsuit.

Healy's also recommended improving mass emergency communications, raising campus security professionalism, and improving federal campus crime reporting. He said that while there are no one-size-fits-all solutions, IACLEA plans to provide guidelines as part of its accreditation process. The association also recommends the creation of a National Center for Campus Public Safety. When asked by Rep. Rob Andrews (D-N.J.) if IACLEA certification should be required to receive federal funds, Healy said that since the association is "in the infant stages of accreditation," he would not recommend that now "but maybe in 20 years." Andrews also asked if student privacy laws hindered campus investigations. Healy responded that there are exceptions in FERPA for law enforcement and, in his experience, FERPA had never been an impediment in a campus safety situation.

Rep. Dale Kildee (D-Mich.) asked about the implications of state laws governing whether or not institutions can have sworn police officers on campus. In Michigan, he noted, public colleges have sworn police officers, but private colleges are not allowed to have them. Healy said that, across the country, state laws are split about half and half between sworn officers and public safety officers on public and private campuses.

Rep. McKeon asked the panelists whether federal policies were effective at both K-12 schools and colleges. Healy responded that colleges don't have the same control over students as K-12 schools do, and suggested that it could be helpful – especially in shootings – for colleges to adapt the K-12 model. Both Healy and Cornell encouraged Congress to provide funding for the FBI and Secret Service to work with colleges in improving threat assessment models.

Very little was said about the specifics of the Virginia Tech tragedy. The few times it was mentioned, it was in the context of a mental health problem, not a school violence problem. UVA's Cornell explained that violence has actually decreased overall at K-12 schools and college campuses, and that bullying and fighting are more prevalent than homicides. All agreed that more attention should be paid to the availability of student mental health services and to the coverage of such services by medical insurance.

*For more information, please contact Stephanie Giesecke*

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## **House Hears that Better Data Would Improve Teacher Preparation**

A recent hearing by the House Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness explored the respective impacts of Title II of the Higher Education Act and

Title II of No Child Left Behind on teacher preparation, as well as how federal dollars can best be invested to improve teacher quality, and how the two titles might be better coordinated.

Chaired by Rep. Rubén Hinojosa (D-Texas), the May 17 subcommittee hearing included a varied panel of witnesses who offered a range of recommendations on reauthorizing the federal role in teacher education. Evident throughout the testimony was the desire for both improved data quality and rigorous accountability. For example, panelists responded consistently that increased availability of data would improve performance, assessments, and student achievement.

Panelist George Scott, representing the federal General Accountability Office, discussed a recent study that outlined the differences between Title II of HEA and Title II of NCLB. He said that future studies would be improved by the increased availability of better data overall, and through assistance from the Department of Education in collecting data on teachers and student academic achievement.

Sharon Robinson, president of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), cited what she views as the three big myths of teacher preparation: that schools of education are weak in content knowledge, don't prepare teachers for the challenges of the classroom, and reject accountability. She advocated support for the recently-introduced TEACH Act (H. R. 2204), which includes a proposal from prominent researcher Linda Darling Hammond for a "Marshall Plan for Teaching." AACTE's HEA reauthorization recommendations include targeted investments to develop state data systems, improved teaching fellowships, and a revision of grade requirements. For the NCLB reauthorization, AACTE recommends targeted funding for systemic changes – at both the K-12 and college levels – to strengthen professionalism, mentoring, teachers' use of data to improve teaching, teaching of diverse populations, and improving college-school partnerships.

Janice Wiley, deputy director of Texas' Region I Service Center, talked about the use of scientifically-based teaching methods to improve student achievement in her region. The center represents 37 school districts and 370,000 students on the Texas-Mexico border.

Daniel Fallon, program director for education at the Carnegie Corporation, described a project of the nonprofit organization Teachers for a New Era, in which 11 colleges and universities are restructuring the way they prepare teachers for the classroom. He supports incentives to states for data to be used for program improvements, academy-based induction to support novice teachers, and partnering with schools for evidence-based performance.

Emily Feistritzer, president of the National Center for Alternative Certification, discussed the tracking of alternative certification routes since 1983. She said that such programs should no longer be considered the step-children of the teaching system, given that 130 alternative programs now produce a third of all new teachers.

*For more information, contact Stephanie Giesecke, [stephanie@naicu.edu](mailto:stephanie@naicu.edu)*

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## **Guide to Congress Available Free to Members**

NAICU has a limited number of copies remaining of the Guide to Congress for the 110th Congress, available free of charge to NAICU members as long as supply lasts. This compact book lists all members of the House and Senate with photo, brief bio information, and contact information for each. It also includes all House and Senate committee assignments, executive and judicial branch listings, congressional district maps for each state, as well as information on congressional terminology, procedures, and calendars.

To request a copy, e-mail Roland King, NAICU vice president for public affairs, at [roland@naicu.edu](mailto:roland@naicu.edu). Please include the full mailing address to which the guide should be sent.

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## ***Week in Review* Stories Available on the Web**

*Week in Review* stories are now being posted on the fully-redesigned NAICU Web site at the same time they are sent via e-mail to our electronic subscribers. If you'd like to keep up on the latest developments in higher education policy days before the print version of *Week in Review* hits your mailbox, go to [www.naicu.edu](http://www.naicu.edu). The stories – each identified as “NAICU Washington Update” – will appear on the home page immediately upon being posted, and also will show up in the Web site's News Room.

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Sarah A. Flanagan, *Vice President for Government Relations and Policy Development*

Roland H. King, *Vice President for Public Affairs and Acting Editor*

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We welcome your comments. Contact us at (202) 785-8866, by fax at (202) 835-0003, or by e-mail at [roland@naicu.edu](mailto:roland@naicu.edu). Our mailing address is 1025 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036. *The Week in Review* is available to NAICU member presidents and their staff via e-mail upon request, and is archived on the NAICU Web site, [www.naicu.edu](http://www.naicu.edu) (go to user log-in on home page). To subscribe, or for member log-in user name and password, e-mail [roland@naicu.edu](mailto:roland@naicu.edu).

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1025 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20036