

**APPROPRIATIONS BATTLES CONTINUE:
CONTINUING RESOLUTION NECESSARY** *HS*

The struggle over Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 appropriations continues unabated. The Congress will not meet the deadline of finishing all 13 appropriations bills by the beginning of the new fiscal year on October 1. In order to keep the government operating, a Continuing Resolution (CR) must be passed. As of this writing, Congress wants a CR through October 21, the administration only wants one for two weeks. The words "government shutdown" are in the air again.

Congress has made some progress. However, only one bill has been signed by President Clinton; three others await his signature; and the rest are still in various stages of the process. The VA, HUD, Independent Agencies bill, which includes funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF), has passed the Senate and now moves to a conference committee. A first step has finally been taken on the massive Labor, Health and Human Services, Education bill. With great difficulty the House subcommittee produced a bill. (See stories below).

The Speaker of the House, Representative Dennis Hastert (R-IL) still hopes to complete appropriations action by October 29 and adjourn for the year. Many of his colleagues in both chambers remain skeptical that the disagreements between the administration and the Congress can be worked out by then.

**SENATE PASSES VA, HUD SPENDING BILL;
FUNDS NSF AT REQUEST** *HS*

On September 24, by voice vote, the Senate passed the FY 2000 VA, HUD, Independent Agencies appropriations bill. Given a last minute infusion of \$7.3 billion to work with, the Appropriations Subcommittee was able to produce a bill that restored many of the cuts that the House had

been forced to make with a smaller allocation (See *UPDATE*, September 13, 1999).

The Senate provided \$3.92 billion for NSF. This is \$250 million more than the FY 1999 enacted level and the same as the budget request. The House provided \$3.64 billion. For Research and Related Activities, the Senate appropriated \$3.01 billion, \$237 million above the FY 1999 enacted level and \$3.3 million above the request. The House-passed level was \$2.67 billion. For the Education and Human Resources Directorate, the Senate allocated \$688 million, \$26 million more than last year, \$10 million more than the request, and \$28 million more than provided by the House.

The Senate Committee, as usual, included large amounts of report language expressing their views on how NSF should spend its money. It allocated \$5 million to the Computer and Information Science and Engineering Directorate's "Computing and Social Impact" program "to study privacy and access to information and to further our understanding of the impact information technology advances have on issues that are of significant societal, ethical and economical importance."

Inside UPDATE...

- Senate Subcommittee Approves Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Funding Bill
- OJP Reorganization Plan Subject of Senate Subcommittee Hearing
- Senator Unveils Youth Violence Prevention Initiative
- A Tough Year for the NIH Center for Scientific Review
- NJ Selects Pilot for "Data-Driven" Crime Initiative
- U.S. Surgeon General Calls for a Balanced Obesity Research Agenda
- Sources of Research Support

Concern About Economics Research in Committee Report

In addition, the Committee report noted that it is concerned about funding by the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences area, "that may be duplicating research more appropriately funded by other agencies," especially "in economics and related fields that is also funded by agencies devoted to studies of the economy, such as the Federal Reserve Board." The Committee cited a "recent study" that found "that economists who received NSF funding published no more new articles than their peers who did not receive NSF funding." The Committee did discover that the productivity of investigators early in their careers seemed to increase with NSF funding and it urged NSF to support these young investigators.

Furthermore, the Committee encouraged "NSF to review its SBE research activities and to focus its funding towards activities more directly related to NSF's core mission of promoting an understanding of the physical sciences." The Committee did support SBE funding of learning and memory, visual and auditory perception, behavioral and cognitive neuroscience, social cognition, decision making, and human development. It directed NSF to provide a report on "the status of its social, behavioral, and economic sciences research by February 1, 2003."

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Consistent with its earlier views on spreading the wealth of NSF grants, the Committee increased funding for the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCOR) and incorporated it into a new office that will "focus on increasing the Foundation's competitive, merit-based support and outreach to these [the non-top 50 institutions in federal research and development support] smaller institutions." The new office will receive \$65 million in direct appropriations and will include \$10-15 million from within NSF's disciplinary research programs.

SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVES LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION FUNDING BILL

AS, DH

Chock full of accounting gimmicks and sleight-of-hand, the House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee approved by an 8-6 party-line vote the bill which funds the National Institutes of Health and the Department of Education. Subcommittee Chair Representative John Porter (R-IL) designated nearly \$15 billion as forward funding — an accounting gimmick that puts off funding until Fiscal Year 2001 and, therefore, does not count against the FY 2000 budget caps. The bill will next be considered by the full House Appropriations Committee, likely to occur the week of September 26.

NIH Receives Another Big Increase

"Reflecting an ongoing commitment to biomedical research," the Subcommittee-approved bill increases the National Institutes of Health's budget by \$1.3 billion or 8.5 percent from its FY 1999 funding level of \$15.6 billion to \$16.96 billion in FY 2000. The President had requested a funding level of \$15.9 billion for the agency. Other programs within the Public Health Service, however, were funded at or near their FY 1999 levels.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) received a less generous 1.6 percent or \$44 million increase from the Subcommittee, raising its funding to \$2.81 billion from \$2.77 billion.

The Agency for Health Policy and Research (AHCPR) is funded at \$175.1 million, an 1.3 percent increase of \$2.2 million in FY 2000 funding. The allocation is \$31 million less than the president's request and \$50 million less than the \$225 million recommended by the Friends of AHCPR.

Education Research Receives Tiny Boost; Statistics Level-Funded

The bill provides the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) \$83.6 million, a \$1 million increase over the current FY level, but a significant \$50 million less than the administration's budget request. The Subcommittee, however, cut funding for the 10 regional education laboratories to \$61 million from \$64 million in FY 1999. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) was funded at the current year's level of \$68 million, \$9.5 million less than the administration's FY 2000 request.

The Subcommittee increased funding for the International Education & Foreign Language Studies program to \$62 million from \$60 million. It level-funded the Graduate Assistance for Areas on National Need (GAANN) program at \$31 million, \$10 million less than the president's budget request.

A Cut for Labor Statistics Agency

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) total funding was cut by the Subcommittee from \$399 million (including trust fund money) to \$395 million. The amount is \$26 million less than the administration's request. The Employment and Unemployment Statistics account was level-funded at \$116 million.

Currently, the Senate Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee chaired by Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) is scheduled to mark up its version of the FY 2000 bill, Monday, September 27 at 6:00 pm. The Senate Appropriations Committee will consider the Subcommittee bill on Tuesday, September 28. The House Appropriations Committee is scheduled to consider its Subcommittee's bill on Thursday, September 30. This schedule, of course, is subject to change at a moment's notice.

OJP REORGANIZATION PLAN SUBJECT OF SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING *DH*

In the midst of Hurricane Floyd, the Senate Youth Violence Subcommittee held a September 16 hearing on the proposed Office of Justice Programs (OJP) reorganization plan. Chairman Jeff Sessions (R-AL) welcomed both opponents and supporters of the plan, including Alfred Blumstein, J. Erik Jonsson Professor of Urban Systems and Operations Research at the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management of Carnegie Mellon University, Director of the National Consortium on Violence Research (NCOVR), and President of COSSA. Also testifying were Gene Voegtlin, Legislative Counsel for the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and Donna Edwards, Executive Director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

In his opening statement, Sessions noted that the OJP has seen tremendous growth in the last several years, but seems to have "no coherent plan." He said, therefore, that it is about time for the OJP to evaluate itself, and to ensure the largest possible benefit for local law enforcement officials. Currently, he said, the taxpayers' money is not being spent wisely.

Assistant Attorney General of OJP Laurie Robinson told the Subcommittee that the challenges of crime are greater than ever. She spoke of the need to make the office more responsive and user-friendly to local law enforcement officials. The current "unwieldy structure" prohibits the office — in the words of the U.S. Army commercial — from "being all that we can be," said Robinson.

Robinson noted that several groups oppose the plan, particularly juvenile justice advocates who believe the plan to consolidate all research, including juvenile justice research, within the NIJ would diminish the focus placed on this issue by the current Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). She noted that the issue of juvenile justice would not lose focus since the plan calls for the creation of an Institute for Juvenile Justice Research within the NIJ. In supporting the consolidation, she said: "Issues of human development and anti-social behavior cannot be neatly divided into an 'under 18' category and an

adult category. In fact, knowledge about early childhood development and problems that develop early in life and influence later behavior can greatly illuminate our understanding of adult criminality."

Blumstein agreed with Robinson and called the plan "an excellent one." He said it "will bring considerable order out of the chaos that now prevails..."

Presidential Appointees on the Line

The plan calls for the directors of the NIJ and the BJS to be appointees of the Attorney General, not of the President, as they are currently. Robinson noted that the OJP has also received complaints regarding this recommendation. According to Robinson, this recommendation was offered to "address what has too frequently in OJP's history been a situation where individual 'fiefdoms' operated independently, were uncoordinated and duplicative, and frequently competitive — or even in 'open warfare' with one another."

Blumstein differed with Robinson on the subject of the Presidential Appointee status of the directors of the NIJ and the BJS. While he lauded the plan for giving the NIJ and BJS directors final sign-off authority on grants, contracts, and publications, Blumstein noted his concern that the plan would diminish the stature of the directors of the NIJ and the BJS by removing their status as Presidential Appointees. He pointed out that virtually all heads of federal research and statistics offices are Presidential Appointees. The plan's recommendation, said Blumstein, could convey the notion that the Justice Department cares little about criminal justice research, evaluation, and statistics.

Blumstein further argued that the Presidential Appointee status allows the research and statistics performed by the NIJ and the BJS, respectively, to be insulated from political pressures. This, he stressed, is of utmost importance for the research and statistics enterprise.

Sessions "strongly agreed" about the need to ensure the "integrity of the research and statistics" products. He said, "Independent research and statistics is important." But, he stressed that he was

not sure if the Presidential Appointee status is needed to guarantee this independence. He concluded by noting that the Subcommittee would look more into this issue.

Mixed Support

Voegtlin expressed the IACP's strong support for the plan and noted that its Executive Committee unanimously voted to support the Robinson plan. He said that although the plan is a good one, it may not be immediately successful in addressing the concerns of duplication of effort and redundancy. Therefore, he told Sessions that the IACP recommends if this or any other reorganization plan is adopted that "immediate and consistent evaluation of the new framework be performed in order to ensure that it is meeting its goal of streamlining the OJP and improving its ability to assist state and local law enforcement agencies."

Unlike Blumstein and Voegtlin, Edwards opposed the plan, and expressed concern that violence against women issues would lose focus if the Robinson plan is adopted. Edwards, whose organization works closely with the OJP's Violence Against Women Office (VAWO), argued that the Robinson plan would severely fragment and undermine the progress in implementing violence against women programs. VAWO is currently a separate program office within OJP. The Robinson plan would transform the VAWO to a section in the newly established Office of Criminal Justice Program Development.

SENATOR UNVEILS YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE *DH*

Calling youth violence a national health problem, Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA), chairman of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, held a hearing September 14 to unveil a nearly \$1 billion youth violence prevention initiative. The hearing featured officials from the four departments — Education, Health and Human Services, Justice, and Labor — that would work together through the initiative.

The language for the youth violence prevention initiative will, according to officials of the Subcommittee, be included in the final Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education funding measure to be voted on by the full Senate. At the hearing, Specter noted that both sides of the aisle, as well as the Clinton Administration, are "on the same wave length" with respect to the need to prevent youth violence. Despite this agreement, however, he said coming to consensus on legislative language, and finding adequate funding "will be difficult."

Education Secretary Richard Riley, Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, Labor Secretary Alexis Herman, and Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder, Jr. appeared by the Subcommittee, and all were supportive of the importance of addressing and preventing youth violence. All stressed the need to make youth feel "connected" at school, and to be more than just faces in the crowd.

Shalala noted that we now know enough to address problems of youth violence. She said that we must "translate scientific research into effective strategies." In particular, she noted that the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health (ADD HEALTH), a subject of one of COSSA's congressional briefings (See *UPDATE*, August 10, 1998), has shown the importance of a close relationship between children and their parents.

Herman said, "I believe the youth violence problem reflects the reality that a growing number of our Nation's young people feel disconnected and disenfranchised from our community." Echoing Herman's remarks, Riley noted that we "must help kids become connected." Students, he said, are looking to become connected through calls for smaller schools and more after-school programs. He used these points to emphasize the importance that the Subcommittee and the full Appropriations Committee raise funding for education programs.

Like Specter, Deputy Attorney General Holder termed youth delinquency a "public health problem." He said that youth violence prevention requires a team effort, and that "we must build on what research shows us that works to prevent youth violence."

Through the initiative, the Subcommittee calls on the:

- Office of the United States Surgeon General to coordinate the youth violence prevention effort.
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) to conduct research to understand and prevent child abuse and neglect, by encouraging research on how to best instruct parents and child care workers in appropriate research, and by supporting research that develops and evaluates interventions for early disruptive behavior in diverse preschool and community settings.
- National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to support research on the contribution of drug abuse including methamphetamine use, its co-morbidity with mental illness, and treatment approaches to prevent violent behavior.

White House Initiative

Earlier this month, President Clinton announced \$100 million in grants aimed to address and prevent youth violence and delinquency. The money is part of a joint initiative of the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice known as the Safe Schools/Healthy Schools Initiative.

A TOUGH YEAR FOR THE NIH CENTER FOR SCIENTIFIC REVIEW

AS

Fiscal Year 1999 was a tough year for the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Center for Scientific Review (CSR), according to Director Ellie Ehrenfeld. She explained that the \$2 billion budget increase for the NIH in the FY 1999 allowed NIH's Institutes and Centers to work on new efforts. The unprecedented budgetary windfall for NIH, however, has had an adverse impact on the agency's peer review system, concluded Ehrenfeld.

Speaking at the Center's September advisory council meeting, Ehrenfeld noted that the budget boost has increased the workload for CSR staffers and has complicated the review process, including devising new types of reviews called for by new areas of research. The existing CSR structure, she said, was not equipped to handle the increased workload that resulted from its being asked to

evaluate new types of applications that would have normally been reviewed by Institute review committees. At the same time, Ehrenfeld noted, the Institutes' and Center's own review capacity was saturated. Furthermore, many of the new initiatives were sponsored by multiple Institutes. At the May Advisory Committee meeting, she noted that because her Center has been extremely short-staffed in recent years, CSR had to borrow Institute staff during the last review cycle. She admonished, however, that this was not a long-term solution.

Furthermore, FY 1999 also saw the incorporation of the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Institute of Mental Health into CSR without the timely transfer of staff and resources, she said. She observed that it was clear that what was being asked from the Institutes was not more of the same.

Additionally, lamented Ehrenfeld, CSR has also implemented a very large number of changes to the structure of CSR, including: changes in the Small Business Innovation Research grants, a shortening of the review cycle, developing a system for electronic receipt of applications, establishing new study sections, as well as reorganizing and starting new study sections in neuroscience and the social and behavioral sciences. CSR also has a shortage of management staff to coordinate and manage the changes, which causes a loss of flexibility to accommodate the changes, she said. Nevertheless, Ehrenfeld said that she is "absolutely overwhelmed" by the effort made by CSR. "The response is absolutely outstanding. . . lots of good things are happening" at CSR, she concluded.

The Advisory Committee also discussed the recently released *Panel on Scientific Boundaries for Review Phase I Report* for which comments are being sought. (See *UPDATE*, September 13, 1999). A Working Group of Advisory Committee members convened to discuss the report generally found the document to be "thorough" and felt that it "addressed important issues" and "documents the problems." A Committee member, however, noted that health services research was "insufficiently addressed." Another member noted that "there are a lot of things that are not mentioned" in the Boundaries Report. Comments are welcome through October 15, 1999

To view the report, go to:

<http://tango0.cit.nih.gov/csr/boundaries.taf>

NIJ SELECTS PILOT FOR "DATA-DRIVEN" CRIME INITIATIVE

DA

The National Institute of Justice recently announced that Seattle, Washington will pilot a new crime fighting initiative that takes a data-driven approach to fighting crime. The new Community Mapping, Planning, and Analysis for Safety Strategies (COMPASS) Initiative, according to the NIJ, is a crime fighting program that combines information such as employment statistics, land use data, hospital records, drug use, gun tracing, and arrest and victimization statistics into a centralized database. The NIJ will provide Seattle with \$1 million in financial and in-kind assistance for the implementation of the new initiative. Seattle Mayor Paul Schell's office will coordinate the effort.

COMPASS incorporates Geographic Information System (GIS) technology into the database, which will allow public safety agencies to plot the crime-related data against a map of a specified community or region. In turn, the GIS technology will help law enforcement officials to analyze how the relationships among these community factors affect its overall well-being and will help predict future hot spots so crime can be prevented.

Through the COMPASS initiative, local strategic planning councils will be created to engage local policymakers and stakeholders by enabling them to see what is happening in their communities, what is working and what is not in public safety. The local strategic planning councils will include a number of local officials, including the mayor, chief of policy, school superintendent, officials from social service agencies and others. They will work with a research partner to analyze the data and develop appropriate programmatic and policy responses.

NIJ Director Jeremy Travis, speaking at last year's American Society of Criminology (ASC) annual conference, said, "As we look forward to the next decade of innovation in the relationship between research and practice, we must recognize the need to construct a national research infrastructure that will

support a more complex set of approaches to the challenges of crime. We believe that the COMPASS initiative will support these new approaches."

The Clinton Administration's budget request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 includes \$30 million for the COMPASS program. However, neither the House of Senate Commerce, Justice, State appropriations bills contains money specifically designated for COMPASS. Nevertheless, both bills contain money for crime-fighting initiatives similar to COMPASS.

U.S. SURGEON GENERAL CALLS FOR A BALANCED OBESITY RESEARCH AGENDA

A "balanced research agenda — basic, biomedical, behavioral, clinical and health services research — with much more attention paid to behavioral research" is needed to combat obesity, stressed U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher at the first annual conference on obesity sponsored by the American Obesity Association, *Obesity: the Public Health Crisis*. Satcher noted that since the establishment of the Healthy People 2000 goals, the incidences of individuals suffering from diabetes, asthma, and obesity are "more severe" than they were in 1990. Physical inactivity is also much greater today than it was in 1990, he continued. Unless the United States deals with obesity, Satcher strongly emphasized, we will struggle to accomplish goals developed for Healthy People 2010 in other areas. AS

Underscoring that prevention saves unnecessary pain and suffering and unnecessary death, Satcher declared obesity to be "a major public health problem in this country." He also emphasized that the U.S. is moving in the wrong direction when it comes to several chronic diseases, including obesity. Observing that more than 50 percent of adults (or 97 million Americans) are overweight or obese, an all time high.

This trend is continuing to increase dramatically in young people. According to Satcher, there has been a 20 percent increase in 20 years in the rate of obesity in younger American. He alluded to the fact that we are seeing more Type II diabetes in children of less than 10 years of age, which is directly related to obesity. Pointing out that African Americans and Hispanics were the most underserved groups in the health care

system, he said the system needs to "reflect the people it serves, understand the culture, and speak their language." There should also be a focus on lifestyles, a very difficult issue to deal with, said the Surgeon General.

Overweight, the Norm?

Claude Bouchard, Louisiana State University professor of biomedical research, explained that being overweight has become the norm today in America. The greatest increase of America's overweight population, he said, comes from those people who are classified as obese. He estimated that genes are responsible for about 30 percent of obesity cases. Bouchard emphasized that family lines are very important, and there is a lot of interaction between genes and the environment — making it hard to predict the effect of the environment.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

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. DH

U.S. Army Research Institute for Behavioral and Social Science's Basic Research Program

Application Deadline: November 17, 1999

The Research and Advanced Concepts Office (RACO) of the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) solicits new proposals for its Fiscal Year 2000 contract program of fundamental research in behavioral science. The purpose of the research is to add new, fundamental knowledge to behavioral science subdisciplines and discover generalizable principles. Inquiries, concept papers, and formal proposals should be addressed to: U.S. ARI, Attn: TAPC-ARI-BR(6.1), 5001 Eisenhower Ave., Room 6S58, Alexandria, VA 22333-5600. For more information, contact program managers: Michael Drillings (Chief, RACO), 703/617-8641; Jonathan Kaplan, 703/617-8828.

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