



Politics

[\[Print\]](#) [\[Email\]](#)

[Share](#)



Senate passes \$26.1 billion state aid package

By: [Susan Ferrechio](#)
Chief Congressional Correspondent
August 5, 2010

By Susan Ferrechio Chief Congressional Correspondent

A \$26.1 billion aid package for states and teachers cleared a critical Senate hurdle on Wednesday despite overwhelming opposition from Republicans who say the legislation is fiscally irresponsible and a gift to labor unions.

A vote to block a Republican filibuster on the measure passed 61-38, clearing the way for final Senate passage as early as Thursday. The House is planning an emergency session next week in order to pass the money in time for the beginning of the school year.

Sens. Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins, both Maine Republicans, gave Senate Democrats the help they needed to stop a filibuster after weeks of failed attempts.

The bill includes \$10 billion for local school boards to avert staff layoffs as well as \$16.1 billion to temporarily increase Federal Medical Assistance Percentages, the program that reimburses states for Medicaid, whose rolls have increased in the recession.

Democrats were able to lure Snowe and Collins by finding cuts in the federal budget to pay for the new expenditures instead of increasing the deficit.

"Maine's hospitals, nursing homes and home health agencies are also struggling due to the economic downturn," the two senators said in a joint statement. "An extension of the enhanced FMAP with the gradual phase out included in this bill will help to ensure that these providers of critical health care services can continue to serve those who reach out to them for services."

Soon after passage, Democrats touted the bill as a job saver and slammed Republicans for opposing it.

"In the past few hours," an e-mail blast from the office of Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., read, "Republicans have voted to fire 290,000 teachers, firefighters and police officers."

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., called the bill "a last-minute effort by Democrats in Washington to funnel more money to the public employee unions before an election."

Republican critics pointed out that the states already received \$100 billion for education under the \$800 billion stimulus and a third of that money remains unspent.

The bill does not specify how many teaching jobs would be preserved.

The jobs figures put forth by Democrats come from the Economic Policy Institute, a liberal think tank, which used a formula to come up with the numbers.

Economists at EPI say the \$10 billion for teachers included in the bill would save 140,000 school jobs, though not specifically teaching jobs, while the FMAP funding would keep about 150,000 state employees in the work force.

"It's a little misleading when we say it's a teacher bailout," said Neal McCluskey, associate director of the Center for Educational Freedom at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank. "It's about overall school staff."

sferrechio@dcexaminer.com

More from Susan Ferrechio

- [Senate passes \\$26.1 billion state aid package](#)
- [House will return briefly to vote on state aid package](#)
- [Senate Dems scrap energy bill for the summer](#)
- [Waters joins Rangel as 2nd Democrat facing ethics charges](#)
- [Dems face new ethics charges](#)



[CCSF chancellor donates raise to help close funding gap](#)

City College of San Francisco's chancellor Don Griffin just completed his two years on the job with rave reviews from the school's governing board. But Griffin opted forego...

—[Andrea Koskey](#)

[Newsom lauds Proposition 8 ruling](#)

Mayor Gavin Newsom, who started the battle for gay marriage six years ago when he married gay couples at City Hall, said Wednesday's ruling was another historic step toward...

—[Erin Sherbert](#)

[Budget and Finance Committee approves Presidio Fire Department transfer](#)

The Board of Supervisor's Budget and Finance Committee approved an agreement to transfer the beleaguered Presidio Fire Department into the hands of San Francisco. The plan,...

—[Erin Sherbert](#)

[Board committee OKs parking meter expansion plan](#)

The City is moving ahead with a plan to install more high-tech parking meters across San Francisco, an idea aimed to increase revenue while cutting the number of parking tickets...

—[Erin Sherbert](#)

[More Under the Dome posts...](#)



[Immigration enforcement union took a no-confidence vote in its leadership](#)

Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents believe overwhelmingly that their department leadership has become so politicized as to compromise the effectiveness of ICE and the...

[Newsweek already proving it was overvalued at \\$1](#)

I read this, and I'm convinced that someone overpaid for Newsweek. The Tea Party's Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Night Moderates rule a series of...

—[David Freddoso](#)

[Hospital lobby tried to save individual mandate in Mizzou](#)

Barack Obama told you that those battling his health-care bill were those who "profit from the status quo." Joe Biden just sent out an email bragging that he and the...

—[Timothy P. Carney](#)

[House will return briefly to vote on state aid package](#)

The House will interrupt its Summer recess next week and return to the Capitol in order to take up the \$26.1 billion state aid package expected to pass the Senate this...

—[Susan Ferrechio](#)

[More Beltway Confidential posts...](#)



To view this site, you need to have Flash Player 8.0 or later installed. Click [here](#) to get the latest Flash player.

MOST POPULAR STORIES

[Man accused of strangling woman with rosary beads faces hearing](#)

[Engineer, associate charged with 243 felony counts for fraud](#)

[Scoop: Spencer, Heidi called out on divorce story](#)

[Read Judge Walker's ruling on Prop 8](#)

[Suspected jewel thieves allegedly part of international crime syndicate](#)

[City courts on edge with stabbing cases](#)

[Club America to get a Real test at Candlestick](#)

[Suspect in nightclub killing arrested; no charges filed](#)

[City Hall Watch: Creative use of Octavia empty lots a boon for city](#)

[Federal judge strikes down Calif. gay marriage ban](#)

```
.t_links_box { font-family: arial, Helvetica, sans-serif; width: 300px; height: auto; /* border: 1px solid #ccc; */ margin: 10px 0px 10px 0px; padding: 10px; /* line-height: 10px; */ line-height: auto; height: auto; } .t_links_box p { margin: 0px padding: 0px; /* line-height: 0px; */ } .t_links_box p.heading, .heading { font-size: 11px; font-weight:bold; padding: 0; margin: 0px 0px 20px 0px; /* line-height: 10px; */ } .t_links_box .t_links { /* padding: 0px 0px 5px 0px; */ padding: 0px 0px 10px 0px; /* border-bottom: 1px solid #ccc; */ } .t_links_box .text a { font-size: 12px; text-decoration: none; font-weight:bold; color: #333; } .t_links_box .text a:hover { text-decoration: underline; } .t_links_box .before_text a { font-size: 11px; text-decoration: none; color: #333; } .t_links_box .before_text a:hover { text-decoration: underline; } .t_links_box .after_text { font-size: 11px; }
```

[Masters in Alternative Dispute Resolution](#)



.submission { display: none; } .submission { display: none; }

Reader Comments

All comments on this page are subject to our Terms of Use and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Examiner or its staff. Comment box is limited to 200 words. Comments that advocate violence, racism, or libel as well as comments written in ALL CAPS are not permitted.

[blog comments powered by Disqus](#)



[RSS](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Mobile](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Rack Locations](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

Find this article at:

http://www.sfexaminer.com/politics/Senate-passes-_26_1-billion-state-aid-package-1007421-99978239.html

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.