

# COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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## HOUSE PASSES BUDGET RESOLUTION AND ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE <sup>HS</sup>

On March 18 the House of Representatives gave President Clinton two major victories with the passage of both the FY 1994 Budget Resolution (by a vote of 243-183) and the FY 1993 Supplemental Appropriations bill (by a vote of 235-190). Both bills reflected the new President's spending and taxing priorities outlined in his speech to Congress on February 17.

The \$1.5 trillion budget resolution, organized by function of the government, provides the parameters which will be used by the Appropriations and Way and Means Committees for specific FY 1994 agency funding decisions and tax provisions. During debate on the plan produced by the House Budget Committee, the House rejected Republican alternatives that would have eliminated the proposed tax hikes and made deeper spending cuts. It also rebuffed an alternative developed by the Congressional Black Caucus that proposed increased spending on certain domestic functions, offset by reduced spending on the defense function, and increased taxes.

The House Budget Committee made slight adjustments to the Clinton proposal. For the science, space and technology function (#250, which includes the National Science Foundation) Clinton proposed outlays of \$18.1 billion for FY 1994, but the House reduced that by \$500 million. Education, training, employment and social services (function #500) was reduced by \$400 million. The Health function (#550) remained at \$18.1 billion.

The \$16.3 billion supplemental appropriations bill, the so-called economic stimulus package, survived Republican attempts to remove most of the spending. The NSF will receive \$206.6 million from the package (see *Update*, February 22). The bulk of the appropriations will go to Community Development Block Grants, a summer youth jobs program, Head Start, mass transit grants, and AIDS treatment programs.

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## NIH REAUTHORIZATION BILL PASSES HOUSE <sup>SY</sup>

On March 11 the House voted 283-131 to approve the National Institutes of Health Revitalization Act. The bill authorizes \$6.6 billion in FY 1994 and unspecified sums through FY 1996 to extend the expiring programs within the 16 institutes of NIH. The legislation establishes an Office of Behavioral Research within the NIH Director's Office (see *Update*, March 8).

The Senate version of the bill passed the Senate on January 26. No date has been set for the House-Senate conference to resolve differences in the two versions of the bill. Once both chambers approve the conferenced bill, President Clinton is expected to sign the legislation.

The acrimonious battles over fetal tissue research that had held up previous attempts to reauthorize NIH were made moot with President Clinton's executive order reversing a 1988 Reagan administration moratorium on research using fetal tissue from elective abortions. As a result, the bill moved swiftly through Congress.

On the House floor, Rep. Thomas Bliley (R-VA), offered an amendment which proposed more stringent fetal tissue research guidelines. Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA), succeeded in substantially modifying Bliley's amendment by streamlining the

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guidelines for the donation of fetal tissue to require that physicians certify that abortions in which fetal tissue was donated were performed in accordance with state law. Bliley's amendment, modified by Waxman, was approved 250-161.

The House also approved an amendment by Rep. Sam Johnson (R-TX), prohibiting further funding of Project Aries, a peer reviewed research study supported by the National Institute of Mental Health Office on AIDS Programs. The objective of the four-year study was to develop an inexpensive and effective way of reducing the spread of the HIV virus. The study would assess the effectiveness of a 14 session cognitive-behavioral group counseling intervention, delivered entirely by telephone, on reducing AIDS risk behaviors among hard to reach men who have sex with men.

Project Aries is the only research project that is studying the effectiveness of using telecommunications and telephone counseling in AIDS prevention. While hotlines and safer sex workshops exist in communities, information alone is not believed sufficient to change high risk behavior. If the intervention proved to be effective, it is presumed it would have substantial potential for reaching other difficult-to-reach populations.

Proponents of this study assert that Johnson's amendment will have a deleterious impact on public health, and that it does not represent good science policy. Supporters of the study believe that it would compromise the integrity of the peer review process and the credibility of Public Health Service research support within the scientific community by basing decisions on political rather than scientific or medical concerns.

An opponent of Project Aries stated that the phone number associated with this study was one where a person "talks dirty on the phone to you." The amendment, which passed 278-139, states that no further NIH funds beyond FY 1993 can be spent on the study.

### GIBBONS OUTLINES CLINTON TECHNOLOGY POLICY: BASIC SCIENCE A KEY INGREDIENT 1/5

John Gibbons, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology Policy, presented the Clinton administration's plan *Technology for America's Economic Growth: A New Direction to Build Economic Strength* to the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee on March 4. The new policy reflects many of the ideas of committee chairman Rep. George Brown (D-CA), who has promoted government support of technology for many years. If the technology plan succeeds, Gibbons declared, "we will experience fundamental change in the way we live and work."

Clinton's proposal focuses on three major goals: long term economic growth that creates jobs and protects the environment; making government more efficient and responsive; and world leadership in basic science, mathematics, and engineering. The administration is committed to shifting the ratio of military to civilian research and development (R&D) spending from 60:40 to 50:50 within five years.

For those concerned that the emphasis on technology means a neglect of basic science, Gibbons, whose second title is director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), assured the committee that "none of the innovations in technology proposed in our initiative will be funded at the expense of basic science." The administration's economic plan proposes significant increases in funding for the National Science Foundation. The technology plan calls for more investments in basic environmental research to better understand global warming, ozone depletion, and other phenomena important to local, regional, and global environments. The Research and Experiment Tax Credit will also be made permanent.

Aside from directly supporting the development, commercialization, and deployment of new technology, the administration also wants to

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promote "an atmosphere in which U.S. firms can excel equally at inventing new technologies... and commercializing new products." To achieve this goal the President's plan will assist U.S. firms, through the Department of Labor, in implementing the principles of high performance work organization.

### Emphasis on Life-long Learning

To create a world-class business environment for innovation and private sector investment, the administration expects to make increased investments to foster life-long learning by restructuring primary and secondary schooling, using youth apprenticeships, making retraining programs accessible to workers, and targeting workers displaced by declining defense budgets or increased international trade. New technology will serve to increase the productivity of all learning environments, Gibbons told the committee. A key will be to connect university campuses, community colleges and K-12 schools to a high speed communications network through the National Research and Education Network (NREN), part of a major information infrastructure program Clinton is proposing.

To make the government more efficient and effective, technology will be used to reinvent government. Advanced communications systems, energy efficient technologies and procurement reform will fuel this activity. Upgrading government communication and information technologies will produce "flattening the existing organizational structure, form effective cross-disciplinary problem solving groups, and expand the definition of the workplace and workforce," according to Gibbons.

Gibbons noted that OSTP will manage the program, working with Vice President Gore, and using the FCCSET process as one tool for coordination. Clinton's National Economic Council will monitor the implementation of new policies and coordinate technology policy with the complementary tax, trade, regulatory, economic development and other policies.

Gibbons concluded by telling Brown that the administration supported his efforts to prevent "inappropriate earmarking of funds for science and technology." "We believe that peer review and merit-based competition are critical to the success of any science and technology program," Gibbons asserted.

## CSRS FACES APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: NRI AND SPECIAL GRANTS DEFENDED 143

John Patrick Jordan, Administrator of the Cooperative State Research Service, defended his agency's programs before the House Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee on March 11. The Subcommittee, with its new chairman Rep. Richard Durbin (D-IL), appeared quite concerned with defending the Special Grants Program, where the appropriations committee allocates funds for specific projects. The Clinton administration has proposed to eliminate these, calling them non-peer reviewed earmarks.

Jordan declared the mission of CSRS is "to advance science, technology and education in support of agriculture, forestry, people and communities," working with a system of State Agricultural Experiment Stations, colleges, universities, and other public and private research entities. A special relationship, Jordan noted, exists between CSRS and the nation's land-grant university system. The CSRS/State system performs approximately 69 percent of all publicly funded agricultural and forestry research in the U.S., according to Jordan.

The National Initiative for Research on Agriculture, Food and Environment (NRI) was established in FY 1991 with an initial appropriation of \$73 million. In each of the last two years Congress appropriated \$97.5 million for the NRI. Jordan stated that in 1992 more than 2,900 proposals were submitted requesting around \$597 million, but CSRS was able to support only about 15 percent of the requested funds. The NRI includes a Markets, Trade and Policy division with two programs: rural development and markets, competitiveness, and technology assessment. These two programs receive only about \$4 million of the NRI funds. In its economic plan, the Clinton administration proposes to triple funds for the NRI over the next four years.

In discussing the Special Grants program, which totaled \$73.4 million in FY 1993, Jordan claimed that "important national needs are addressed." He seemed to agree with Rep. Joe Skeen's (R-NM) assertion that "all CSRS grants are put under a peer review system." Jordan asserted that there are review panels for each special grant appropriated by Congress and that, if the review questions the scientific worthiness of the grant, CSRS will suggest

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COSSA is pleased to announce that Kansas State University has joined the Consortium as a Contributor. We look forward to working with the university on issues of common concern.

to the sponsoring member that the grant be revised or withdrawn.

Rep. John Myers (R-IN) made a vigorous defense of the appropriations committees' prerogative to earmark special grants. He blamed the congressional authorizing committees for being too slow in approving certain projects. "We get tired of waiting," Myers proclaimed. Asking a question that comes up in all congressional debates of peer review, Myers wanted to know "Who are these peers?" Jordan described them as scientists with a strong background in research including "sociological impact folks" and users, such as farmers and ranchers.

### Indirect Costs Discussed

In another matter, Chairman Durbin inquired as to whether setting indirect cost rates at zero percent as they currently exist for the Special Grant Program, rather than the presently mandated 14 percent, would have an effect on the NRI program. Jordan surmised that such a drastic solution would lead many institutions to reject grants and disrupt "the partnership between USDA and the university based research system." He also suggested that indirect costs are already built into the special grant.

Since the detailed FY 1994 budget figures still await the release of the Clinton budget, still scheduled for April 5, Jordan and the committee were unable to discuss specific allocations.

## HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEES ABOLISHED *SL*

The four House Select Committees: on Aging, on Children, Youth and Families, on Hunger, and on Narcotics Abuse and Control will all be eliminated as of March 31, 1993. The desire of House members to cut congressional spending appears to be the main factor for the decision. Elimination of the four select committees is estimated to save \$2,694,144 in 1993.

Select committees, by definition, are established for a limited period and generally for a strictly limited purpose. Once their defined function has been carried out, the select committee would automatically expire if not reauthorized with each new Congress. The above select committees were created from 1975 to 1984, and have received authorizations totaling \$44.7 million over the years. Until this year, reauthorizing the select committees was a routine and noncontroversial action.

The functions of select committees include holding hearings, issuing reports, and conducting special investigations. Although they do not have direct legislative authority, their work does generate ideas for legislation. Select committee chairpersons have stated that many issues of concern to them, which standing committees do not have the time to address, are dealt with in depth in select committees. They also believe that select committees are better able to build consensus on difficult issues because they draw information and expertise from many disciplines. The social sciences have contributed a great deal to the findings of the select committees.

The first hint of the demise of the select committees came on January 26, when the House voted 180-237 against a resolution to reauthorize the Select Committee on Narcotics for the duration of the 103rd Congress. This came as a surprise to the Democratic leadership that had believed that of all of the select committees, Narcotics had the best chance for survival, in part because of a desire to show congressional resolve on combatting crime and drugs.

### Foley Cites Lack of Support

Although there have been efforts to keep the committees going, House Speaker Tom Foley (D-WA) recently stated that "there seems to be no real purpose in bringing this issue to the floor... [because] of the very negative counts of how members said they would vote." Supporters of the select committees hoped that a compromise could be reached that would at least allow their renewal for the duration of 1993, until the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress makes its recommendations in the fall. It is now expected that no further action will be taken and the select committees will simply be allowed to expire on March 31.

## CLINTON PLAN CLEARS FIRST HURDLES

(continued from page one)

The action now shifts to the Senate. The President is expected to have a more difficult time there, especially on the stimulus plan, since a number of conservative Democratic Senators are balking at the administration's proposals. Unlike the House, where the Democratic margin is significant, the margin in the Senate is only seven votes (57-43), and a threatened Republican filibuster would need 60 votes to break. On March 18, the Senate did reject a Republican attempt to eliminate the administration's proposed energy tax boost. The budget resolution produced by the Senate Budget Committee includes \$200 million more for the science function than the House. It also includes deeper spending cuts and more tax increases than proposed by Clinton.

## HOUSE PANEL HOLDS HEARING ON RESCISSION PROPOSALS

The Subcommittee on Legislation and National Security of the House Government Operations Committee, chaired by Rep. John Conyers (D-MI), convened a March 10 hearing regarding expedited rescission authority. President Clinton has requested this power, which would allow the President to submit rescissions -- specific programmatic cuts -- within three days of signing an appropriations bill and bring the rescissions to a vote in Congress within ten days of submission. Several bills have been introduced in the 103rd Congress that create expedited rescission authority in varying forms.

Leon Panetta, Director of the Office of Management Budget (OMB) testified on behalf of the Clinton administration in support of expedited authority, saying it "expedites the process for rights that already exist." Panetta, a former chair of the House Budget Committee, said that such a change would not alter the balance of power between the executive and legislative branches, rather it would provide accountability; the president would not be faced with the choice of blaming Congress for spending too much money or vetoing an entire appropriations bill, he said. Panetta added that just because an item is in an appropriations bill, "doesn't mean that the majority of Congress approves of it," and expedited rescission authority would bring a

## CORRECTION

In the March 8 issue of *Update*, the name of Arne Kalleberg was misspelled. We apologize for the error.

"fresh-air" review to spending programs. Panetta said a line-item veto amendment would take several years to be ratified by the states, whereas expedited rescission authority could be approved by Congress, and in Panetta's view, would stay within the delicate balance of power.

Robert Reischauer, Director of the Congressional Budget Office, presented his views to the committee, making three main points: such authority would force Congressional proponents of a specific funding proposal to publicly defend it; expedited rescission authority is unlikely to have a significant effect on deficit reduction; and it could increase the Congressional workload. Reischauer cited evidence from studies of 43 states that give governors some form of power to reduce particular appropriations, and said that there is little evidence of it reducing overall spending. He referenced a Wisconsin study showing that such powers were frequently used to substitute one set of spending priorities for another, rather than reducing a budget.

Louis Fisher of the Congressional Research Service told the panel that expedited rescission authority would "give inadequate protection to the interests and prerogatives of Congress," particularly through advancing presidential spending priorities over those of Congress. Fisher noted that under current law, Congress has the right to accept, reject, modify, or not act at all on presidentially-submitted rescissions. He cited the 1992 rescissions (see *Update*, May 4, 1992) as an example of how the process can balance the concerns of both branches of government. In this instance, President Bush identified specific congressionally-supported programs as wasteful, and Congress responded by targeting executive branch spending -- in this case many National Science Foundation grants in the social and behavioral sciences -- for rescission. According to Fisher, the 1992 rescissions reflected a balance of power, and in the process reduced spending by a larger amount than had been intended by Bush.

Joseph White of the Brookings Institution said that the historic purpose of rescissions is to

accommodate policy changes after an appropriations bill has been signed into law, but questioned the likelihood such a change occurring within the three days of the bill's passage. White noted that expedited rescission applies only to appropriations bills, and not to legislation authorizing a program, and also that since specific funding proposals are included in both forms of legislation, enhanced rescission unfairly targets appropriations as sources of wasteful spending. He concluded by telling the committee members, "I suspect this procedure would be marginally useful to presidents, who will be able to threaten members that, if they do not support the president, he will target their projects for rescission. I doubt this procedure will do anything to reduce the deficit."

## BROWN ADDRESSES CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND PUBLIC POLICY

Rep. George Brown (D-CA), chairman of the House Science, Space and Technology committee, continued to express his views on the nation's science policy in a speech to a conference on *Science and Public Policy: Linking Users and Producers*. In the March 12 speech, Brown suggested that "Science + Advice  $\neq$  Science Policy Advice."

The Sigma Xi sponsored conference brought together many representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to respond to *Facing Toward Governments: Non-Governmental Organizations and Scientific and Technical Advice*, the latest report from the Carnegie Commission on Science, Technology, and Government. The commission concludes that "the independent and diverse expertise of NGOs is a significant and renewable resource that government should take advantage of more fully." There are "impressive NGO capabilities for enhancing and mediating interactions between science and technology and government," according to the report.

Brown noted that throughout his long congressional career he has encouraged scientists to become more involved in the political process since science can be a source of expertise to help policy makers make better political decisions. Yet, Brown suggested, several assumptions underlie this obvious statement.

The first assumption is that experts can transmit objective information to policy makers in a way that

has a positive influence on the formulation of policy. Rather than objectivity as the source of advice, (Brown claimed that you can usually find experts on each side of an issue) it seems "that science has been particularly effective at influencing policy debate when it is overtly linked to widely shared subjective values." Brown maintained that the success of the environmental movement in influencing national priorities has been due largely to the popularity of an ethical or spiritual position, bolstered by scientific expertise. Objectivity disappears in policy debates since "successful politics not good science, resolves conflicting values," Brown declared.

### "Predictions Highlight Uncertainty"

The second assumption is that "research into complex issues can offer predictive tools by which better policy can be formulated." Politicians expect, and scientists offer, predictive models, yet Brown noted that "predictions highlight uncertainty" and "motivate inquiry, experimentation, and debate, not consensus." Typically, scientists advocate more research asserting this will improve policy decisions and the level of certainty. Brown expressed skepticism about this argument for more science. Thus, Brown argued, "scientific objectivity can draw us onto the rocks of legislative inaction, by creating rhetorical gridlock on the one hand, and by perpetuating the illusory expectation of better prediction through more research on the other."

### Urges Inclusion of Policy Experts

The third assumption is that policy issues with complex scientific ramifications require scientific input as a prerequisite for wise policy formulation. However, Brown contended that "in a vain effort to be accurate, measured, unbiased, and comprehensive, science advice can also be irrelevant, impractical, untimely, and incomprehensible." Increased Congressional demand for scientific information, "often reflects not a quest for truth, but an appetite for ammunition," according to Brown. He concluded that "NGOs would have greater effectiveness and impact on the policy process if they uniformly included in their study groups a critical mass of policy experts, to help bridge the canyon that sometimes divides scientists from policy makers."

What is needed, according to the chairman, are "incremental, adaptive programs" that move toward policy goals. Scientists and policy makers must work together on a mission oriented research

agenda that is closely linked to the policy process and would include assessments of the impact and efficacy of incremental policy decisions. Thus, Brown professed, if there is ever to be a direct synergism between politics and research, and political expediency is to be overcome, both the character of policy making and science advice must **both** change (his emphasis). Despite this, Brown concluded, a better way must be found to integrate "scientific knowledge and technological expertise with our needs as human beings living in an increasingly global society"

## NAVY PROGRAMS PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE RESEARCH *mb*

What follows is an overview of the basic and applied research programs of the Office of Naval Research (ONR) relevant to *Update* readers. COSSA encourages those interested to contact agency officials for further information.

ONR programs are carried out under contracts and grants, with proposals being evaluated on the basis of scientific merit, available facilities, and relevance to Navy needs. ONR seeks to develop fundamental knowledge about human capabilities and performance characteristics to guide efforts to improve personnel assessments, training, and equipment designs.

The **Cognitive Science** division (Susan E. Chipman/(703) 696-4318) aims to achieve a theoretical understanding of learning and performing in the domain of complex cognitive skills. Objectives include providing theories on: fundamental characteristics of the learner and performer as an information processing system, the nature of acquired knowledge and skills in problem-solving and decision-making, how complex bodies of knowledge and skill are acquired, and instruction to guide education and training programs, foundations for testing and assessment.

Human Learner research seeks an understanding of the features of the later stages of information processing -- cognition rather than perception. Results will provide theoretical bases for personnel testing and selection, in addition to developing individualized instruction related to cognitive capacity. Knowledge, Skill, and Expertise research aims at formal theories of complex human skill. It emphasizes the expression of theories in formal languages provided by mathematics and computer

science, and results are intended to provide a general model of skill analysis to be used in training and testing systems. Learning and Instruction research seeks to develop a theory that explains how to produce desired changes through learning and instruction. Model-based Measurement and Cognitive Diagnosis aims to develop systems for personnel selection, career counselling, and evaluation.

The **Perceptual Science** division (Harold Hawkins/(703) 696-4323) emphasizes issues of vision, audition, touch and manipulation, and motor control. Research results are translated into engineering, signal classification, and machine-operated vehicles.

The Visual and Visual Attention program is an interdisciplinary approach to visual processes and mechanisms of control. The Audition programs examine the processing of acoustic signals and signal processing capabilities. Research on Haptics and Sensory Guided Motor Control considers experimental and theoretical studies of issues of motor function and force control. A current area of priority is providing robotic devices with intelligent hands. The basic research of the Human Factors Technology program includes work on signal analysis and decision making and the neural basis of attention.

The **Manpower, Personnel, and Training (MPT) Research and Development Program** (Stanley C. Collyer/(703) 696-4825) is an interdisciplinary program with four main areas of focus: Advanced Instructional Technology, Interactive Displays, Personnel Testing, and Methodological Issues in MPT. Research addresses areas such as training problems, human information processing, predicting training failures and maladaptive behaviors, and improving manpower modelling.

The **University Research Initiative** (Charles Paoletti/(703) 696-4601) is a program of basic research that emphasizes theory definition, measurement approaches, modeling, and experimentation to better understand how coordination is achieved and maintained by hierarchical decision-making teams. This program works closely with ONR's Tactical Decision Making Under Stress research.

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