

## **Next Stop For ESEA Reauthorization: Senate Floor - Elementary and Secondary Education Act**

Article By:

Amy B Smith

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### **Legislative Activity**

#### **ESEA Reauthorization Passes Out of Committee**

After three days of marking up its ESEA reauthorization bill, the Every Child Achieves Act of 2015, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee unanimously passed the measure last Thursday afternoon. While nearly 60 amendments were considered, many of the most controversial amendments were withdrawn – though they will reappear during floor debate and consideration – and the committee worked in a bipartisan fashion to amend the bill. Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) is pushing leadership to schedule floor time for the measure before the Memorial Day recess. While more contentious issues will play out during the floor consideration, such as federal protections from bullying for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students and Title I portability, the rare unanimous vote in committee sends a message to other Senators regarding the urgency for updating No Child Left Behind. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan again commended the Committee leaders for their work on the bill and particularly for the inclusion of language to expand access to high-quality early education programs. However, Secretary Duncan, Congressional Democrats, and other education stakeholders called for further improvements to be made on the floor, including a requirement for turning around low-performing schools. While House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairman John Kline (R-MN) continues to push for a floor vote in that chamber, leadership has given no indication of bringing up the Committee-passed bill (H.R. 5) in the near future. Chairman Kline has acknowledged he is exploring alternative paths to get a rewrite through the House.

#### **Senate HELP Committee Approves Education Department Nominations**

Also last Thursday, the Senate HELP Committee approved two Obama Administration nominees for the Department of Education: Ericka Miller as Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education and Michael Yudin as Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The nominations now need to be approved by the full Senate.

This Week's Hearings:

- Wednesday, April 22: The House Science, Space and Technology Committee will mark up its

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America COMPETES Reauthorization bill, which reauthorizes federal research programs at the National Science Foundation, NASA, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Office of Science and Technology Policy and other agencies.

- Thursday, April 23: The House Committee on Energy and Commerce's Subcommittee on Energy and Power will hold a hearing to review Title II of its Architecture of Abundance energy plan, which directs the Secretary of Energy to establish a comprehensive program to improve education and training for energy and manufacturing-related jobs.

*Roxana Boyd contributed to this post.*

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