

**CLINTON VETO SAVES
CENSUS SAMPLING** *MS*

After vetoing a flood relief bill in part because of anti-sampling provisions, President Clinton got his way with the Republican Congress and was able to sign into law a disaster aid bill that did not contain language banning the use of sampling and statistical methods in the census.

Earlier this month a House-Senate conference committee, on a 15-13 vote, approved a provision that would bar any sampling or statistical procedure used in obtaining population counts to apportion seats in the House of Representatives. Only the census long form, a key source of demographic data, would have been exempt. Opponents of sampling — generally Republicans — say it is unconstitutional, inaccurate, and subject to political manipulation. Proponents — generally Democrats — say it is a scientifically-validated method of decreasing the cost and increasing the accuracy of the census, particularly in reducing the differential undercount of hard-to-enumerate populations.

The final language in the bill Clinton signed requires the Census Bureau to provide Congress, within 30 days, a comprehensive description of its proposed methods for taking the 2000 Census. The report must include details on the level of error these methods would have at differing levels of geography, and also describe alternatives to the use of sampling in 2000.

Data users and their allies remain cautious. The House Appropriations Subcommittee overseeing the Census Bureau will begin drafting its Fiscal Year 1998 spending bill shortly, and panel chair Rep. Harold Rogers (R-KY) has been openly critical of both sampling and the census long-form. The legislation, to be considered in July, is likely to revisit these contentious issues.

Academy Report Backs Sampling

A National Academy of Sciences' panel recently issued its third report in recent years endorsing sampling. It said in its report that "a census of acceptable accuracy and cost is not possible without the use of sampling procedures."

The study group evaluated results from tests conducted in 1995 on the new design and recommended some refinements in sampling plans to further enhance the quality of geographical data and improve survey techniques.

**OMB DIRECTOR ADDRESSES
SCIENCE ADVISORS** *MS*

Franklin Raines, director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), told the President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) that securing an extra \$120 billion over the Republican budget plan in non-defense discretionary spending was a "major victory in the budget negotiations." Addressing the 19-member panel on June 9, co-chaired by John Gibbons, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, and John Young, former President and CEO of Hewlett-

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Packard, Raines said he hoped that the budget agreement will now allow the administration to "focus more carefully on the substance and implementation of policy rather than budgets."

Within the next four to five weeks, Raines claimed, the framework for budget decisions affecting the nine trillion dollars the federal government will spend in the next five years will be put in place. He expects Congress to enact entitlement reform, tax cuts, and limits on discretionary spending. According to Raines, non-defense discretionary spending will suffer a 14 percent reduction in real terms in the budget plan. Of course, the details will make all the difference. Despite the agreement, Raines declared that "budgets will not be off the table," resulting in bigger competition among key priorities. Level of inflation increases will define budgetary success for agencies, Raines asserted.

Regarding science and technology, the OMB director noted that the administration favors investment across the board from basic research to pre-competitive commercial research, such as the Advanced Technology Program. He acknowledged that Congress has other ideas, and is much more enamored of federal support for basic research, especially for the biological sciences at NIH. Like other officials in their talks to scientists, Raines focused on priority setting. He admitted that "the

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), an advocacy organization for federal support for the social and behavioral sciences, was founded in 1981 and stands alone in Washington in representing the full range of social and behavioral sciences. *Update* is published 22 times per year. Individual subscriptions are available from COSSA for \$65; institutional subscriptions, \$130, overseas mail, \$130. ISSN 0749-4394. Address all inquiries to COSSA, 1522 K Street, NW, Suite 836, Washington, D.C. 20005. Phone: (202) 842-3525, Fax: (202) 842-2788.

creation of knowledge does not yield to a strategic plan," but he argued that people in the field need to make choices on where scarce additional dollars can make a difference. Raines also expressed the administration's support for peer review over Congressional earmarking.

Education Research and Graduate Training

PCAST member, David Shaw, chairman of D.E. Shaw & Co. and Juno Online Services, asked Raines about research on education. Shaw chaired a PCAST subcommittee that has issued a report (copies available within the next few weeks) on educational technology and its impact on learning that calls for a massive influx of support for educational research. The OMB director noted the recent White House conference on the brain and child development, but generally dismissed much of the research on elementary and secondary education as "anecdotal studies of a particular project." He called for a greater interagency, interdisciplinary focus to provide the guidance on "where to go." Raines seemed quite receptive to PCAST members' suggestions that those from disciplines where there are oversupplies of Ph.D.s (presumably physics, not English) be recruited to add their expertise to the education research area.

Phillip Sharp, MIT's Head of Biology and another PCAST member, wondered whether federal government support for graduate training will still exist in ten to twenty years. Raines said this will be an emerging issue in the next four to five years with the outcomes unclear. Referring to the recent debate on separating support for graduate medical education from Medicare, he suggested that Congress, as it focuses on the efficiency of federal spending on research, may start to ask questions about the ancillary aspects connected to the research. This has already happened with indirect overhead costs. Soon, Raines suggested, policymakers may question why graduate students are often funded through research. Raines warned that we should make no assumptions on this issue as budgets continue to tighten.

NIH GRANT RESTRUCTURING PROPOSED AS

In an attempt to "refocus the application and award process on the proposed science," Geoffrey Grant, Director of the Office of Policy for Extramural Research at the National Institutes of Health explained the idea of Modular Research Grants to the NIH's June advisory councils. This new process is currently at the discussion stage.

The Modular Research Grants proposal is one of four NIH Reinvention initiatives. The other areas include: progress reporting and scientific coding, receipt and referral process, and expedited review and award.

The current grant application process "overemphasizes the apparent precision of itemized costs to a degree that is neither warranted nor feasible," Grant told the advisory councils. The objectives of the initiatives, he said, "are to offer investigators and institutions a mechanism of project support that facilitates science and simplifies administration and to offer NIH staff the opportunity to focus professional expertise on essential management requirements."

The Modular Research Grant proposal would offer five total direct cost grants of \$50,000, \$75,000, \$100,000, \$125,000 and \$150,000. The process would eliminate "the need for most of the budget detail, thereby relieving administrative burdens on both the NIH staff and grantee organizations and simplifying cost management by NIH program staff," according to Grant. The new process would affect approximately 15,000 applications. Other features would require applicants to: justify the request based on overall requirements, scientific aims, and scope; specify only key personnel, level of effort, and address any major budget items that would be considered unusual for the scope of research; and list current research projects of key personnel in an "other support overview" (including such information as title, sponsor, total costs, effort).

In addition, applicants would no longer have to itemize cost detail by categories. The new process would eliminate cost analysis and postaward categorical budgeting and provide incentives for

principal investigators and institutions to optimize the use of funding.

This new paradigm, Grant emphasized, "reinforces the grant-in-aid philosophy of supporting research." It "refocuses on science," rather than itemized costs, he continued. More importantly, the paradigm would allow investigators to receive funding from other sources and minimize the overlap of cost-specific items.

The complete Modular Grant proposal can be viewed on the Division of Research Grants section available through the NIH website (<http://www.nih.gov>).

On Time

Grants costing between \$150,000 and \$500,000 would not compete in the Modular process. On Time application procedures would apply to these projects. In terms of NIH implementation, the On Time application procedure is independent of the Modular Research Grant proposal. Either could be implemented without the other.

The On Time procedure would allow the use of the routine short budget request for applications. It would also require the identification of key personnel and address any major budget items, other than personnel, that would be considered unusual for the scope of research. Other On Time features include: individual cost items, detailed justification for those applications above \$150,000 and information about active support for all awards as necessary (title, sponsor, total costs, effort, project number, major goals, dates, and overlap).

NIH hopes to continue discussion of these new procedures throughout the summer at professional meetings and at a "Reinvention Roundtable II" conference. NIH Director Harold Varmus will make a decision on implementation this September or October.

PRESIDENTIAL PANEL SAYS NO TO CLONING *AS*

The President's National Bioethics Advisory Commission (NBAC) concluded in its recently released report, *Cloning Human Beings*, "that at this time it is morally unacceptable for anyone in the public or private sector, whether in a research or clinical setting, to attempt to create a child using somatic cell nuclear transfer cloning." The Commission, chaired by Princeton University President Harold Shapiro, emphasized that it "reached a consensus on this point because current scientific information indicates that this technique is not safe to use in humans at this time."

The Commission submitted its report and a series of accompanying recommendations to President Clinton on June 9. The report responds to Clinton's call to examine the issue in the wake of the announcement that scientists in Scotland apparently had succeeded in cloning an adult sheep. The NBAC was charged with undertaking a thorough review of cloning and making recommendations on possible federal actions to prevent its abuse.

The report notes that the Commission began its "discussion fully recognizing that any effort in humans to transfer a somatic cell nucleus into an enucleated egg involves the creation of an embryo, with the apparent potential to be implanted in utero and developed to term . . . Federal funding for human embryo research is severely restricted, although there are few restrictions on human embryo research carried out in the private sector. Thus, under current law, the use of somatic cell nuclear transfer to create an embryo solely for research purposes is already restricted in cases involving federal funds."

There are, however, no Federal regulations regarding private use of funds. Therefore, the Commission made an immediate request to all firms, clinicians, investigators, and professional societies in the private and non-federally funded sectors to comply voluntarily with the intent of the Federal moratorium. Professional and scientific societies should make clear that any attempt to create a child by somatic cell nuclear transfer and implantation into a woman's body would be at this time an irresponsible, unethical and unprofessional act.

The report emphasizes that "[a]t present, the use of this technique to create a child would be a premature experiment that would expose the fetus and the developing child to unacceptable risks. This in itself might be sufficient to justify a prohibition on cloning human beings at this time, even if such efforts were to be characterized as the exercise of a fundamental right to attempt to procreate."

The report notes that the Commission also found "that concerns relating to the potential psychological harms to children and effects on the moral, religious, and cultural values of society merited further reflection and deliberation."

Call for Legislation With Sunset Provisions

The Commission endorsed the need for Federal legislation to prohibit anyone from attempting, whether in a research or clinical setting, to create a child through somatic cell nuclear transfer cloning. It is critical, the Commission advised, that such legislation include a sunset clause to ensure that Congress will review the issue after a specified time period (three to five years) in order to decide whether the prohibition should continue. Any enacted state legislation should also include such a review provision.

Any such legislation or associated regulation also ought to require that, at some point prior to the expiration of the sunset period, an appropriate oversight body will evaluate and report on the current status of somatic cell nuclear transfer technology and on the ethical and social issues that its potential use to create human beings would raise in light of public understanding at the time. In addition, the Commission also warned that any such legislation or regulations should be carefully written so as not to interfere with other important areas of scientific research.

Already two bills have been introduced in the House by Rep. Vern Ehlers (R-MI): H.R. 922 provides that "[n]one of the funds made available in any federal law may be expended to conduct or support a project of research that involves the use of a human somatic cell for the process of producing a human clone." H.R. 923 says that "it shall be unlawful for any human person to use a human

somatic cell for the process of producing a human clone."

More Thinking on Social and Ethical Implications

The Commission report also recommended, that the Federal government, and all interested and concerned parties, encourage widespread and continuing deliberation on these issues in order to further our understanding of the ethical and social implications of this technology. Society needs to reach conclusions to produce appropriate long-term policies regarding this technology should the time come when present concerns about safety have been addressed.

Finally, the Commission recognized that scientific knowledge is essential for all citizens to participate in a fully informed fashion in the governance of our complex society. It, therefore, encouraged Federal departments and agencies concerned with science to seek out and support opportunities to inform and educate the public about developments in genetics and the other biomedical sciences, especially where these affect important cultural practices, values and beliefs.

Technology Committee Convenes Hearing

A hearing convened by the House Science Subcommittee on Technology, chaired by Rep. Constance Morella (R-MD) reviewed the Commission's recommendations. NABC Chairman Shapiro testified that the Commission made every effort to consult with ethicists, theologians, scientists, physicians, and other citizens with interests and concerns in this area.

He emphasized that "time is our ally." The Commission felt "quite strongly that most of the of the legal and moral issues raised can only be resolved, even temporarily by a great deal more widespread deliberation and education," Shapiro told the Subcommittee. Broad education is necessary and crucial in a society with varied moral and religious perspectives. Time would allow for more scientific data and "can improve the prospects for moral agreement or mutual respect where agreement cannot be achieved," he concluded.

Morella said she appreciated "the depth, the thoughtfulness, and the inclusiveness of the Commission's deliberations . . . The Commission's recommendations appear to reflect a national consensus on this issue. By taking a reasoned and judicious legislative approach to prohibit human cloning technology which also preserving the potential for future biomedical breakthroughs using that technology." Morella noted that the Subcommittee will seek more input from the scientific community and study the details of any legislation that might be developed.

For more information on the NBAC report contact the National Bioethics Advisory Commission, 6100 Executive Boulevard, Suite 3C01, Rockville, MD 20892-7508, Telephone (301) 402-4242, Fax (301) 480-6900.

CD-ROM TO PROVIDE DATA ON DOCTORATE PROGRAMS *M/S*

A CD-ROM containing the detailed data used in the National Academy of Science's major study of U.S. research-doctorate programs is now available.

The 1995 NAS study was a 740-page assessment of the quality and effectiveness of doctoral programs across 41 fields at 274 universities. The CD-ROM is available at a cost of \$44.95 through the National Academy Press at (800) 624-6242 or www.nap.edu.

HUMAN CAPITAL INVESTMENTS FOCUS OF ACADEMY MEETING *HS*

On June 6, the Board on Children, Youth and Families of the National Research Council, presented a conference, *Human Capital Investments from Infancy to Adolescence*. The conference was sponsored by Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Science Foundation, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and the President's Council of Economic Advisers. The meeting provided the opportunity to discuss the efforts of the NSF Human

Capital Initiative and how it connects to other research activities in and outside of government.

A series of presentations spoke to the many connections between investing in human capital and the health and well-being of children. In introductory remarks, NSF Director Neal Lane noted that "human problems are the most difficult to solve," and that investment in scientific research on human capital development was "pretty important stuff." He praised NSF's Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate for "providing the tools to understand" this issue. Providing a stable childhood makes for smooth transitions from school to work and a competitive workforce that will lead to 21st century economic growth, Lane said.

CEA Chair Janet Yellen noted that "NSF's Human Capital Initiative fills the need," to conduct more basic research on this topic in order to "create a more productive America." She also noted the administration's economic agenda includes strong support for investment in human capital, particularly education and the development of national standards. Yellen also pointed to the CEA report released at the White House Conference on the Brain and Child Development, *The First Three Years: Investments That Pay*.

Presidential Science Adviser John Gibbons cited the report of the National Science and Technology Council, *Investing in Our Future: A National Research Initiative for America's Children in the 21st Century*. This report argues that an essential component of preparing America's children for the next century "is undertaking research to provide new knowledge of ways to improve their futures and to provide sound guidance for policy makers to assure that efforts to help are likely to succeed." According to the report, "much of the progress achieved in [improving the well-being of children] is the result of critical research efforts that have advanced our understanding of how are children and youths develop into healthy and productive individuals."

Kagan Delivers Keynote

Jerome Kagan, Psychology Professor at Harvard University, delivered the keynote address at the conference. He declared that "the variation in

preparation for school is America's most serious social problem." He posited a research agenda that would focus on: the impact of class on school preparation; the relationship between temperament and delinquency; and improving methods to evaluate the child's construction of his/her experiences. Kagan is distressed that "too many poor parents have become fatalists about the futures of their children." He argued for intense efforts to change this skepticism, but was clear that shaming parents will not work. He also cited the work of Michael Rutter and Emmy Werner (see *Update*, April 29, 1996) on resiliency, suggesting that early experiences, including deprivation, are not irrecoverable. He called for three possible strategies: motivating the parents, reforming the schools, and starting academic training in the preschool years.

William Greenough, Psychology and Neuroscience Professor at the University of Illinois, provided evidence of the role of the environment on infant brain development. He demonstrated how brain synapses accumulate in the early years and how experience organizes the "wiring diagram" in the brain. Elizabeth Bates, Center for Research on Language, noted how early language acquisition takes place at the peaks of synapse development, from zero to four years old, but that language development occurs throughout a lifetime, suggesting that the notion of "critical periods" of language learning have been oversold.

Robert Siegler, Professor of Psychology, Carnegie Mellon University, discussed cognitive development in the school age years, noting how children use multiple, often competing, ways of thinking over long periods of time. He asserted that the "discovery of advanced ways of thinking is a frequent, naturally occurring process during childhood." The Japanese achieve educational success with their kids because their teachers encourage children to explain why problem solving strategies work or don't work, Siegler said. He also expressed concern about the "cascade effect," how those rich in early cognitive development, continue to get richer throughout childhood. Alan Krueger, Professor of Economics at Princeton University and former Chief Economist at the U.S. Department of Labor, spoke on the evidence of economic returns to years of schooling and school resources. Using data

from a Tennessee longitudinal study of 11,600 children, he asserted that there is sufficient evidence to causally link future earnings and educational achievement.

Marta Tienda, Professor of Sociology at Princeton University (as of summer, 1997), addressed the issue of school-to-work transition, stressing the impact of the nation's changing demographics, and the influence of race and ethnicity. She examined the cost-benefits of adolescent employment, suggesting that for some groups early work experiences correlated with early school dropout. Yet for others, there were positive wage benefits associated with gaining work experience while in high school. Jon Gruber, Professor of Economics at MIT and currently on-leave at the U.S. Treasury Department, laid out the administration's options for expanding children's health coverage under the Medicaid program.

Bennett Bertenthal, NSF's Assistant Director for the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate, discussed the next steps for this research. He issued a call for more data collection, greater

interdisciplinary cooperation, a need to narrow the temporal gap between basic research and application, and using the research results for better public policy.

TRANSPORTATION DATA DIRECTOR OK'D BY SENATE *MB*

The United States Senate recently confirmed T.R. Lakshmanan for a second four-year term as the Director of the Bureau of Transportation Statistics.

Prior to becoming the first Director of BTS, Lakshmanan's academic career included teaching at both Johns Hopkins and Boston Universities and conducting research on contributions of infrastructure to the economy.

A component of the Department of Transportation, BTS compiles, analyzes, and publishes transportation statistics, operates a long-term data collection program, and identifies information needs in transportation.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON AGING *JCC*

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.

Edward R. Roybal Centers for Research on Applied Gerontology

This Request for Applications (RFA) seeks applications in support of the Edward R. Roybal Centers for Research on Applied Gerontology. The Roybal Centers program's purpose is to facilitate the process of translating basic behavioral and social research theories and findings into practical outcomes that will benefit the lives of older people. The Roybal Centers focus on strategies to improve quality of life, enhance productivity, and minimize the need for care. The Roybal Centers have an emphasis distinct from the clinical and biomedical approaches that are sponsored through the Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Centers.

Funds Available: An estimated \$2,500,000 to \$3,000,000 will be made available in Fiscal year 1998 to support awards made under this RFA. It is expected that up to six awards will be made at a maximum of \$400,000 direct costs per award in the first year, exclusive of facilities and administrative costs on consortia.

Letter of Intent Receipt Date: July 24, 1997. To include identification of all participating investigators and institutions and a descriptive title. Send letter of intent and inquiries to: Jared B. Jobe, Phone: 301-496-3137, Email: Jared_Jobe@nih.gov

Application Receipt Date: October 24, 1997.

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