



National Career Development Association Monthly Report

December 17, 2021

ON THE HILL

Happy Holidays from Lobbyit! This month on the Hill, Congress has been cramming to pass a long list of priority legislation. The House passed their version of the Build Back Better Act the Friday before Thanksgiving. This leaves the bill in the hands of the Senate, who continue to negotiate on a compromise. It is important to note that because the Senate is considering cutting several provisions, the version of the Build Back Better Act passed by the House will likely not be the same as the final version of the bill. Congressional leaders had initially committed to having the bill to President Biden's desk by Christmas, but the latest reports from the Senate side indicate that finalizing the bill will stretch into next year.

Because focus has been primarily on the Build Back Better Act, Congress opted not to negotiate the FY 2022 Appropriations bill before year-end and instead passed another continuing resolution to temporarily fund the government through February 18, 2022. We expect Congress will revisit FY 2022 appropriations after the Build Back Better Act is passed.

Congress has also been working through two other priorities that needed to be passed before the end of the year: the debt ceiling and the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Despite significant rifts between Republicans and Democrats on both items over the past few months, Senate Majority Leader Schumer and Minority Leader McConnell were able to iron out their differences and push both priorities through this week.

Looking ahead to early next year, we anticipate that Congress and the Administration will focus on addressing several other urgent challenges, including supply chain issues, federal privacy legislation, WIOA reauthorization, and mental health.

LOBBYIT UPDATE

As negotiations on the Build Back Better Act drag on, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee released draft text for their portion of the legislation. While there are some marginal decreases in funding compared to the House version, workforce development program funding was largely maintained. The Senate bill includes nearly \$17.6 billion in workforce funding:

- \$3 billion for adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities.
- \$1.5 billion for WIOA youth workforce investment activities.
- \$500 million for reentry employment programs.
- \$1 billion for registered apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and youth apprenticeships.
- \$4.6 billion for industry or sector partnership grants (\$400 million less than the House bill) for the purposes of carrying out employment and training activities for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations.
- \$500 million for Job Corps programs.



- \$600 million for Perkins CTE programs.
- \$4.895 billion for community college and industry partnership grants (\$100 million less than the House bill). Grants will go to community colleges that are a part of or in the process of establishing industry or sector partnerships to expand workforce development programs in high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations, including providing supportive services, career services and job placement assistance.
- \$1 billion for grants to support the direct care workforce.

Lobbyit has also begun investigating possible avenues for legislation addressing intern pay as we look to next year. At this time, no viable legislation that has been introduced this session addresses this. While there has been a bipartisan legislative push to pay interns within certain federal agencies (S. 599 is one example), broader legislation has yet to tackle this.

Reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is on the horizon in 2022, and we have seen an interest among other stakeholders for increasing funding and support for career counseling programs. We are working closely with our Congressional allies on this issue who believe that legislation like the Counseling for Career Choice Act provides a strong baseline framework for possible improvements to career counselor funding in WIOA.

LOOKING AHEAD

For the next few weeks, Congress will be working hard to finalize the Build Back Better Act, likely with the inclusion of significant workforce development funding. As we approach 2022, we anticipate that WIOA reauthorization will be a top priority, and we will be working to ensure that NCDCA has a seat at the table as reforms are made to programs authorized under the bill. We will be meeting with Congressman GT Thompson's staff, as well as staff for Congresswoman Elise Stefanik, before the new year to discuss workforce priorities within WIOA and more broadly. We are also discussing internally on which bipartisan pair of individuals to nominate for the NCDCA Legislator of the Year.