



DAILY BRIEFING

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NCHER Legislative and Leadership Conference: Hotel Cut-Off is Tomorrow, Register Today!

The NCHER Legislative and Leadership Conference, which will be held on February 6-8, 2023 at the Westin Washington, DC City Center, is less than two weeks away! This popular conference will be the first opportunity to hear about federal and state developments impacting the higher education finance industry and to meet with the House and Senate Education Committee leadership, Biden Administration officials, and your Congressional delegation on your organization's advocacy priorities. [So Register](#)

Today!

NCHER has secured the discounted room rate of \$199 per room, per night at The Westin Washington, DC City Center, which expires tomorrow. So act now and call the hotel at 202-429-1700 or click [here](#) to make online reservations.

The NCHER Board of Directors and staff have been hard at work putting together the [program agenda](#) geared toward providing important and timely sessions on the political and policy environment in the U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, and the Biden Administration. This is a 'can't-miss' event for the NCHER membership! The current draft program includes:

- An important session with government relations experts who will provide a federal update on recent developments impacting the higher education finance industry and the outlook as we begin 2023.
- House Education and the Workforce Committee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx will speak about her priorities for higher education, including ideas to improve federal and private student loan programs and college access and success initiatives. U.S. Department of Education Deputy Under Secretary Ben Miller will speak about the agency's policies and priorities, including reforms to the federal student loan program.
- A Congressional staff panel where House and Senate Republican and Democratic staff will discuss the priorities of the Democratic and Republican leadership in the 118th Congress and whether there are consensus areas for enactment of improvements to federal and private student aid programs.
- A timely session from the National Student Clearinghouse examining enrollment trends in postsecondary education, followed by observations from college and university leaders on a range of current topics such as learner access, affordability, student outcomes, and value measures.
- Engaging sessions examining state policies impacting higher education finance; examining recent proposals impacting private student loan programs; and how the higher education finance industry is managing Board and staff through the period of ongoing uncertainty and change as a result of the federal student loan forgiveness program, Fresh Start, and new income-driven repayment plans.
- Multiple opportunities to meet with your Congressional delegation on Capitol Hill, and a bootcamp session to review NCHER's Advocacy Priorities for the 2023 in

advance of Congressional and agency visits.

We look forward to seeing you in-person in Washington, DC!

House Republicans and Democrats Reach Agreement On Committee Ratios, Both Parties to Complete Assignments Later This Week

Over the weekend, House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) sent a [letter](#) to his colleagues confirming that he reached an agreement with the House Republican leadership on member ratios for all standing committees. With that agreement, it is expected that both the House Republican Steering Committee and the House Democratic Steering Committee will meet later this week to make committee assignments for their membership. In the letter, Leader Jeffries wrote “it is my expectation that no returning member of the House Democratic Caucus will involuntarily lose a seat related to an existing committee assignment, except for the House Committee on Ways and Means...”

Below are the ratios for the committees important to the NCHER membership:

- 34 Majority seats and 27 Minority seats on the House Committee on Appropriations
- 21 Majority seats and 16 Majority seats on the House Committee on Budget
- 25 Majority seats and 20 Minority seats on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce
- (The Committee on Education and the Workforce will see the greatest decrease in membership compared to the 117th Congress – a total of 4 seats on each side.)
- 29 Majority seats and 23 Minority Seats on the House Committee on Financial Services
- 26 Majority seats and 21 Minority seats on the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability
- 25 Majority seats and 18 Minority seats on the House Committee on Ways and Means.

For additional coverage, see this article from [Roll Call](#).

Education Secretary Cardona Delivers Address Outlining Priorities for the Coming Year

Today, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona delivered an [address entitled, “Raising the Bar: Lead the World,”](#) where he laid out his priorities for the coming year. In a press release, the U.S. Department of Education said that the speech was not a list of new priorities, but a call to strengthen the country’s will to transform education for the better, building on approaches that work in education. The key focus areas include the following:

- Achieving Academic Excellence
 - Accelerating learning for every student
 - Deliver a comprehensive and rigorous education for every student
- Boldly Improve Learning Conditions
 - Eliminate the educator shortage for every school
 - Invest in every student’s mental health and well-being
- Creating Pathways for Global Engagements
 - Ensure every student has a pathway to college and career
 - Provide every student a pathway to multilingualism

While Secretary Cardona largely focused on elementary and secondary education in his speech, he briefly mentioned the importance of career and technical education as well as career pathways that link K-12 education and higher education. He also said that the K-12 and college systems are disconnected and highlighted the importance of dual enrollment programs starting in 11th grade. At the end of the speech, Secretary Cardona told reporters that he would stay on through the rest of the President’s first term, which concludes on January 20, 2024.

For a copy of the press release from the Department, click [here](#).

Department of Education Holds First Hearing in DeVry University Case

On Monday, Administrative Law Judge Robert Layton held a hearing where he heard arguments from attorneys representing the U.S. Department of Education and DeVry University in a case where the agency is seeking funds from a college that is still operating to reimburse the cost of approved borrower defense to repayment claims. Last year, the Department announced that it was forgiving nearly \$72 million of federal student loan debt held by 1,800 borrowers who attended DeVry University after finding that the

university misled students about their job prospects. Following the announcement, the Department moved to recoup \$23.6 million of that money from the university to hold them responsible for the cost of discharging federal student loans owed by its former students. DeVry University appealed the penalty claiming that the Department is trying to hold them responsible for the cost of debt relief to borrowers who the company already paid restitution as part of other settlements. In Monday's hearing, Judge Layton said that potential "double liability" is an important issue in the case and that matching individual borrower records to assess whether there was double counting against DeVry would be a "key issue." Judge Layton said he planned to issue a written order that creates a 60-day period in which the Department and DeVry will exchange records about borrowers. The judge did not rule on the other issues in the case, including whether the appeals process should be put on hold while DeVry pursues a separate lawsuit against the Department.

New Urban Institute Report Evaluates Potential Impact of New IDR Plan

Earlier this week, the Urban Institute released a [new report entitled, "Few College Students Will Repay Student Loans Under the Biden Administration's Proposal,"](#) which compares how much undergraduate borrowers would pay under the U.S. Department of Education's new Income Driven Repayment (IDR) plan relative to the current IDR plan. The report states that "under the Biden plan, taking on debt for college would provide larger benefits than Pell Grants for many students. This means students will have strong incentives to borrow, especially at community colleges, where students who take on \$12,000 of debt can expect to repay only \$1,000 under the new plan." The report says that the proposed IDR plan is the most generous yet, but it will make the federal student loan program significantly more expensive and risks encouraging students to take on more debt, which could have implications for their personal finances even if it is eventually forgiven.

U.S. Department of Education News

For today's *Federal Register*, click [here](#).

Member News



The Boards of Directors of the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) and Kentucky Higher Education Student Loan Corporation (KHESLC) recently [announced](#) that they are seeking a dynamic leader to fill the position of Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director. KHEAA/KHESLC are sister

organizations created by state statute, whose joint mission is to enable Kentuckians to achieve their education goals beyond high school. The CEO/Executive Director will serve as one of the Commonwealth's leading policy advocates for financial access to and successful completion of postsecondary education, representing the interests of prospective and enrolled Kentucky students and their families. To apply, submit a cover letter and resume via email in PDF format to ceosearch@kheaa.com by 4:30 PM EST Tuesday, January 31, 2023. For more information, [click here](#).

General News

[The Hill](#) reports that Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) recently said that a bipartisan deal on raising the nation's debt limit is up to House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and President Joe Biden.

[Forbes](#) examines whether student and parent borrowers will be taxed on any loan forgiveness provided in 2023.

[Business Insider](#) reports on how borrowers should calculate their monthly student loan payment under proposed rule creating a new income-driven repayment plan.

[Higher Education Dive](#) interviews six college admissions experts who share their biggest predictions for 2023.

The Brookings Institution recently released a new [report](#) on college enrollment gaps and how academic preparation influences opportunity.

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