



COSSA Washington Update

Consortium of Social
Science Associations

June 28, 2004

Volume 23, Issue 12

SPENDING BILLS ON FAST TRACK, FOR NOW

While there is still doubt that any of the FY 2005 appropriations bills, with the exception of Defense and Homeland Security, will see enactment before the election, the House has moved swiftly to try and complete its action on the 13 spending bills. The Senate has begun the process as well. The Defense bill has passed both chambers and is on its way to a conference committee. With the \$25 billion in Iraq war spending the Administration requested, this has become priority legislation. The “war on terror” also necessitates the speedy passage of the Department of Homeland Security funding bill. It too has passed the House and has made it through the Senate full appropriations committee, with floor action expected soon.

On the domestic side, the House has passed the Interior bill with funding for the National Endowment for the Humanities at \$141.8 million, a \$6.5 million boost from the FY 2004 level. An amendment on the House floor increased the funding by \$3 million for the “We the People” initiative pushed by the Administration. The House has also passed the Energy and Water spending bill. The Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, and State, and Legislative Branch bills have moved through the full Appropriations committee, and the Foreign Operations bill through the Subcommittee. The two major bills of interest for social and behavioral science research funding, Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies, which includes the National Science Foundation, will wait until after the July 4 recess.

House Appropriations Committee chairman Rep. C.W. Bill Young (R-FL) wants all

(Continued on Next Page)

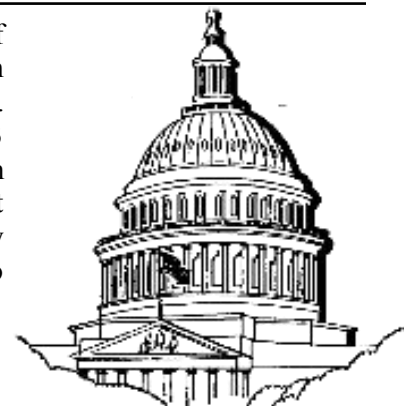
MARRIAGE PROMOTION POLICIES DISCUSSED ON CAPITOL HILL DESPITE SENATE DISCORD

While much time, research, and money has been devoted towards the goal of eradicating the national poverty epidemic, only a small fraction of those resources has been spent on promoting marriage as a solution among low-income couples with children. Although the Personal Responsibility, Work, and Family Promotion (PRWFP) Act of 2003 – which also reauthorizes Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) – has been pulled from the Senate floor for perhaps the remainder of the 108th Congress, the subject remains in play. Two Senate subcommittees and the Brookings Institution have recently held panel discussions with both social science researchers and community activists to discuss educating young people and low-income parents about the importance of

(Continued on Page 3)

Inside UPDATE...

- POLITICAL SCIENTISTS REPORT ON INEQUALITY IN AMERICAN LIFE
- NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND FAILS TO CLOSE ACHIEVEMENT GAP
- NEW NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES' PRESIDENT SELECTED
- TASK FORCE SEEKS CONGRESSIONAL FUNDING FOR RESEARCH ON AGING



13 bills through the House before the summer recess that begins on July 23. He has also floated a trial balloon of an omnibus bill that would wrap up the whole appropriations process by the end of September. It appears the Senate, which is less easy to control than the House, will complicate Young's plans.

Below are the FY 2005 numbers for programs related to social and behavioral science in the Agriculture, and Commerce, State, and Justice appropriations bills as reported out of the full House Appropriations Committee. The directed language comes from the Committee's draft reports that accompany the legislation.

Agriculture

The Agricultural, Rural Development, FDA Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Henry Bonilla (R-TX), did its best within the limited spending available. The **Economic Research Service** received \$76.6 million, close to \$6 million above its FY 2004 appropriation, but about \$3.5 million below the Administration's request. The Subcommittee also provided almost \$3 million for a Consumer Data and Information System "to develop an integrated and comprehensive data analysis framework... to provide a basis for understanding, monitoring, tracking, and identifying changes in food supply and consumption patterns."

The House panel provided the **National Agricultural Statistical Service** \$128.7 million, an increase of \$500,000 over the current year's appropriation, and about \$9 million below the request. The Census of Agriculture was funded at the requested level of \$22.5 million. The Subcommittee is encouraging the agency to "develop an organic data survey process based on its 2003 Census of Agriculture."

The **National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program** got a boost of \$17 million above the FY 2004 level to \$181 million, which is \$1 million above the request. The **Hatch Act** programs would receive \$180.6 million, a \$1.5 million raise from the current year, restoring some of the funding lost in recent years from across-the-board reductions. Once again ignoring the Administration's pleas to reduce **Special Research Grants** deemed worthy by Congress, the Subcommittee funded these projects at \$100.5 million, including almost \$1.3 million for the Rural Policy Institute. This is less than the current year's \$124.2 million, but the Senate usually adds its own favorite projects to boost the final number.

The House Commerce, Justice, and State Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA), recommended a total operating level of \$773.9 million for the **Bureau of the Census**. Of that total, \$571.1 million is for periodic censuses and related programs, \$37 million below the Administration's request. From that figure, \$173.8 million will go toward planning and designing a short-form only 2010 Census, and \$80.2 million will go to enhance the Master Address and TIGER (Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing) files. The Committee also recommended \$146 million for the American Community Survey. This is the full request, with the exception of funding for group quarters testing, which the Committee believes can be postponed for a year. The Committee "strongly supports the Administration's efforts to collect long-form data on an on-going basis rather than waiting for once-a-decade decennial long-form data." For the Salaries and Expenses account, which includes non-decennial programs such as economic censuses and the demographic statistics programs, the panel provided \$202.8 million.

The **Economic and Statistics Administration**, whose account includes the **Bureau of Economic Analysis**, received \$78.2 million, \$4 million above the current year, and \$10.2 million below the request.

The Subcommittee rejected the Administration's attempt to severely cut funding for State and local law enforcement assistance, calling it "ill-conceived." It also refused to go along with the budget request proposal to merge all **Office of Justice Programs** into one Justice Assistance account. The committee gave the **National Institute of Justice** (NIJ) a base budget of \$55 million, \$7.5 million above FY 2004. NIJ will receive additional funding under the two assistance programs named for Edward Byrne, the Violence Against Women program, and the DNA initiative. The latter received the requested \$175.8 million, which included funding for research, development, demonstration, and evaluation.

The **Bureau of Justice Statistics** (BJS) received \$34 million, \$2.2 million above current year funding, but \$4.7 million below the request. The Byrne Grants program, the Violence Against Women program, and the Prison Rape Prevention program also provide funds for BJS activities. The Prison Rape program allocates \$15 million for the collection of statistics, data, and research regarding sexual assaults in prisons.

Additionally, the bill includes \$345.3 million for the **State Department’s Educational and Cultural Exchange programs**. This is \$28.7 million above the current year, and the same as the budget request. This funding supports a myriad of exchanges, including the Fulbright and International Visitor programs. The Committee made clear that it wants the State Department to enhance its support to engage Arab and Muslim audiences through educational and cultural exchanges. Furthermore, it asks the Department to support foreign visitors and student exchange programs on religious freedom, the relationship between religion and the state, and the role of religion in civil society.

MARRIAGE PROMOTION, (Continued from Page 1)

marriage and the consequences of extra-marital childbearing, especially by teenagers.

Currently, over one third of all U.S. children are born outside of marriage. Between 1970 and 2002, the percentage of children living with just one parent more than doubled, increasing from 12 percent to over 27 percent. In addition, the percentage of children who spend some portion of their childhood in a single parent family rose to nearly 60 percent. Research shows that a single mother is five times more likely to fall below the poverty line than a two-parent family. Married adults are also more likely to be healthier, live longer, and earn and accumulate more wealth than single people. Social science research confirms this pragmatic correlation between marital status and poverty, and lawmakers have shown that they are eager to apply this finding in the continuing dialogue on welfare reform policy.

Congressional lawmakers incorporated language from the Promotion of Family Formation and Healthy Marriage Act into the PWRFB Act, which redirects \$1.5 million in TANF funding over five years toward marriage promotion programs. If enacted, \$500 million would be allocated to the Secretary of Health and Human Services for research, demonstration projects, and technical assistance, and up to \$1 billion in federal funds would be set aside for competitive grants to bolster marriage promotion programs and activities. Such activities would include:

- Public advertising campaigns recognizing the values of marriage and the skills needed to increase marital stability and health.
- Education in high schools about the value of marriage, relationship skills, and family budgeting.
- Marriage education, relationship-skills programs, and divorce reduction programs (which *may*

include parenting skills, financial management, conflict resolution, and job and career advancement) for couples interested in marriage, non-married pregnant women, non-married expectant fathers, engaged couples, and married couples.

- Marriage mentoring programs that use married couples as mentors in at-risk communities.

Marriage as a Policy Goal

On May 5th, the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Social Security and Family Policy, chaired by Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA), held the hearing “The Benefits of a Healthy Marriage,” with two panels comprised of marriage promotion program administrators and social scientists. The social scientists warned lawmakers that the promotion of marriage would be misguided without the removal of economic disincentives that currently act as a deterrent to couples wishing to wed. The panel also suggested that the pursuit of marriage promotion as a public policy, in general, should be approached with caution.

Kathryn Edin, an Associate Professor at the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University, told committee members that based upon her studies, “Relationship skills alone are unlikely to move many poor unmarried parents into stable marriages...An agenda aimed at enhancing relationship skills and improving access to economic resources, on the other hand, might help more new unmarried parents achieve their own stated goal; a healthy lasting relationship.”

Theodora Ooms, Senior Policy Analyst for Center for Law and Social Policy, stressed the need for oversight in implementing such marriage programs, noting that while every state has undertaken at least one policy change designed to strengthen marriage and/or two parent families, very few of these initiatives are being carefully documented or evaluated.

Scott Stanley, the Co-Director for the Center for Marital and Family studies at the University of Denver, also urged lawmakers to proceed with care and thorough oversight. However, his testimony emphasized that empirically informed, research-based approaches could be developed to help people achieve healthy marriages. Although he noted “a deep consensus has emerged among social scientists about the beneficial effects of healthy marriages on children and adults,” he acknowledged that “there is a clear need for more program implementation, refinement, and evaluation among those in poverty.” Stanley is also optimistic about recent “definable and practical” models developed for tracking societal progress in strengthening marriages.

Marriage as a Social Institution

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation held a similar hearing on May 14, "Social Science Data on the Impact of Marriage and Divorce on Children."

Gordon Berlin, Executive Vice President, MDRC, Inc., a non-partisan social science research organization, also exhibited concern about the relatively sparse amount of research on how relationships in low-income families are affected by frequent, stressful events in their lives, given that they have fewer resources with which to counter such pressures. Berlin also lent his support to the possibility of public involvement in marriage programs.

In addition, Westat Vice-President Nicholas Zill called attention to the correlations between child well-being and parental marriage, while Steven Nock, Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Virginia, provided forceful testimony about the consequences of a non-marital lifestyle for adults in society. He contended that the increasing number of Americans delaying marriage, cohabitating, and divorcing has proven harmful to women's economic circumstances and prevents people from leading healthier, economically stable, productive lives. "There is no public arrangement capable of monitoring and controlling behavior as effectively as other family members. Nor is there any better method of providing for dependent adults and children... Accordingly, a compassionate government has a legitimate interest in encouraging health and stable marriages," Nock stated.

Promoting Marriage for African Americans

On June 2nd, The Brookings Institution held a public forum entitled "The Marriage Movement and the Black Church." The event brought together African American religious leaders, researchers, policymakers, and community activists to present their views on whether the black church should be involved in marriage promotion and, if so, how the church should go about achieving such a goal. Unlike both Senate hearings, the panelists at Brookings were less concerned about debating the merits of promoting marriage, a point which they already accepted as a necessity, and instead focused on how the black church could aid in promoting marriage and the kinds of internal reforms that would be necessary in order to make these efforts successful.

Ron Haskins, who also testified at the May 5th Senate hearing, opened the forum by reiterating the marital and parenting trends for African Americans that necessitate the black church's increased involvement in the growing national debate on marriage. Population surveys show that the marriage rates among African Americans have plummeted in recent decades to the current situation, where nearly seven of ten black children are born to unmarried parents. Despite a recent increase in the number of black children living in two-parent families and a 40 percent decline in the birth rate among black teenagers over the last decade, about 85 percent of all black children are still expected to spend some or all of their childhood in a single-parent family, Haskins reported.

Following the first panel of religious leaders in black communities throughout the U.S., three social scientists, Diann Dawson, Director of the Office of Regional Operators, HHS; Ronald Mincy, Professor of Social Work Policy and Practice at Columbia University; and W. Bradford Wilcox, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, took part in a second panel that discussed the ways in which to integrate social science research findings into the marriage promotion activities that are being developed by black religious leaders.

The consensus that emerged from panel participants was that in order for marriage promotion activities among African Americans to be successful in breaking the cycle of non-marital births and poverty, the black church must go beyond the efforts of local and federal governments to take a leading role in promoting marriage within their communities.

Despite credible testimony delivered by the social scientists to policymakers at the three hearings about the impact that marriage and limited economic prospects have on poverty, it is unlikely that PWRFP will pass before the end of the 108th Congress. Although the House passed PRWFP earlier this year, disagreements between Senate Democrats and Republicans on how the process of debating and finalizing the bill should go forward have led to its withdrawal from the Senate floor. While it is unclear whether the Senate will take up the bill again this year, Congress will need to extend TANF's current authorization before it expires on June 30, 2004 in order to avoid leaving the people that the bill intends to help much worse off than before.

POLITICAL SCIENTISTS REPORT ON INEQUALITY IN AMERICAN LIFE

The American Political Science Association's Task Force on Inequality and American Democracy released its report, *American Democracy in an Age of Rising Inequality*, on June 7 at the National Press Club in Washington, DC.

After two years of deliberation, the panel, chaired by Professor Lawrence Jacobs of the University of Minnesota, concluded that despite gains in extending voting rights to minorities and other disadvantaged citizens, "persistent and rising" economic disparities work to deny many Americans an effective voice in their government. Technological advances such as the Internet, which had been expected to expand Americans' opportunities for political involvement and ability to make their views known to policy-makers, have not corrected for these inequalities, according to the report.

In presenting the panel's conclusions, Jacobs noted: "There is also a growing sense of powerlessness that is tearing at the heart of democracy itself. When people feel powerless, when the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, we make ourselves vulnerable to the sort of system-wide chaos that we like to believe will never touch us."

Based on analyses of the U.S. economy, various forms of political participation such as voting, and government policy making, the Task Force also found that:

The United States has, in effect, two classes of citizenship:

- Wealthier Americans are far more active across the board – from voting to contacting government officials and joining pressure groups in Washington—than are those with lower incomes.
- Both major political parties target many of their resources on recruiting those who are already the most privileged and involved.
- The decline in union membership has reduced the traditional role of blue-collar trade unions in bringing working Americans into the political process.
- The rise of "public interest" citizen associations has not significantly corrected the bias of the system toward the more privileged.

- The economic disparities among U.S. citizens are growing more sharply in the United States than in other democratic nations such as Britain, Canada, France, Germany, and Italy.

A copy of the full report is available at www.apsanet.org/inequality.

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND FAILS TO CLOSE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

"How is the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act helping to improve student academic achievement in our nation's urban schools?" was the question posed by Chairman John Boehner (R-OH) to both the panelists and Members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce at the hearing held on June 23. The purpose of the hearing, which was the ninth convened on NCLB since its inception, was to assess whether the early results being seen in America's inner-city schools are diminishing the achievement gap between disadvantaged students and their peers. Two members of the panel were provided the opportunity to present their research on the efficacy of NCLB in improving the math and reading performance in urban schools.

The testimony given by Michael Casserly, Executive Director of the Council of Great City Schools, focused on the findings of the report recently published by his organization, "Beating the Odds IV: A City-by-City Analysis of Student Performance and Achievement Gaps on State Assessments." This research provides statistical data on the percentages of urban students achieving at or above proficiency levels on each city's respective state tests through Spring 2003. According to the report, some gains in reading and math performance have been shown since NCLB.

Between the 2002-2002 and 2002-2003 school years, the percentage of urban 4th graders scoring at or above proficiency levels on their state reading tests increased 4.9 percentage points to 47.8 percent and on the state math tests, their scores increased to 51.0 percent – an increase of 6.8 percentage points. During the same time period, the percentage of urban 8th graders scoring at or above proficiency levels on their state reading tests remained at approximately 37 percent and the percentage scoring at or above proficiency on the math tests increased from 36.4 percent to 39.4 percent.

These figures are corroborated by the National Assessment on Educational Progress (NAEP) data, which also shows that the percentage of urban 4th graders

reading at or above proficiency level had increased between 2002-2003 from 17 percent to 20 percent. However, the percentage of 8th graders remained unchanged and there is no trend data available for math. In contrast to “Beating the Odds,” the NAEP report shows how city schools compare on the national level. Casserly pointed out to committee members that the urban gains marked in the NAEP study came during a period in which the nation showed little overall movement in reading performance, demonstrating that city schools were not being pulled upward by a larger national effect, but rather these cities were producing gains by doing something different from what others were doing.

Gains in Urban Math Achievement Predate NCLB

Moreover, Casserly testified that the data from previous editions of “Beating the Odds” suggest that urban achievement, particularly in math, pre-dates NCLB by a number of years, while reading gains appear to be more recent. The data from previous reports also suggest that racially identifiable achievement gaps are narrowing in many cities. Casserly explained that the standards movement predates NCLB in big-city schools, in addition to the fact that urban schools had a running start on implementing NCLB.

The testimony given by Margaret Raymond of the Hoover Institution at Stanford University focused on whether student accountability, which is the backbone of the standards movement and NCLB, leads to improved student performance. NCLB builds on the existing state accountability policies, which were adopted individually over a period of years. Since states differ in whether they adopted a “report card” system (which publicizes performance results) or a “consequence” system (which builds rewards and sanctions into their policies), Raymond’s study, “Does School Accountability Lead to Improved Student Performance,” examines whether either of these accountability models is successful in improving performance and minimizing the achievement gap.

Using information from the NAEP as a nationwide yardstick of how much students are learning, Raymond told committee members that the findings from her study show “that introducing accountability systems into a state tends to lead to larger achievement growth than would have occurred without accountability.” The analysis, however, indicates that simply “reporting results has a minimal impact on student performance and that the force of accountability comes from attaching consequences to school performance.” While states that

employed consequential accountability gained an average of 3.6 NEAP percentage points more than student in states that had no accountability, students in states that operated report card accountability policies showed only slightly positive gains that “are not significantly different from zero.”

Accountability, while helping all students, may aid some more than others. Raymond was quick to mention that accountability systems lead to overall improvements in student performance on NAEP mathematics and reading tests, but they do not uniformly meet the objective of closing achievement gaps, particularly because the white-black difference in gains has widened in states with consequential accountability while Hispanic-white differences have narrowed. Specifically, Raymond testified, “Accountability provides Hispanics an extra boost relative to whites, but for Black students, the relative effect is negative.”

Since NCLB is costing the nation more federal education dollars than ever before, committee members at the hearing were particularly eager to hear from Casserly and Raymond as to whether NCLB is improving academic achievement in its initial stages.

Casserly told committee members that although his organization is strongly in favor of the standards movement that NCLB helps to facilitate, “it would be difficult, of course, to claim that [NCLB] has had a direct effect programmatically in just one year.” While he gives credit to NCLB “for focusing our attention more sharply on student achievement...the gains may be attributable in part to our increasing awareness of the research, strategies and programs” on which NCLB was built.

Raymond also supported Casserly’s conclusion: “We must use caution in drawing implications from the results presented here in NCLB. Because NCLB called for each state to design its own system and because most states have keyed off their existing systems, the analysis here of the impacts of state systems enacted prior to NCLB provides information about what can be expected with full implementation.”

She concluded that adding consequences to accountability systems, a direction toward which the NCLB has begun to gravitate, is supported by looking at similar historical models. However, her findings suggest “that other incentive mechanisms might be appropriate to further accelerate student gains” because NCLB, thus far, does not mitigate the achievement gap.

NEW NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES' PRESIDENT SELECTED

Ralph J. Cicerone, chancellor of the University of California-Irvine campus, has been nominated to succeed Bruce Alberts as president of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). If approved by the members, Cicerone will take office for a six-year term commencing on July 1, 2005.

An atmospheric chemist, Cicerone has served on the faculty at the University of Michigan and was a research scientist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and at the National Center for Atmospheric Research. He served as Dean of Physical Sciences at UC-Irvine from 1994 to 1998, and was named chancellor in April 1998. He also holds the Daniel G. Aldrich, Jr. Chair in Earth System Science and serves as professor of chemistry.

Cicerone was elected to the Academy in 1990, and served on its governing Council from 1996 to 1999. Furthermore, he has been a member of more than 40 Academy and National Research Council committees since 1984. In 2001, he chaired the landmark study, *Climate Change Science: An Analysis of Some Key Questions*, conducted at the request of the White House.

Dr. Cicerone received his bachelor's degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Illinois. He has conducted research on the plasma physics of Earth's ionosphere, the chemistry of the ozone layer, radiative forcing of climate change, and sources of atmospheric methane and methyl halide gases. Cicerone's research has been recognized by the American Geophysical Union, who awarded him its James B. Macelwane and Roger Revelle medals; by the Franklin Institute, with its Bower Award and Prize for Achievement in Science; and by the United Nations.

The new President was selected by a nominating committee of 28 Academy members, chaired by Peter H. Raven, director of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Under the Academy's procedures, Cicerone's name will be presented to the full membership for formal ratification on Dec. 15.

TASK FORCE SEEKS CONGRESSIONAL FUNDING FOR RESEARCH ON AGING

On June 22, the 2004 Task Force for Aging Research Funding, consisting of more than 65 organizations, including COSSA, released its annual report, *Meeting the Needs of the 21st Century*, highlighting recent advancements in medical research and new health technologies. The report also underscored the need to maintain predictable and consistent resources for the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Specifically, the report urges the Congress and the President to: 1) Make age-related research a greater priority due to an increase in older Americans with the graying of the baby boom generation, and 2) Uphold a national commitment to medical research by increasing NIH funding by 8 – 10 % in FY 2005.

Meeting the Needs of the 21st Century also emphasizes that “social and behavioral research is a proven critical component in reducing illness and frailty among older people. The knowledge produced is often relevant to all diseases and disorders.”

Attending the report's release, Rep. Lois Capps (D-CA) emphasized the need to put “health and social research policy” in place “so that we are not unprepared” for the aging baby boomers. It is “an important time to not stop the flow of resources,” she stressed, citing the “damage” it would cause to “long term plans” for research.

Copies of the report are available by calling 202.293.2856 or via <http://www.agingresearch.org>.

CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

Executive Director: Howard J. Silver
Dep. Dir. Health Policy: Angela L. Sharpe
Public Affairs: Tracey S. Lesetar
Gov't Relations: Julie A. Egermayer
President: Orlando Taylor

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 \$80; institutional subscriptions - \$160; overseas mail - \$160. 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

www.cossa.org