

Consortium of Social Science Associations

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CONTINUING RESOLUTION GIVES APPROPRIATORS MORE TIME *HS*

Congress passed and the President signed a Continuing Appropriations bill that will fund the government for nine days past the beginning of Fiscal Year 1999 on October 1. Congress still hopes to go home to campaign on October 9. It appears that the extra time will not be enough to complete all thirteen appropriations bills.

As of September 28, only one regular spending bill has been signed by the President, Military Construction. Legislative Branch is on the way to the President. The Defense and Energy-Water bills have made it through the conference committees and need final approval by both Houses before they are sent to the President. A number of others remain in conference discussions including Agriculture, VA-HUD-Independent Agencies (including NSF), Transportation, and Treasury-Postal Service. The Interior (including NEH), Foreign Operations and D.C. spending have not passed the Senate. The Labor-HHS-Education bill has not passed either House. Commerce-Justice-State, with funding for the Census and the prohibition on sampling, is still tied up. The President continues to threaten vetoes on a number of these.

The President has also asked for a supplemental appropriations bill that would include funding designated "emergency" in order to fall outside the spending limitations imposed by last year's budget agreement. This bill includes funds for, among other things, U.S. troops in Bosnia and federal disaster aid.

Thus, another Continuing Resolution will be necessary. How long it will last and what provisions will be included remain unclear. With Congress expected to recess, rather than adjourn, because of the looming impeachment inquiry, spending bills may also remain on the agenda, before the 105th Congress finally says goodbye.

SENATE COMMITTEE APPROVES PREWITT NOMINATION TO HEAD CENSUS BUREAU *DIT*

Kenneth Prewitt, the Clinton administration's nominee to head the Bureau of the Census, passed the first Congressional hurdle in his effort to become the next Director. On September 24, the Senate Government Affairs Committee approved Prewitt's nomination by voice vote. If confirmed by the full Senate, Prewitt would replace Acting Director James Holmes who has led the Bureau since Martha Farnsworth Riche resigned in January.

At the confirmation hearing on September 16, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) introduced Prewitt and strongly supported his nomination. Moynihan noted that since the beginning of United States history, we have kept numbers of the nation's population. The 1990 census, noted Moynihan missed more people and had a higher undercount than the 1980 census. Describing Prewitt as "one of the most distinguished social scientists in the country," Moynihan declared that "we have found someone to fix" the Bureau's problems. He said that as Census Bureau Director Prewitt will do a superb job, but he "doesn't have a lot of time."

Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Fred Thompson (R-TN) asked Prewitt if the Census Bureau plans are operationally feasible in light of General Accounting Office (GAO) criticisms earlier in the year. Prewitt said that he has great respect for both the Census Bureau and the GAO, but that he
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believed that the Bureau's plans need to be ambitious to undertake the task of performing the census. Thompson additionally asked Prewitt what he would do if the Supreme Court has not decided by March 1, 1999 on the use of sampling in the upcoming census. Would Prewitt do a census without sampling? Prewitt stated that he would convene an emergency session with Congress to determine Census Bureau operational plans.

Prewitt told Committee that his proven record of guiding large and complex organizations — SSRC, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago — qualifies him to lead the Census Bureau. In addition, he noted that he has served on the faculty of many distinguished universities — Stanford, Columbia, Washington — and has a “reputation as a good boss.” In addition, he noted that any loss of trust among the public for the census would have a terrible impact. He said that the Census Bureau has a duty to the America public to maintain its trust.

Senator John Glenn (D-OH) asked Prewitt if the Census Bureau has enough money to carry out its operations, especially considering that the Bureau will be hiring temporary workers in numbers greater than the entire U.S. Marine Corps. Prewitt believed the funds appropriated were adequate, but admonished that funding could not be delayed — a reference to language in the House-passed

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Commerce-Justice-State appropriations bill that funds the Census Bureau and places a six-month cap on the Bureau's funds. Glenn proceeded to ask Prewitt if the Bureau has been harmed by not having a permanent director. Prewitt said that Acting Director James Holmes has done a wonderful job and there has been no damage, but further delay could have adverse consequences.

Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) said that Prewitt was very well qualified for the position. He asked Prewitt about the possibility of a “failed census.” Prewitt noted that he wished the term “failed census” was not in the vocabulary when referring to the census. He said that he believes that the Bureau will do a good job and that the census will not fail. He claimed that the real failure would be if the nation did not trust the Census Bureau and the numbers it produces.

Thompson inquired what type of access the Census Monitoring Board (see *UPDATE*, June 15), the Congressionally-mandated board charged with overseeing the Bureau's preparations for and activities during the upcoming census, would have and if Prewitt would consider the board a nuisance. Prewitt noted that the Monitoring Board would have full access, except for issues of confidentiality and privacy, and that he would welcome its activities.

Thompson warned Prewitt to expect pressure from all sides, especially if sampling is performed, because there is a notion that the Census Bureau may “cook the books.” He, too, stressed that it would be “very bad” if the American public did not trust the numbers of the Census Bureau.

Prewitt Resigns as President of SSRC

Prewitt will officially resign the presidency of SSRC effective October 1, 1998. Orville Gilbert Brim, former president of the Russell Sage Foundation and the Foundation for Child Development, has been named as interim president. A search committee chaired by Cora Marrett, provost of the University of Massachusetts, has been formed. For more information, contact Presidential Search Committee, SSRC, 810 Seventh Ave., New York, NY, 10019.

President Shows Strong Support for Sampling; Second Federal Court Rules Against Sampling

At a White House Rose Garden Ceremony on September 24, President Clinton gave strong support for the Census Bureau's plan to use statistical sampling in the upcoming census. At the ceremony attended by many Census Bureau officials and census stakeholder groups, Clinton said that the Republicans should not hamstring the Census Bureau's efforts to use statistical sampling to make the next census the fairest and most accurate.

Despite the President's support, on September 25 a second federal district court three judge panel ruled 3-0 that the Census Act prohibits the use of sampling to produce the population count that is used to reapportion Congressional seats. The panel, from the Federal District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, did not rule on the constitutionality of the use of sampling in the census. The Supreme Court will hear the case on November 30.

HOUSE COMMITTEE RELEASES SCIENCE POLICY REPORT

House Science Committee Chairman Representative James Sensenbrenner (R-WI) called it "a document for visionaries." Others such as House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA) and Science Committee Ranking Democrat George Brown (D-CA) referred to it as a "beginning" to a national dialogue. The Speaker suggested it only "scratched the surface" and it was now time to move to a phase two that would lead to a bolder, more dynamic, risk taking science policy. The object of these comments was *Unlocking Our Future: Toward A New National Science Policy*, a report to the Congress from the House Science Committee prepared by Representative Vern Ehlers (R-MI).

Released at a press conference on September 24th, the long anticipated report, its authors hope, will provide a blueprint for this nation's science policy in the post-cold war era. It is the latest in a series of documents seeking to replace Vannevar Bush's *Science: The Endless Frontier*, the report that set the

agenda for post-World War II U.S. science policy. The latest version's vision statement: "The United States of America must maintain and improve its pre-eminent position in science and technology in order to advance human understanding of the universe and all it contains, and to improve the lives, health, and freedom of all peoples," reflects the notion that science and technology must enrich the lives of people, according to Ehlers.

The document justifies the scientific enterprise as "a critical driver in the nation's economy," and that "basic scientific research is a long-term economic imperative." Thus, the declaration that Congress "make stable and substantial federal funding for fundamental scientific research a high priority." Peer review and indirect costs are supported, as are specific set asides for "the pursuit of particularly creative, groundbreaking research." Given the push in Congress for a greater geographic distribution of the research funding pie, the report also calls for the cultivation of working relationships between major research universities and "less well established research universities and technical colleges," with the possibility of joint proposals.

Although interested in how to set priorities for research, the document notes that "it is important that the federal government fund basic research in a broad spectrum of scientific disciplines, including the physical, computational, life and social sciences, as well as mathematics and engineering, and resist overemphasis in a particular area or areas relative to others." It also calls for increased support for interdisciplinary research.

Unlocking Our Future places an emphasis on partnerships between universities and industry, although "the independence of the institutions must be protected and their differing missions respected." International partnerships are also encouraged. However, reflecting the current mess concerning Russian participation in the space station, these "should be pursued only when they serve to further science and the national interest," with "a clear set of criteria for U.S. entry into, participation in, and exit from an international project." The report also calls for a revitalization of the State Department's "contingent of scientific advisors."

The role of the private sector in the science and technology enterprise is highlighted, including the support for making permanent the research and development tax credit. Friendly tax and regulatory policies are supported to ease private sector capitalization of new technology based companies. The document calls on the States to play a greater role in facilitating the development of these industries and asks the private sector to commit to funding "mid-level research," not simply product development.

Sound Science for Regulations

The report strongly advocates "ensuring that technical decisions made by governmental bodies are founded in sound science." Reflecting a long-held skepticism of the environmental regulatory process by some Members of Congress, the report asks that Congress, the Executive Branch, and the technical advisors for each address the relationship between regulations and sound science at the earliest possible stages of the regulatory process. Supporting a rule instituted by the Republican Congress in 1995, the report says that "scientists and engineers should be required to divulge their credentials, provide a resume, and indicate their funding sources and other affiliations when offering expert advice to decision-makers." Noting Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer's address to the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) meeting in February concerning scientific evidence and the Courts, and the decision in the *Daubert v. Merrill Dow Pharmaceuticals* case, the Committee endorses "efforts to identify highly qualified and impartial scientific experts to provide advice to the courts for scientific and technical decisions."

Once again, Congress tries to find a solution to the perceived crisis in American students' lack of knowledge about science and technology. Citing the dismal results of the Third International Math and Science Study as evidence, the report recommends "curricula that are rigorous in content, emphasize the mastery of fundamental scientific and mathematical concepts as well as the modes of scientific inquiry, and encourage the natural curiosity of children by conveying the excitement of science and math." A message that has been heard often. It also calls for programs that encourage the recruitment and

retention of qualified math and science teachers, including professional development, and merit pay. Echoing others in the policy making community of late, *Unlocking Our Future* also declares the need for more funding for education research.

Regarding graduate education, the document asks for "better preparation of students who plan to seek careers outside of academia by increasing flexibility in graduate training programs." It chastises the "current academic culture" for undervaluing non-research careers by students.

Finally, the report emphasizes the need for scientists to communicate their results to the public, suggesting that as part of their graduate training, scientists should take at least one course in journalism or communication. Journalists are advised to take at least one course in scientific writing. Stressing the need for dissemination of results, Speaker Gingrich asserted that scientists must write clearly in English and make use of the Internet to spread information widely and more quickly, in order to "debureaucratize large science."

Brown: Social Sciences Missing

Although a footnote indicates that the Committee's definition of science includes the social sciences, Brown in his statement complained that "the Ehlers report seems to support the traditional 'hard' sciences with only passing mentions of engineering and the social sciences." He further indicated that "an argument can be made that the most pressing issues facing our society — crime, education reform, social justice — are likely to be addressed through investments in the social science rather than in the hard sciences. Yet, the report is silent on the need to support this important research." Speaker Gingrich also stressed the need to understand human interactions as an important part of science.

Ehlers hopes the report will be adopted by the House in a resolution and that the Senate will consider it as well. Chairman Sensenbrenner read a letter from the Senate Science and Technology Caucus praising the report. However, as Senators Bill Frist (R-TN) and Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), two members of the caucus, told the President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology

on September 17, the biggest difficulty they face is convincing their Senate colleagues that science and technology should become a priority for policymakers.

MIND/BODY HEALTH FOCUS OF SENATE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE *AS*

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) "has a long and revered tradition of funding research in the physiological realm, and more recently, there is tremendous excitement in the realm of genetics research. But equally important is the recognition of the role that behavioral, psychological, sociocultural and environmental factors play in health. Our beliefs, our emotions, our behavior, our thoughts, our family and culture systems, as well as the environmental context in which we live, all are as relevant to our health as our genetic inheritance and our physiology," testified Norman Anderson, director of the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) at the National Institutes of Health.

Anderson, along with Herbert Benson of the Mind/Body Medical Institute at Harvard Medical School and Harold Koenig of the Center for the Study of Religion/Spirituality and Health at Duke University Medical School, appeared before the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee on September 22. The hearing, *Medical Applications of Mind/Body Medical Interactions*, was convened by the Subcommittee Chairman Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA).

Specter emphasized that mind/body approaches to health are an "important part of medical treatment." He said the hearing was designed to explore the benefits of mind/body medicine, to look at stress-related illnesses, the role of stress in a number of medical conditions, and to investigate the cost-effectiveness of mind/body interventions.

For Fiscal Year 1999, the Senate Appropriations Committee has included in the report accompanying the Senate appropriations bill language encouraging the OBSSR "to establish pilot mind/body medical centers to make more visible the benefits of

mind/body medicine; to expand its scientific base; and to teach and train health care professionals in these approaches. The Committee further encourages the Director to establish 10 mind/body centers around the Nation." After asking Anderson about the appropriateness of the center funding mechanism for all 10 centers, Specter appeared amenable to providing the OBSSR the flexibility to determine which NIH funding mechanism would be most expedient.

Anderson emphasized that "mind/body" approaches to health are "particularly relevant to the mission of the OBSSR." He said that "our next challenge is to seek a deeper understanding of mind/body interactions, and to do that we need research that cuts across disciplinary boundaries. That is, research that combines expertise from such social and behavioral science fields as psychology, sociology, demography, and anthropology, with expertise from the various fields of biomedicine." He identified several examples of research that illustrate "the influence of psychological, behavioral, and social processes on levels of biological functioning and health," including research on asthma; breast cancer; coronary disease; touch and preterm infant survival; personality and health; behavior, experience, and the brain; and chronic pain.

"Barriers to Integration of Mind/Body Therapies to Mainstream Medicine"

Benson noted four barriers to integration of mind/body therapies into mainstream medicine: "1) the lack of knowledge of the existing scientific data among healthcare providers, researchers in other fields, among patients and among policy makers in government and private industry; 2) a bias against mind/body interventions in medical care as being 'soft' science; 3) inadequate insurance payments for these treatments; and 4) a bias against shifting away from the overwhelming use of pharmaceuticals as well as surgeries and procedures." Benson emphasized that mind/body medical centers under the aegis of the OBSSR "would be a meaningful step toward overcoming narrowly-focused, exclusively reductionistic research." Mind/body medicine, he concluded, "responsibly fulfills the needs of our people who want therapies that enhance and complement traditional medicine and that do so in a

scientifically-established, safe, and cost-savings fashion."

"Mounting research is demonstrating that psychological stress negatively impacts physical health, and that mind/body medicine approaches are effective in relieving stress and counteracting its negative health effects," said Koenig. He emphasized that because "mind/body medicine techniques help to reduce stress and anxiety, they also have a direct impact on stress-related illnesses like cardiovascular disease and cancer, the #1 and #2 killers of Americans." Beliefs, he continued, have been shown to affect mental health by preventing or relieving psychological stress. Religious beliefs and practices, concluded Koenig, "are associated with quicker recovery from disabling illnesses and prevention of costly disability in older persons, and are associated with reduced use of acute hospital services which are the most expensive form of health care."

The House Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired by Representative John Porter (R-IL), held a comparable briefing in the Spring (See *UPDATE*, March 23).

STOKES HONORED BY SCIENCE AND HEALTH GROUPS HS

The Coalition for National Science Funding and the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding honored Representative Louis Stokes (D-OH) for his support of science research and education during a thirty-year House career that will come to a close at the end of this Congress. The farewell reception, held on September 10th, was attended by nearly 200 House colleagues, federal agency officials, and friends from the scientific community.

Stokes, who served as Chairman and ranking member of the VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, and as a member of the Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Subcommittee, was feted by Neal Lane, director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and former director of the National Science Foundation (NSF), and Harold Varmus, director of the National Institutes of Health. Both recalled their

many appearances before Stokes in subcommittee hearings. They extolled his commitment to increasing funding for basic research and science education, and to expanding opportunities for underrepresented groups to participate in science, health and engineering research. New NSF Director Rita Colwell presented Stokes with a letter of appreciation from the National Science Board.

Representative Jerry Lewis (R-CA), current chair of the VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, spoke about the warm friendship and spirit of bipartisan cooperation that he and Stokes have developed over the years. COSSA Executive Director Howard Silver, chair of the Coalition, and Richard Knapp, chair of the Ad-Hoc Group, presented Stokes with a memento depicting the achievements of African-American scientists and inventors. Stokes expressed his appreciation for the event which clearly indicated the admiration and respect for a man who has made his mark on Congress and science policy.

NIJ LECTURE LOOKS AT GROWTH OF U.S. PRISON POPULATION DH

On September 15, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) began the fourth year of its Research in Progress Seminar series. NIJ welcomed Alfred Blumstein, Carnegie Mellon University professor and director of the National Consortium on Violence Research, and Allen Beck, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) statistician. The two spoke on "The Growth of Incarceration in the U.S.: Where Are All the Prisoners Coming From?" Blumstein succinctly summarized the presentation by stating that the "main story is drugs."

Blumstein began with a historical overview of the growth in the federal and state prison population. He pointed out that between the 1930s and 1970s, the prison population remained relatively stable. After 1970, Blumstein noted that a dramatic growth in the country's prison population occurred (1.7 million).

He laid out the argument that drug offenders were leading the increase in the prison population in

the United States, with most of the growth of drug offenses, and the overall prison population, occurring in the 1980s. According to Blumstein, the last seven years have been marked by oscillation in the number of drug offenses. Blumstein noted that despite recent declines in overall crime, the prison population continues to grow. Through analysis of data, he attributed this growth to the increased number of prison commitments per offense and an increase in the number of years offenders are serving in prison.

Beck followed Blumstein and patterned his discussion on a paper he authored (along with BJS statistician Darrell Gilliard) for BJS entitled *Prisoners in 1997*. He spoke primarily about the increase in prisoners in the state prison system. Additionally, he echoed Blumstein's remarks that drug offenders and the use of minimum-mandatory sentencing led to the growth in the states' prison populations. Beck's paper can be obtained by accessing BJS's Webpage at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/>.

Questions for Further Research

At the conclusion of their presentation, Blumstein and Beck each raised some interesting questions for further research, including: What has been the role of prisons in the recent overall decline in crime?; What is the effect of prison on different crime types?; What potentials are there for intermediate sanctions given the disconnect between the growing prison populations and limited budgetary resources?; and What are the negative consequences of incarceration on the communities and the prisoners themselves? In the end, Blumstein noted that officials must consider the opportunity costs of incarceration, especially the incarceration of drug offenders, in the context of limited budgets.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

DH

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.

Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health (NIH)
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)
Program Announcement Number: PAS-98-037

The NIAAA seeks health services research grant proposals which are aimed at developing a knowledge base to improve the delivery of services for alcohol-related problems. This program announcement invites research proposals to test strategies for improving the availability, accessibility, delivery, quality, effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and outcomes of alcohol-related treatment and prevention services. For general information, contact Robert Huebner, Ph.D., Division of Clinical and Prevention Research, NIAAA, 6000 Executive Boulevard MSC 7003, Bethesda, MD 20892-7003; Telephone: 301/443-0787; Fax: 301/443-8774; Email: bhuebner@willco.niaaa.nih.gov.

Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs
National Institute of Justice (NIJ)
Evaluating Task Forces, Toll-Free Information Service Lines, and Drug Testing Programs

The NIJ, in partnership with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, is conducting comprehensive evaluations of programs funded by the Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program. The NIJ solicitation, *Evaluating Task Forces, Toll-Free Information Service Lines, and Drug Testing Programs*, provides guidelines and application information for evaluations of activities supported by the Byrne Program. The application deadline is October 31, 1998. For more information, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, Box 6000 Rockville, MD, 20849-6000; Telephone: 800/851-3420; Email: askncjrs@ncjrs.org. Interested persons can also contact the NIJ Webpage at: <http://ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>.

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