

August 29, 2016

## OVERVIEW

The congressional committee hearing process for policy legislation moves at a much slower pace than the state legislative process. As a result, the status of congressional bills has not changed for months. Information on federal Bills of Interest will be provided in the next update should any of the measures move forward. The House recessed on July 14, 2016 and is set to return on September 6, and the Senate is scheduled to return on September 5, 2016. In the meantime, the U.S. Department of Education has recently announced a pilot program on loan counseling and issued a proposed rule on distance education. Information from the Association of Community College Trustees as well as other sources is provided below.

### **Department of Education Announces Loan Counseling Experimental Sites**

On August 17, 2016, the US Department of Education released details on a pilot program to allow some institutions to require additional counseling for federal student loan borrowers beyond what is currently required under law. The goal is to determine whether additional loan counseling has an effect on academic achievement, financial literacy, and loan repayment. Institutions wishing to participate in the pilot must submit a letter of interest to the Department of Education. Letters must be received by September 29th for consideration. Chancellor's Office program staff are reviewing the details of this pilot program. Information can be found on the Department of Education's website:

<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/fact-sheet-department-education-announces-efforts-strengthen-loan-counseling-help-borrowers-manage-their-debt>

### **Department of Education Releases Proposed Rule on State Authorization of Distance Education**

On July 22, 2016, the U.S. Department of Education released a new iteration of a proposed rule over state authorization of distance learning. The proposal regulates how colleges and universities providing distance education become authorized to offer courses to students located in other states. It would also require additional consumer information, and set up a process for addressing student complaints against distance education programs. The proposed rule includes a notable change from prior proposals. For example, the requirement that states provide an active review of out-of-state colleges seeking authorization has been removed. The Department of Education accepted comments on the proposed rule through August 24, 2016. A final rule will likely be released by the end of October, for implementation on July 1, 2017. Information can be found on the Department of Education's website:

[http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/education-department-proposes-rule-state-authorization-postsecondary-distance-education-foreign-locations?utm\\_content=buffera296e&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_campaign=buffer](http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/education-department-proposes-rule-state-authorization-postsecondary-distance-education-foreign-locations?utm_content=buffera296e&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)