

Consortium of Social Science Associations

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BUDGET GAME NEARING END

The fight over the FY 2000 appropriations appear to be heading toward a conclusion. Although a fourth Continuing Resolution will be necessary to keep the government from shutting down, a weariness has descended on the combatants from the Congress and the White House that will likely result in their finishing this business by November 10th.

The President vetoed the D.C. appropriations bill for the third time on November 3, along with its attachment the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education funding allocations. The D.C. bill still has some policy riders attached the White House does not like and the big Labor bill has the amount of funding the President wanted — in some cases it exceeds his requests — but how the money would be spent and the .97 percent across-the-board cut on all spending accounts, made the bill “vetoable”. The Interior and Commerce, Justice, State bills also await final action. In those bills, the difficulties are again policy riders, and some appropriation amounts, including funding for the COPS program (See story on page 4). The administration and Congress appear to have settled the Foreign Operations spending bill.

In the conference report that emerged from the Labor, HHS, Education, the Congress in most of the accounts agreed to higher spending numbers than were in the Senate passed and House committee passed bills. At the same time, a number of provisions will postpone expenditure of the funds at the agencies of the Public Health Service (See following story) that could create havoc with grant management procedures. In addition, the appropriators once again invoked their prerogative to determine where and how federal funds should be spent. The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) received \$62 million, over half of which is directed for specific programs at specific universities and other entities. Included in this largesse are funds for public policy institutes honoring former House Speaker Tom Foley (Washington State University), former Governor Dan Evans (University of Washington),

and former Governor Richard Snelling (University of Vermont).

The conferees were also generous to the Javits Fellowship Program which provides support for graduate students in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. The Javits program, still part of the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) program, will receive \$20 million over the next two years. This will allow Javits to be forward-funded so that the competition for the awards will take place in a timely fashion giving graduate students a chance to make decisions with more information about their financial aid. Whether these numbers stick in the end is unclear as the final negotiations seek the tradeoffs that will send Congress home for the year.

NIH RECEIVES BIG BOOST IN VETOED SPENDING BILL

The vetoed Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill provided the National Institutes of Health (NIH) a generous increase. For the second year in a row, NIH's budget received a double-digit boost — 14.7 percent (\$2.3 billion) over the FY 1999 funding level. This would increase the agency's budget to \$17.9 billion in FY 2000. The proposed across-the-board cut, however, would reduce the agency's appropriation by \$174 million

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to \$17.739 billion, a 13.6 increase. Conversely, the conference agreement includes a provision that prevents the NIH from spending \$7.5 billion of its FY 2000 budget until September 29, 2000. See chart for the budgets of some of the individual institutes.

For the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the conference report provides \$2.798 billion in funding for FY 2000, \$965 million would be delayed until September 29, 2000. The CDC's National Center for Health Care Statistics (NCHS) is provided a total of \$100 million; the President requested \$109.57 million. Seventy-one (\$71.69) million of the total appropriated to NCHS is designated under the Public Health Service one-percent evaluation set-aside funds.

For CDC's chronic and environmental diseases program, the conference report provides \$361.70 million with increases for the following activities: \$500,000 for oral health; \$500,000 for prostate cancer; \$500,000 for colorectal cancer; \$500,000 for autism; \$1 million for women's health/ovarian cancer; \$2 million for diabetes; \$5 million for nutrition/obesity; \$10 million for cardiovascular diseases; and \$27 million for smoking and health/tobacco.

The conference agreement provides \$86 million for CDC's injury control program, including the following earmarks: \$2.5 million to expand injury

control centers; \$12.5 million to initiate or expand youth violence programs, of which \$10 million is for national academic centers of excellence on youth violence prevention and \$2.5 million for a national youth violence prevention resource center.

The agreement also includes \$1 million in funding to the Office of the Director to establish a sustainable pilot program that would initiate an interdisciplinary approach to mind-body medicine and assess their preventive health impact. Thirty (\$30) million is included for health disparities demonstration.

HOUSE PASSES BILL TO ALLOW FEDERAL AGENCY DATA SHARING

On October 26, the House of Representatives passed the Statistical Efficiency Act (H.R. 2885) to permit sharing of records for statistical purposes among designated federal agencies. Shepherded by Representative Steve Horn (R-CA), the bill would provide efficiencies in data gathering, while at the same time establishing in legislation a uniform protection of privacy and confidentiality for the collected information. Horn separated this part from earlier legislation he sponsored that would have also combined the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Census Bureau.

The bill designates eight agencies involved in the collection of statistics as "statistical data centers" to facilitate data sharing. The eight are: the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Bureau of the Census, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the National Agricultural Statistical Service, the National Center for Education Statistics, the National Center for Health Statistics, the Energy Consumption Division in the Department of Energy, and the Division of Science Resource Studies at the National Science Foundation.

The centers would be allowed to share statistical data, eliminate duplicate reporting requirements, and enter into joint projects to improve the quality and lower the cost of statistical programs. In addition, other federal agencies could also share data with the eight centers for "purely statistical purposes." The bill would eliminate the need for both the Bureau of the Census and the

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Bureau of Labor Statistics to compile their own lists of business establishments because current law prohibits these agencies from sharing their lists.

The agencies could only use the collected data for statistical purposes. The bill would prohibit them from disclosing the data in identifiable form, for any purpose other than a statistical one, without the informed consent of the respondent. Horn made clear in his explanation to his colleagues in the House, that "information collected for statistical purposes cannot be used for the enforcement of regulations or laws. The firewall between statistical purposes and regulatory enforcement is essential in obtaining the cooperation of business in reporting financial information."

Katherine Wallman, head of the Office of Statistical Policy in the Office of Management and Budget, expressed delight in the House's passage of the bill after many years of seeking easier ways for federal agencies to share data. She and others hope the bill can also secure enactment by the Senate before the current session of Congress comes to a close.

ARE WE HURTING OUR CHILDREN?

"Is what we don't know hurting our children?" This was the question posed during an October 26 hearing of the House Committee on Science Subcommittee on Basic Research. The hearing, chaired by Representative Nick Smith (R-MI), was convened to discuss the federal government's education research program, including the impact of recent developments in fields such as neuroscience, cognition, and developmental psychology on education policy and classroom practices. The cooperative, multi-agency education research initiative known as the Interagency Education Research Initiative (IERI) was a particular focus of the hearing.

The Subcommittee heard from several witnesses, including: Judith Sunley, Assistant Director of the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Directorate for Education and Human Resources; Kent McGuire, Assistant Secretary of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI); Reid Lyon, Chief of the Child Development and Behavior Branch of the National

Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's (NICHD); Alexandra (Sandy) Wigdor, Associate Executive Director of the National Research Council's Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education (CBASSE); and Maris Vinovskis, Professor in the Department of History and School of Public Policy at the University of Michigan.

In his opening statement, Smith noted that he wanted to examine how the money spent by the federal government on education research could be better utilized, and to determine whether the "taxpayers are getting their money's worth in terms of dissemination and utilization of research that has proven successful." He noted that education research is often not done in a scientific way, with adequate control groups or other methods that minimize bias. Too often, he continued, we end up with popular theories favored by the education community, rather than proven methods.

McGuire urged the committee to recognize the complexity associated with education research, noting that many factors outside the school context impinge on student achievement. Unlike the present OERI system of five institutes, ten national centers, and a Field Initiated Studies program, the Assistant Secretary argued for more targeted and focused funding on fewer problems. He also cautioned the panel that instant results are difficult to ascertain and that the education research system needs more longitudinal studies to evaluate new ideas. He also suggested that scaling up successful programs from the local level to the national level is a formidable problem.

Academy Reiterates Call for Strategic Research Plan

Wigdor spoke about the National Research Council's proposed Strategic Education Research Plan (SERP) as a method to produce long-term, sustained, multidisciplinary, research on the practical problems of improving teaching and learning, and transmit best practices to the classroom (See UPDATE, May 31, 1999). The SERP, first laid out in the NRC publication *Improving Student Learning: A Strategic Plan for Education Research and Its Utilization*, calls for four separate networks, each consisting of researchers, policy makers, and educators, to

address four different questions regarding the nation's educational system.

The SERP, proposed as a 15 year initiative, is undergirded by three propositions, said Wigdor. First, that there is "an emerging science of learning that has important implications for the design of curricular, instruction, assessment, and learning environments." Second, that "researchers, educators, and policy makers can work together in a partnership that can improve effectiveness." Third, SERP rests on the proposition that "the time is right for the initiative: the field of educational practice is hungry for research that is applicable to the everyday task of educating children."

Sunley spoke of NSF's education research efforts, as well as its participation in the IERI. In her written testimony, she noted that "the state of education research is mixed but improving." She said there has been a vigorous yet healthy debate regarding the effectiveness of the nation's education research program since the March 1997 release of the *Report to the President on the Use of Technology to Strengthen K-12 Education in the United States* by the President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST).

The PCAST report, she said, was a "clarion call to mobilize an ambitious effort of rigorous research to enable large-scale improvement in technologically rich K-12 classrooms." The level of federal funding for education research, as indicated by the report, are "woefully inadequate." She said that "neither the past levels of funding for education research nor the localized and unique characteristics of the education system have lent themselves to an uncritical adaptation of clinical research methodologies."

Reid Lyon, Chief of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development's Child Development and Behavior Branch, spoke about the research NICHD has conducted and its applicability to education. He noted that NICHD considers teaching and learning in today's schools "a critical public health issue." NICHD longitudinal studies, he said, have shown that "school failure has devastating consequences with respect to self-esteem, social development, and opportunities for advanced education and meaningful employment."

He noted that the education research is "at a crossroads." The education research community, he said, can either choose to become "part of the modern scientific community or it can isolate itself and its methods from mainstream scientific thought and progress." He laid out several steps the education research community can undertake to develop the most effective instructional procedures and interventions, including: the integration of experimental, quasi-experimental, and qualitative/descriptive methodologies, the development of an exact set of conditions — variables that can be quantified and manipulated — and determine what happens in the presence and absence of these condition, the development of hypotheses that can be

Vinovksis argued for a reinvigorated OERI. It needs to be the "intellectual leader" for education research, but has not achieved that status because of its historical reliance on Centers and Laboratories, which he claimed have failed. Other problems for OERI, has been the decline in staff over the years, the short tenure of Assistant Secretaries, and the lack of "first-rate" evaluations of the research. He said "ideas are not lacking," it is the "will to put them into practice." He agreed with McGuire on the need for larger, systematic, more focused research.

A number of questions remained unasked, including why NICHD, although a partner in the IERI, has not contributed any funds to it.

THE FOCUS IS ON "COPS"

The Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program has been in the news a lot in recent weeks. The lack of funds in the Fiscal Year 2000 budget for COPS was a central reason President Bill Clinton vetoed the appropriations bill for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State. On October 27, House Judiciary Committee Crime Subcommittee Chair Bill McCollum (R-FL) held a hearing to explore the COPS program, and addressed his reservations about continuing to fund this program in place of "more flexible" block grant programs.

COPS, a grant program administered by the Department of Justice, provides funds to local law

enforcement agencies to hire additional cops, as well as technologies to help police perform their duties more efficiently and effectively. The program was established through the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act (or Crime Act). In particular, funds are used to increase the number of officers in a police department. The department applying for the funds must have plans "to assume a progressively larger share of the cost over time, looking toward keeping the increased number of officers by using state and local funds after the expiration of the federal grant program at the end of the 2000 fiscal year."

At the time the president proposed the program, he said it would ensure 100,000 additional police officers would be patrolling the beat. However, to date, the program has introduced 60,000 new police officers. The disparity in the expressed goal and the actual number of officers was a central theme of the hearing, and an especially "troubling" issue for McCollum. COPS Director Thomas Frazier noted that while the actual number of cops on the street is roughly 60,000, the overall number by the end of 2000 will be nearly 100,000. Frazier pointed to the long lag-time between recruiting and training would-be officers and the time they appear on the beat as the reason for not reaching the goal set by Clinton.

The Effectiveness of COPS

Lawrence Sherman, Albert M. Greenfield Professor of Human Relations, and Director of the Fels Center of Government at the University of Pennsylvania, noted that while the nation's crime rate has declined in recent years, the COPS program may or may not have played a role in the decrease. More research, he noted, is still needed to determine the program's effectiveness. He called for a 10 percent set-aside in overall COPS funding explicitly for the program's evaluation.

Richard Stana, Associate Director of the Administration of Justice Issues of the United States General Accounting Office (GAO), also testified before the Subcommittee. In his testimony, based primarily on the 1997 GAO report *Community Policing: Issues Related to the Design, Operation, and Management of the Grant Program*, Stana questioned how funds are targeted. He noted that most funds are provided to local law enforcement agencies that meet the COPS criteria, rather than

those areas with the greatest need for assistance in fighting crime.

Sherman suggested that the COPS funding be targeted to the highest crime spots. Echoing Stana, Sherman noted that the current formula for COPS funding, based on aggregate population levels, directs funds to areas which do not necessarily experience higher levels of crime. Too often, he said, the areas that need additional funds to fight crime are not receiving government assistance. Under Sherman's proposal to provide money to crime "hot spots," continued funding would be contingent on actual and substantiated decreases in crime. Sherman insisted that there should be regular audits of crime records to ensure that police departments are not falsifying crime reports to overestimate the reductions in crime.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON AGING SEEKS COMMENTS ON ITS 2001-2005 STRATEGIC PLAN

Noting the "remarkable growth of the older population world-wide poses both opportunities and challenges," National Institute of Aging Director Richard Hodes is seeking comments on NIA's draft strategic plan. He welcomes the extramural community's "thoughts, ideas, and insights on refining the plan's goals and objectives." In his director's message, Hodes also notes that "notable progress in a number of areas of research — biomedical, social, and behavioral — have improved health and function, and contributed to reduced rates of disability, for older people."

NIA will be accepting public comments on the plan until December 10, 1999. Comments are welcome on all aspects of the plan, including the balance and accuracy of the content, and its responsiveness to the needs and challenges facing aging research and the communities it serves.

Hodes notes, as have other NIH directors, that in developing NIA's new strategic plan for aging research, the Institute collaborated closely with the National Advisory Council on Aging and other public and private organizations to establish research priorities for the next five years. (See UPDATE, NICHD, NIMH) According to the Institute's draft strategic plan these priorities will

address scientific topics that hold the greatest promise for advancing knowledge in areas such as the basic biology of aging, geriatrics, and social and behavioral functioning.

NIA's Research Goals for 2001-2005

NIA's plan will address four major goals. According to the plan's overview, the first three goals represent broad areas that NIA will pursue in years to come. The goals are not meant to be mutually exclusive, and have many areas of overlap and interdependence. The fourth goal will complement the first three goals, ensuring that "aging research benefits from a strong infrastructure to support future research, program management, and information dissemination."

1. Improving Health and Quality of Life of Older People - NIA's plan states that research has shown that lifestyle and other environmental influences can profoundly impact outcomes of aging, and that remaining relatively healthy and emotionally vital into very advanced ages is a realistic expectation. Improving health and quality of life for older adults therefore depends upon progress in achieving three research objectives:

- ◆ Preventing or reducing age-related diseases, disorders and disability;
- ◆ Maintaining physical health and function; and
- ◆ Enhancing older adults' societal roles and interpersonal support, and reducing social isolation.

2 . Understanding the Principles of Health Aging Processes - NIA underscores that research on the biology of aging has led to a revolution in aging research. Aging today is viewed as many processes, interactive and independent, that determine life span and health. Lifestyle choices, including diets, physical activity, and other health habits, as well as behavioral and social factors, also have a potent effect on aging processes. Research subgoals within this goal include:

- ◆ Unlocking the secrets of aging, health, and longevity; and
- ◆ Maintaining and enhancing brain function, cognition, and other behaviors.

3. Reducing Health Disparities among Older Persons and Populations — NIA's strategic plan notes that health disparities are associated with a broad, complex, and interrelated array of factors.

Risk factors, diagnosis, progression, response to treatment, caregiving, and overall quality of life may each be affected by aspects such as race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, age, education, occupation, and yet unknown lifetime and lifestyle differences. Citing recent research that found a striking relationship between socioeconomic status, health and longevity, the NIA plan underscores that causes of such results require in-depth research. The plan further stresses that understanding these differences and interactions is critical for developing behavioral and public health interventions to reduce the burdens of illness and increase quality of life. Research objectives include:

- ◆ Increasing active life expectancy and improving health status for older minority individuals;
- ◆ Understanding health differences associated with race, ethnicity, gender, environment, socioeconomic status, geography, and culture; and
- ◆ Monitoring health, economic status, and life quality of elders and inform policy.

4. Enhance Resources to Support High Quality Research — NIA's strategic plan also addresses developing infrastructure to support future research, program management, and information dissemination including:

- ◆ Training and attracting a diverse workforce of new, mid-career, and senior researchers necessary to conduct research on aging;
- ◆ Developing and sustaining a diverse NIA workforce and a professional environment that supports and encourages excellence;
- ◆ Disseminating accurate and compelling information to the public, scientific colleagues, and health care professionals; and
- ◆ Developing and distributing research resources.

The Internet version of the draft strategic plan contains several direct links for feedback and comments. Comments can also be sent via FAX, e-mail, or regular mail. To submit comments via FAX: (301) 496-2793; e-mail: NIAPlan@nia.nih.gov; U.S. Mail: NIA Draft Strategic Plan Comments, Attn: Gail Jacoby, Building 31, Room 5C05, 31 Center Drive, MSC 2292, Bethesda, MD 20892-2292

CDC'S PREVENTION RESEARCH INITIATIVE FUNDS UNIVERSITIES

In October, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as part of a new strategy to strengthen and expand public health research program at universities, announced \$12.5 million in funding to 50 research projects at academic health centers, research centers, and university-affiliated programs across the country. The funding is part of the agency's Prevention Research Initiative designed to link university-based scientists with the resources of health departments, community-based programs, and national organizations. (See Update, two stories)

According to CDC Director Jeffrey Koplan, "the awards ensure that public health research activities address problems affecting the nation's communities." The initiative covers a range of subjects: family-based interventions to improve nutrition and physical activity, development of practical measures of social factors and social capital in racial and ethnic communities, advanced statistical methodologies for high priority health issues, youth violence prevention research and dissemination, promoting walking in rural communities, social determinants of health, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, asthma, and home, workplace and recreational injuries. The average grant is approximately \$250,000. Most projects are funded for three years.

The CDC's Prevention Research Initiative is also supporting projects devoted to establishing priorities for future research, as well as working to develop a research agenda that prioritize and focus on both extramural and intramural research activities.

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.

Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
Deadline: January 24, 2000

OERI is now accepting applications for its Visiting Scholars Fellowship Program, which allows

individuals to conduct educational research at the OERI national research institutes in Washington, DC for up to 12 months. For more information, contact Craig Gidney, The Fellowship Program, National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Ave., Washington, DC, 20418; Telephone: 202/334-2872; Email: c_gidney@nas.edu. Those using a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service at: 800/877-8339.

United States Institute of Peace **Deadline: December 30, 1999**

Through its two principal grantmaking components — unsolicited grants and solicited grants — USIP offers support for research, education, pilot projects, and training, and the dissemination of information on international peace and conflict resolution. The Institute is currently accepting application for its solicited grants program. For more information, contact the Institute at: USIP, Grant Program, Solicited Grants 2000, 1200 17th Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC, 20036-3011; Phone: 202/429-3842; FAX: 202/429-6063; TTY: 202/457-1719; Email: grant_program@usip.org.

National Institute of Justice **Deadline: January 18, 2000**

The NIJ's Office of Research and Evaluation is currently accepting applications for **Investigator-Initiated research**. This is an open invitation to researchers and practitioners to explore innovative topics and techniques to aid in shaping public policies that control crime and enhance justice. For more information, contact NIJ's webpage at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij> or call the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) at: 800/851-3420.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Because of the special double issue on October 11, the next, and final, UPDATE for this year will be published December 6. This edition will include a story on the COSSA 1999 Annual Meeting, as well as a story and a chart on the final budget numbers.

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