

# COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

Volume XII, Number 13

July 12, 1993

## HOUSE BEGINS WORK ON APPROPRIATIONS BILLS *HS*

As Washington focuses on the upcoming House-Senate conference committee to hammer out the budget reconciliation bill that sets the deficit reduction targets for the Clinton budgets of the next few years and the amount of taxes Americans will pay to finance those budgets, the House of Representatives has begun to make decisions about how much agencies will spend in FY 1994 on federal programs. Prior to recessing for the July 4th holiday, the House passed 9 of 13 annual appropriations bills. Working under the limitations imposed by the spending caps of the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, the House froze many programs, and increases were offset by corresponding decreases in an all too often zero-sum appropriations game.

What follows is a round-up of decisions made by the House prior to July 4 on those agencies of interest to social and behavioral scientists. The House will take up the remaining appropriations bills after the recess, with Senate action and conference committees beginning their work in late summer and early fall.

## HUD POLICY RESEARCH ON ROLLER COASTER; NSF RETAINS INCREASE *HS*

The Office of Policy Development and Research (OPDR) in the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) discovered the new vagaries of the appropriations game as it rode a roller coaster of increases, decreases, and restorations during the House's deliberations on its FY 1994 spending level.

The office, which funds programs of research, studies, testing and demonstrations related to the HUD mission, was funded at \$25 million in FY 1993. President Clinton asked for an increase to \$35 million, the same request the Bush administration made last year and rejected by Congress.

The House VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee again rejected the President's request and allocated \$25 million to

OPDR for FY 1994. However, after the deliberations of the full appropriations committee, OPDR received \$85 million for next year "to fund high priority research, studies, and demonstrations... to be distributed at the Secretary's discretion." Why was the full committee so generous? As Subcommittee Chairman, Rep. Louis Stokes (D-OH), explained on the House floor, "In order to have some flexibility in conference, what we have done in some accounts is to park money that, in conference, we will be able to remove to fund some of the other programs [currently unauthorized] that we know are going to be unauthorized."

When the bill was debated in the House, in the Committee of the Whole, a device the House uses to conduct much of its business, the OPDR account became the target of amendments to strip it of what appeared to be inflated funding. First, an amendment by Rep. Doug Bereuter (R-NE) reduced its total by \$2 million to pay for shortfalls in the Indian Home Loan Guarantee Program. Then Rep. Rod Grams (R-MN) succeeded, by a roll-call vote of 220-194, in striking \$48 million from the program, with Grams calling the "parking" concept "the kind of closed door, smoke-filled room process that the American voters are sick and tired of seeing." This brought OPDR's funding back down to the President's request of \$35 million.

The House was far from finished with this agency. Rep. Jim Kolbe's (R-AZ) successful amendment took \$10 million from the OPDR account and transferred it to the HOPE ownership program. OPDR was back to last year's level of

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\$25 million. All of this House floor action occurred on June 28. However, the House postponed the final vote on the VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Appropriations bill until the following day.

On June 29 the House rose from the Committee of the Whole and convened as the full House of Representatives. The Republicans, who have been unhappy with the Democrats' decision to allow the five delegates representing the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa to vote in the Committee of the Whole, have been forcing second votes on the same amendments in the full House (where the delegates cannot vote) even though they were already voted on in the Committee of the Whole. On the second vote, the Grams amendment lost by a vote of 198-214. The end result: OPDR had \$48 million restored and came out of the House with an appropriation of \$73 million for FY 1994.

Funding for the National Science Foundation, which is included in the same bill, emerged from the House in the same form as the Subcommittee version (see *Update*, May 31) with NSF receiving an 11 percent increase overall and a 10 percent increase for research. The Senate Subcommittee is expected to mark up its version of this bill in mid-July.

#### AGRICULTURE FUNDING: NRI INCREASED; ECONOMIC RESEARCH RESTORED *HS*

The House of Representatives passed the Agriculture, Rural Development and Related Agencies appropriations bill by a vote of 304-119 on

June 29. For the most part the bill was not subject to major cost-cutting amendments and emerged from the House floor similar to the way it came from the Subcommittee, although the House did reject an attempt to reduce funding for the Cooperative State Research Service's (CSRS) special grants.

For Competitive Research Grants under the National Research Initiative (NRI), the House allocated \$114 million, an increase of \$16.5 million over FY 1993, but almost \$15 million below the request. The Markets, Trade and Policy component (the House report did not acknowledge the Department's name change to Rural Development, Markets and Trade) of the NRI remained at \$4 million. Global change research was moved from the Special Grants category and funded at \$2.5 million. In its report, the committee noted that "it would be advisable to devote increased competitive grant funds to applied research to better demonstrate the role of this program in assisting with the many problems facing agriculture." The committee also encouraged the grantees obtaining matching funds. The report asked for summaries of grants approved and what they accomplished, in addition to opening up the competitive grants process to special grant recipients.

The House provided \$50.1 million for special grants, \$23.3 million below the FY 1993 funding level, but \$16.1 million above the President's request. The Rural Policies Institute did not receive funding from the House, but like many other Special Grants denied, it will look to the Senate for restoration of its funds for FY 1994. For payments under the Hatch Act, the House appropriated \$171.3 million, a \$2.5 million increase over FY 1993 and the same as the President's request.

The House rejected the administration's contention that the Economic Research Service duplicated the work of other agencies. It noted that ERS "provides a vital service to farmers, lawmakers, and the general public. Policy decisions that affect the lives of everyone in this Nation are based on the economic analysis and research work done by the Economic Research Service." The House provided \$57.7 million for FY 1994, a slight decrease of \$1 million from last year, but a \$6.9 million increase over the President's request. The National Agricultural Statistical Service received \$82.1 million from the House, a \$1.1 million increase over last year.

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**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** *SP, HS*

By a 305-124 vote on June 30, the House passed the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill (H.R. 2518). The bill provides a total of \$259.8 billion: \$192.8 billion for mandatory programs, and \$67 billion for discretionary programs. The latter represents an 8 percent increase over FY 1993 levels. The majority of the floor debate centered around an amendment successfully offered by Rep. Henry Hyde (R-IL), prohibiting federal funding of abortions in most circumstances.

At the Department of Health and Human Services, the bill reflects the President's priorities, providing a total of approximately \$2.5 billion for AIDS research, education, prevention, and treatment, an increase of about \$500 million over the FY 1993 level. The funds are appropriated to the public health agency or institute involved, and are not consolidated into one separate account. The exact amount of AIDS-related biomedical research will be determined by the peer review system in place at NIH.

Overall funding for the National Institutes of Health is \$10.9 billion, \$610.1 million above the FY 1993 level, and \$268.7 above the President's request. This represents a 5.9 percent increase over FY 1993, with each institute and center receiving at least an additional 5.2 percent. According to the committee report accompanying the bill, the increase will provide for inflationary adjustments for each institute and center, in addition to real growth of at least one percent. Although supportive of the high priority given to research on breast cancer and AIDS as well as other diseases, neither the bill nor the report identifies a specific funding level for a particular disease. Stated in the report, the committee "believes strongly that the specific allocation of funds among diseases and among research programs should be determined by the scientists and science managers at NIH based on the scientific opportunities available. These judgements are based on a fair system of peer review administered by NIH in consultation with its established system of advisory councils."

H.R. 2518 designates \$420.3 million to the National Institute of Aging (NIA), an increase of \$20.8 million over FY 1993, and \$27.7 million over the President's request. The committee mentioned its support of research that would delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease, and encouraged increased efforts with regard to studies on cardiovascular

aging. NIA was also urged to maintain and strengthen its Hispanic health and aging research initiative, with the report noting that Hispanics are the fastest growing and most diverse group among the U.S. elderly, and that they are generally poorer and in worse health than the total elderly population. Lastly, the committee stressed the importance of continuing demographic research, including the Health and Retirement Survey and the Asset and Health Dynamics of the Oldest Old survey.

This legislation allocates \$555.2 million to the National Institute on Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), an increase of \$27.4 million over the FY 1993 appropriation, and \$15.7 over the President's request. The committee stressed the importance of continuing NICHD research initiatives in several areas including: pediatric and maternal AIDS; vaccines, especially the pertussis vaccine; Rett's syndrome, a progressive neurological disorder that affects only females and results in profound mental and physical retardation; basic and clinical medical rehabilitation; Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS); middle childhood development (ages 5-11); the normative behavioral development of ethnic minorities; bionutrition; and infertility.

The bill also includes \$51 million for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), an increase of \$2.5 million over FY 1993 appropriation, and a \$2 million increase above the President's request. The National Center for Nursing Research (NCNR) was recently elevated to the National Institute for Nursing Research (NINR) (see *Update* June 28.)

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) was given \$185.6 million, an increase of \$9.2 million over the FY 1993 appropriation, and \$12 million above the President's request. The report comments on NIAAA's broad research program "which encompasses a wide range of biomedical and behavioral disciplines, developing new scientific knowledge that will reduce the health, social, and economic consequences of this disease."

The bill funds the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at \$425.2 million, an increase of \$21 million over FY 1993 levels, and \$18 million over the President's request. As it did last year, the committee encouraged NIDA to support research that would "demonstrate the effectiveness of centrally-coordinated service and research programs that are focused on populations of women, children, and minorities."

This legislation also appropriates \$613.4 million to the **National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)**, an increase of \$30.3 million over FY 1993, and \$37.4 million over the President's request. The committee praised NIMH's research emphasis on eating disorders, noting the technical assessment conference held in May, 1993. Further, the committee encourages the Institute "to continue to follow up on the conference by initiating a public and professional eating disorders education campaign as directed in last year's report," and to fully comply with the directive by the end of FY 1994.

The House included \$12 million for Policy Research in the office of the **Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation**, an increase of almost \$4 million over the FY 1993 level, but a reduction of \$3.9 million from the President's request. The increase would provide an additional 13 staff positions for the office and for research grants and contracts related to health care reform and welfare reform.

Since it is not currently authorized, the House provided \$51.5 million for the **National Center for Health Statistics**, the same as the FY 1993 appropriation and \$8 million below the budget request. The NCHS also receives funds from the one percent Public Health Service evaluation set-aside, which will amount to \$28.9 million for FY 1994.

The House also appropriated \$3 million to the **Public Health Service**, sixty percent of the request, to initiate a data improvement and analysis effort in support of health care reform. The initiative will fund interagency efforts to collect and analyze data on employer provided health insurance, population estimates of health insurance coverage, the efficacy of various cost containment efforts, and related areas.

#### LABOR *HS*

The House appropriated \$281.8 million for the **Bureau of Labor Statistics**, an increase of \$6.8 million over last year, and \$1.3 million over the President's request. The committee report notes concern about the usefulness of information currently available on worker injury, illness and health and asks the Departments of Labor and Health and Human Services to conduct a review of the situation. It also requests the Secretary of Labor to commission a thorough review of the nation's labor market information needs and

products and to report back to the committee by June 1994.

At the **Employment and Training Administration**, as part of the National Activities account of the Job Training Partnership Act, the House appropriated \$12.3 million for research and evaluation, an increase of \$4 million over the FY 1993 level, to fund a multi-year outcomes evaluation of the Job Corps program.

The House also provided \$480,000 and 7 staff slots to establish an **Office of the Chief Economist** to serve as the primary economic adviser to the Secretary of Labor, and to provide economic analysis of special topical initiatives and critical general issues. Secretary Robert Reich has appointed Harvard economist Lawrence Katz to this position.

#### EDUCATION *HS*

The **Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)** received \$15.9 million, the same as last year and \$2 million less than the request. According to the House Committee report, "these funds are sufficient to continue the student exchange program with the European Community and to expand model programs dedicated to advancing minority Ph.D. and faculty development.

The House bill provides \$52.3 million for the domestic program activities related to **international education and foreign language studies** programs, a \$3 million increase over FY 1993 levels. One-third of the increase is to initiate the new Institute for International Public Policy to increase the number of minorities trained for foreign service and international studies careers. The **Fulbright-Hays** overseas programs were appropriated \$5.8 million, the same as FY 1993 and the budget request.

The **Law School Clinical Experience** program, slated for extinction by the Bush administration, was of the big winners in the Education Department appropriation. The House granted it a \$5 million increase, bringing its FY 1994 appropriation to \$14.9 million. The **Legal Training for the Disadvantaged (CLEO)** program was level funded for FY 1994 at slightly less than \$3 million.

The major graduate fellowship programs **Patricia Roberts Harris** (\$20.4 million), **Javits Fellowships** (\$7.9 million), **Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need** (\$27.5 million) all received

appropriations at the FY 1993 levels. The House committee report also told the Department that since these programs did not receive increases for FY 1994 the requirement in the Higher Education Amendments of 1992 to increase stipends can not be met. Therefore, the Department is expected to support the same number of fellowships at the same stipend level as before. A new program that supports professional development for minority faculty and fellowships for minority bachelor's degree recipients who wish to become faculty was allocated \$4 million by the House, one-half the requested amount.

Since the Office of Education Research and Improvement (OERI) is without an authorization (a reauthorization bill emerged from a House subcommittee on June 30), the House appropriated \$74 million for education research, the same as FY 1993. All programs within the research account remain at last year's levels, including Field Initiated Studies (\$958,000). The House also level funded the National Center for Education Statistics at \$48.6 million, \$11.4 million below the budget request. The Committee report noted that NCES had received a 123 percent increase in the past five years and that was certainly enough. The National Assessment of Educational Progress, a component of NCES with a separate appropriation line, also was allocated the FY 1993 level of \$29.3 million, \$35.7 million below the request. If the requested increase is not granted by the Senate, further expansion of state-by-state assessments would have to be scrapped.

Library programs, which had been zero-funded in the President's budget, had their funding restored by the House, albeit without an increase over FY 1993 appropriations. Aid to research libraries received \$5.8 million, library research and demonstrations was allocated \$2.8 million, and College Library Technology was funded at \$3.9 million.

The House, as it has in previous years, did not earmark a specific amount for civic education (\$4.3 million in FY 1993) within the Fund for Innovation in Education, acceding to the wishes of the Secretary of Education who now has the discretion to determine the spending level for this activity in FY 1994.

## HOUSE PANEL VOTES TWO-THIRDS CUT IN CENSUS PLANNING BUDGET *MB*

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and State, chaired by Rep. Neal Smith (D-IA), recently voted to eliminate \$15 million of the Census Bureau's \$23 million request for Fiscal Year 1994 research and design efforts for planning the 2000 census.

The drastic reduction reflects the growing frustration on Capitol Hill over the cost and quality of the 1990 census, as well as Census Bureau efforts to redress these issues for 2000. The 1990 census has been described by some experts as the most expensive and least accurate of all censuses. The General Accounting Office has been critical of the Bureau's efforts to improve the census for 2000 (see *Update*, March 8, May 31.)

In the report accompanying the Census Bureau's appropriation, the panel said, "The 1990 decennial census was far too costly and inaccurate, and the results were delayed considerably... it is apparent that the Bureau is not serious about correcting the continuing concerns." The report urges the Office of Management and Budget to play a more active role in the census, "to insure that the lowest cost, most accurate method of collecting the necessary population data is selected, and that the method chosen provides for a more timely distribution of the data results," as well as pursuing "the most appropriate and cost-effective alternative means of data collection... [that] ensure that only the data needed to satisfy statutory requirements is being collected at taxpayer expense."

The full House will consider the Commerce, Justice, State appropriations bill in mid-July, and the Senate will follow suit shortly before or after its August recess. COSSA and its allies have been active on this issue, with the goal of achieving full funding for the census research and design efforts.

## HUMANITIES BILL, HACKNEY NOMINATION CLEAR HURDLES *MB*

Legislation to reauthorize the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 is moving swiftly through the House, having recently gained the approval of two key panels. On June 22 the House Education and Labor Subcommittee on Labor-Management Relations, chaired by Rep. Pat Williams (D-MT),

approved the bill, with the full committee following suit on June 29. The bill may go to the House floor by early August.

Known as a simple reauthorization, the legislation, authored by Williams, continues the life of NEH, along with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Institute for Museum Services, without making any programmatic changes. According to Williams, this was done to give Congress and the new administration an opportunity to assess the future directions of these agencies. The legislation has received only minimal opposition.

Sheldon Hackney, former president of the University of Pennsylvania, faced tough questioning on speech codes at Penn during his June 25 Senate confirmation hearings, but emerged with the support of several key Republicans who had previously expressed concern over his selection to chair NEH. The Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, chaired by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA), is expected to vote on Hackney's nomination in the coming weeks.

## OMB ISSUES REVISED INFORMATION POLICY; NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS <sup>145</sup>

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued new policies on June 25 for managing government information. The long planned revision to circular A-130, first promulgated in 1985, encourages agencies to utilize new technologies to improve public access to government information. (The revised circular appears in the Federal Register of July 2, 1993 pp. 36068-86.)

Sally Katzen, Administrator of OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) which devised the new rules, announced that under the new A-130: "We will use information technology to make government information available to the public in a timely and equitable manner, via a diverse array of sources, both public and private. We will also ensure that privacy and security interests are protected."

The new policy statement keeps the basic rationale for agency information collection as "information necessary for the proper performance of agency functions and which has practical utility." OMB, basing its justification on the Paperwork

Reduction Act of 1980 (PRA), notes that its intent "is not to diminish the importance of collecting information whenever agencies have the legitimate program reasons for doing so...[but] that the burdens imposed should not exceed the benefits to be derived from the information." OMB does concede that the "benefits to be derived from government information may not always be quantifiable."

The new policy's major focus is to recommend the increased use of electronic information collection and dissemination. OMB claims collecting data electronically reduces paperwork burden, reduces errors, facilitates validation, and provides increased convenience and more timely receipt of benefits. Electronic information dissemination through computer tapes, CD-ROMs or on-line services will now fall under the same policy as printed publications or audiovisual material. The circular notes: "Agencies can frequently enhance the value and practical utility of government information as a national resource by disseminating information in electronic media." The use of electronic technology for government records management has also become critical to ensuring the preservation of information for future generations.

The Federal government, the circular notes, should charge users only those costs associated with the dissemination of information, not its creation or collection costs, unless it is custom tailored for individual or special group users. OMB also announced that "as a matter of policy, electronic information dissemination products generally should be provided to the depository libraries." Since depository libraries rely on the Government Printing Office for their information dissemination products, agencies should provide these products to GPO.

The circular "directs agencies to assist the public in finding government information" through the establishment of an agency-based Government Information/Inventory Locator System (GILS). This replaces the PRA notion of a government-wide Federal Information Locator System to avoid duplication and redundancy of federal information collection. Finally, agencies are responsible for "an active knowledge of and regular consultation with the users of their information dissemination."

The second part of federal information policy -- how the government manages its information technology resources-- will be part of the Administration's efforts to reinvent government.

**SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT:  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** *ke*

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the agency for further information or application materials. Additional application guidelines and restrictions may apply.

**Social Security Administration**

This research is intended to add to existing knowledge and to improve methods and techniques for the management, administration, and effectiveness of Social Security Administration (SSA) programs. In particular, this research is expected to be useful to the Trustees of the Old-Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) Trust Funds in choosing the assumptions and/or to SSA's actuaries in refining the methodologies used to make their predictions. Professionals in actuarial science, demography, economics, sociology and related fields are potential users of the results.

In general, SSA will fund the following types of projects: those that examine issues related to the scheduled increase in the retirement age; and those that examine assumptions made in demographic projections for the OASDI Trust Funds.

**Application Procedure:** Application kits which contain the prescribed application forms for grant funds are available from the Grants Management Staff, Division of Contract and Grant Operations, Office of Acquisitions and Grants, Social Security Administration, 1-E-4 Gwynn Oak Building, 1710 Gwynn Oak Avenue; Baltimore, MD 21207, telephone (410) 965-9500, Mr. Lawrence H. Pullen, Chief, Grants Management Staff. When requesting an application kit, the applicant should refer to program announcement number SSA-ORS-93-1 and the date of this announcement to ensure receipt of the proper application kit.

**Budget:** SSA anticipates allocating a total of \$190,000 to fund projects in priority area, "Issues Related to the Scheduled Increase in the Retirement Age." SSA expects to fund the initial 12-month budget period(s) of a 24-month grant(s) for one or more projects in this priority area. Also, SSA anticipates allocating \$160,000 to fund at least one project not to exceed 17-months in duration in priority area, "Selected Demographic Assumptions Used to Project the Financial Status of the OASDI Trust Funds."

**Review Process:** Applications will be reviewed by at least three individuals. Reviewers will score the applications, basing their scoring decisions on the following criteria. (1) Project Objective; (2) Project Design - is the design of the project adequate and feasible as indicated by the appropriateness of the work statement and the technical approach?; (3) Qualifications - do the qualifications of the project personnel, as evidenced by training experience, and publications, indicate that they have the skills required to competently carry out the research and to produce a final report that is comprehensible and usable?; (4) Organization and Budget and (5) Expected Outcomes - what is the potential usefulness of the anticipated result and expected benefits to SSA and other target groups?

**Deadlines:** The closing date for receipt of grant applications is August 24, 1993.

**Contact:** For any additional information please contact: Mr. Serge R. Harrison, Office of Research and Statistics, Social Security Administration, 4-C-15 Operations Building, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21235, telephone (410) 965-2843.

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1522 K Street, NW, Suite 836, Washington, DC 20005

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