**Meeting Summary for Bi-Weekly NACDD Network Call**

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Quick recap

The team discussed ongoing audit and email responses. Erin Prangley provided updates on congressional activity, expressing dissatisfaction with defense sector increases while non-defense spending remained flat. She also discussed a bipartisan proposal to extend the child tax credit and the potential impact of a 3% increase in defense spending. The team also highlighted the importance of state efforts to expand broadband.

Summary

Audit, Leadership, Congressional Activity, Appropriations Bills

Robin Troutman initiated the discussion about an ongoing audit and requested patience with email responses. Erin Prangley then acknowledged Arlene Ponslet's recent leadership role, thanking her for her work on the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Erin provided an update on congressional activity, mentioning the House's passage of a continuing resolution until early March. She also discussed the progress of the appropriations bills through the House and Senate, noting that while some progress has been made, details like per agency and program allocations still need to be worked out. Erin highlighted dissatisfaction with the defense sector getting a 3% increase while non-defense spending remained flat. She also expressed frustration over the lack of agency numbers and the possibility of a full year continuing resolution. Despite this, Erin remained optimistic about level funding and emphasized the importance of reaching out to members of Congress and initiating meetings with key offices.

Child Tax Credit Extension and Broadband Initiatives

Erin Prangley discussed the bipartisan proposal to extend the child tax credit, emphasizing its importance in lifting children out of poverty. She noted that while it's a three-year extension, it will provide significant relief for families. Erin also mentioned that she will be hosting office hours starting February second and encouraged everyone to participate. She then moved on to discuss broadband initiatives and asked for feedback on current efforts. Lastly, Erin shared new resources, including guidance from the Department of Education on assistive technology and toolkits for action alerts regarding housing and funding cuts.

Defense Spending Increase and Budget Agreement Concerns

Erin Prangley discussed the potential impact of a 3% increase in defense spending, describing it as good news. She also expressed concerns about the potential opposition within the Republican party to a full budget agreement for the rest of the fiscal year. Erin highlighted the power of the defense lobby and its influence on policy decisions. She mentioned the possibility of government shutdown if Speaker Johnson decides to quit. However, she remained hopeful that cooler heads will prevail and committee chairs will listen to their counterparts. She mentioned names of key figures in the Operations Committee, such as Cameron and Granger, whom she believes could help push through a full appropriations bill.

Broadband Expansion, New Interns, and Upcoming Events

Erin Prangley discussed the importance of state efforts to expand broadband and promised to report back after a net inclusion panel. Robin Troutman introduced two new interns, Nick Mastrella and Abigail Lewis, who are part of the State University of New York Rockport program. Nick will be working on long term support and services, while Abigail Lewis will focus on issues related to employment, housing, and civil rights. Amy Deaville reminded the team about an upcoming peer to peer call and the state of the States webinar. Sheryl Matney announced that they will be publishing their noble FAQs. Lastly, Kate Barrow shared an update about some appointments submitted to the governor's office.

Appointment Rejection Concerns Addressed

Kate Barrow expressed concerns about two appointments being rejected and sought advice on potential pushback options. Sheryl Matney clarified that while recommendations can be made to the governor's office, the ultimate appointment authority rests with the governor. Sheryl suggested strategies such as involving non-appointed individuals in work groups, task forces, or advisory committees. She also emphasized the importance of education and relationship building in the process. Kate agreed to this approach.

Upcoming Events and Announcements

Eric Berg announced a series of upcoming events, including an Internet safety webinar in collaboration with the Autism Society, a Self Advocacy Committee meeting, and another webinar. He mentioned that all information would be included in the recap email. Robin Troutman shared that the results of the DD awareness artwork review would be announced on Monday and that committees are actively recruiting new members. She also encouraged everyone to send national-level events to Rafa for inclusion in their calendar. Robin also noted that the next Nacdd board meeting was scheduled for February 29th and reminded the group that anyone was invited to listen in. He also mentioned an outstanding task to respond to an individual.

Next steps

Erin will send out a Zoom link for her office hours starting February 2nd.

Erin will send out a recap email with information about the upcoming webinars and meetings.

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