



ITCA Update

March 10, 2025

This week's update reports on activities occurring in Washington DC directly related to our mission and purpose. The House and Senate are working to extend the Continuing Resolution (CR) to keep the government open past the midnight March 14th expiration of the current bill. ITCA will continue to provide federal updates on Monday of each week.

FFY 2025 Funding The current CR expires at midnight this Friday, March 14th. Halfway through the FFY 2025 year, there are still no final funding levels for federal programs. The current Continuing Resolution (CR) is keeping the government open at last year's funding levels. These are the Part C funds states will receive July 1, 2025.

The House leadership has released a bill to extend the CR until September 30, 2025. Others in the Congress want a shorter CR so that there is more time to set specific funding levels for each program for the remainder of this fiscal year.

The House bill is expected to be considered by the full House tomorrow, March 11th. The bill includes \$13 billion in domestic cuts from the FFY 2024 levels. The bill also includes a \$6 billion increase in border funds and other defense items. If the bill passes the full House, it will be considered by the Senate. Sixty votes are needed for passage in the Senate.

It is not clear if the votes are there in either chamber to pass the bill as written. There is significant disagreement on whether to include language committing the Executive Branch to spend any funds appropriated by the Congress. If no agreement can be reached by both the House and the Senate on the same language extending the CR by midnight Friday, there will be a government shut down until agreement can be reached.

U.S. Department of Education On Monday, March 3rd, Linda McMahon was confirmed as the new Secretary of the Department of Education. Immediately following her confirmation, Secretary McMahon published a statement on the Department of Education website titled "Our Department's Final Mission."

Secretary McMahon stated: "My vision is aligned with the President's to send education back to the states and empower all parents to choose an excellent education for their children. [. . .] We will partner with Congress and other federal

agencies to determine the best path forward to fulfill the expectations of the President and the American people. [. . .]

These are our convictions:

1. Parents are the primary decision makers in their children's education.
2. Taxpayer-funded education should refocus on meaningful learning in math, reading, science, and history—not divisive DEI programs and gender ideology.
3. Postsecondary education should be a path to a well-paying career aligned with workforce needs."

The President has been clear that he will issue an Executive Order related to dismantling the Department of Education. The order has not been issued yet.

It is important to remember that the Department of Education cannot be eliminated without Congressional action and the IDEA statute cannot be amended without Congressional involvement. Both actions would require a minimum of 60 votes in the Senate.

HHS Policy Change on Public Comment The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has changed a longstanding policy effective March 3, 2025. HHS has authorized its agencies to bypass public comment for rules addressing "grants, benefits or contracts," and in cases where "good cause" exists to forgo comment procedures. It is not clear how broadly HHS agencies will interpret and apply this new policy on public comment. Advocates are watching carefully to see whether the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) will pursue any major Medicaid rulemaking without public notice and comment and if they do, whether that approach will be upheld if challenged in court.

Personnel Updates A major reduction in force (RIF) of federal employees is expected sometime in March. HHS has offered an incentive of \$25,000 to an employee that voluntarily resigns by this Friday March 14th. A similar offer was given to employees of the Education Department last week.