



COSSA Washington Update

Consortium of Social
Science Associations

February 9, 2004

Volume 23, Issue 3

FY 2005 BUDGET RELEASED: LARGE DEFICIT, SMALL INCREASES FOR NON-SECURITY DOMESTIC PROGRAMS

On February 2, the Bush Administration released its budget blueprint for Fiscal Year 2005. Faced with a projected \$521 billion deficit in FY 2004, the budget vows to cut that in half in the next five years by spending less and growing the economy. The Administration claims it can do this by limiting non-defense, non-homeland security spending increases to 0.5 percent in FY 2005 and by making the enacted Bush tax cuts, scheduled to sunset in the coming years, permanent. Defense and homeland security, on the other hand, will receive 7 and 10 percent increases, respectively in the proposed budget.

In FY 2005, the Administration is projecting revenues of \$2.036 trillion and spending of \$2.4 trillion, leaving a deficit of \$364 billion. By contrast, in FY 2001 the Federal budget was running a surplus of \$127 billion. The Administration blames the weak economy, lack of discipline on spending, and the wars on terrorism and in Afghanistan and Iraq for the turn-around. Others also fault the decline in revenues from the Bush tax cuts.

In addition, at a hearing of the House Budget Committee on February 3, Democrats kept pointing out that the released budget does not include any funding for the continuing U.S. presence in Iraq and Afghanistan. In FY 2004, an \$87 billion supplemental appropriations bill provided such funding. Another supplemental is expected, probably after the election, with the FY 2005 price tag estimated to be \$50 billion.

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ZERHOUNI DEFENDS THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH'S SUPPORT OF SEXUAL HEALTH RESEARCH

On January 26, National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Elias Zerhouni forcefully responded, via letter, to those Members of Congress who have attacked the agency for its support of research on human sexuality. The NIH Director conveyed to Members that he "fully support(s) NIH's continued investment in research on human sexuality," based on the findings of the NIH Institutes directors. "I believe," wrote Zerhouni, "that the peer review process, which is fundamental to the ability of NIH to conduct effective and high quality research, has worked properly and provided a level of valuable and independent review in this important area of research."

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Editor's note: The next issue of *Update* is our annual budget issue, detailing the proposed budgets for social and behavioral science for FY 2005. It will appear March 8.



BUDGET, (Continued from Page 1)

Total discretionary spending in the FY 2005 request is \$818.8 billion, a four percent increase over the \$787.3 billion in the regular appropriations bills, but a 6.4 percent decrease if the supplemental appropriation for the wars is included.

The Administration is once again going after earmarks – special projects inserted by Members of Congress – during the appropriations process. At a press conference, Office of Management and Budget Associate Director Marcus Peacock decried how this spending was distorting the President’s priorities and contributing to the lack of fiscal discipline. When asked whether the Administration was going to get serious and direct the agencies not to spend the earmarked funds, Peacock was non-committal.

Once again in FY 2005, the budget includes many programs the Administration would like to terminate. Many of these, such as the Advanced Technology Program, Star Schools, Close Up Fellowships, Arts in Education, Eisenhower Regional Math and Science Consortia, the National Writing Project, Women’s Educational Equity, Regional Educational Laboratories, Hope VI Housing, the Byrne Law Enforcement Grants, and the COPS program, have been on these lists before. With support from key members, they have managed to survive.

In addition, the President wants Congress to reinstate rules regarding budget-making that provided restraints during the latter Clinton years. These included pay-as-you-go, any spending increases or revenue decreases needed to be offset by corresponding spending decreases or revenue enhancements. Democrats are furious that any proposed tax cuts are not part of the current proposal for pay-as-you-go.

Research and Development Budgets

The President’s science adviser and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) John Marburger presented the Administration’s budget for research and development (R&D) to an audience of science press and community representatives on February 2. He announced that the investment criteria used by the Administration for these programs were: 1) relevance; 2) quality; and 3) performance.

The President’s management agenda continues to rate programs through its Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART). For FY 2005, 58 R&D programs had completed or updated PART assessments. Of those programs, most

were rated “effective” or “moderately effective.” Only the Department of Energy’s Oil Technology program was rated “ineffective” and had its funding cut. The Administration notes: “However, funding changes and management reforms are not made by formula or based solely on PART results. For example, funding may be reduced for ‘effective’ programs that have achieved what they set out to do, and ‘ineffective’ programs might receive more money if it is clear it would help them become more effective.”

The FY 2005 R&D proposed budget is \$131.9 billion, up from close to \$126 billion in FY 2004, approximately a 5 percent boost. Basic research is increased 0.6 percent to \$26.8 billion. Applied research goes up 0.5 percent to \$28.5 billion and development climbs 8 percent to \$71.5 billion. Facilities and equipment account for \$4.8 billion, up from \$4.3 billion in FY 2004. In documents accompanying the release of the budget, the Administration uses comparisons to 2001, when they took office, to demonstrate the spending increases for R&D. (In an interesting sidelight, at the National Science Foundation news conference Director Rita Colwell used comparisons to 1998, when she came to the Foundation, as the basis for comparison.)

Looked at another way, for the Federal Science and Technology Budget, a concept developed by Frank Press in a National Academy of Sciences report some years ago, which removes most of the defense development funding from the total, the FY 2005 proposed figure is \$60.4 billion, down from \$60.5 billion in FY 2004.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) gets a 3 percent increase to \$5.745 billion. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) are up only 2.5 percent to \$28.6 billion. In dollar terms, NSF goes up \$167 million, NIH \$729 million (for more on these proposed budgets see below). Another increase, noted by Marburger as “a priority” for the Administration, is for education research, up about \$20 million. Basic research at the Department of Defense is proposed to decline by four percent. Research in the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service at the Department of Agriculture is slated to go down by \$118 million, although most of this is from the elimination of congressional earmarks.

National Science Foundation

As noted above, the NSF proposed budget would increase to \$5.745 billion, a boost of three percent. This remains a far cry from the FY 2005 budget of over

\$7 billion envisioned in the NSF reauthorization bill passed in 2002. Of course, that was when there were still surpluses in the Federal budget.

The Research and Related Activities account goes up by almost 5 percent to \$4.452 billion. Funding for the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate would increase to \$224.7 million, a boost of almost \$21 million. The two research divisions, Behavioral and Cognitive Science and Social and Economic Science would receive \$7.5 million increases apiece, to \$76 million and \$88.5 million respectively. The Science, Resources, Statistics division would remain at \$26.2 million. The Office of International Science and Engineering (INT) is budgeted at slightly over \$34 million, an increase of almost \$6 million. This last entity has a separate appropriation line, but still remains listed with the SBE budget proposal. Without INT, the increase for SBE is over 8 percent.

The Human and Social Dynamics Priority area remains. The FY 2005 request is \$23.3 million, of which almost \$16 million will come from the SBE budget. It joins Nanoscale Science and Engineering (including societal implications), Mathematical Sciences (including statistics), and Workforce for the 21st Century as the NSF-wide priority areas in the Foundation's FY 2005 budget proposal.

The big surprise is that the Education and Human Resources (EHR) directorate suffers a \$167 million dip in its funding, from \$939 million to \$771.4 million. Most of this reduction comes from the Administration's proposal to move the Math and Science Partnership (MSP) program from NSF to the Department of Education (ED), where it will join a small (\$12.5 million) formula grant program. The purpose of the MSP is to integrate the expertise of higher education with that of K-12 to strengthen and reform science and mathematics education. NSF is allowed to continue funding the \$80 million in peer-reviewed competitive grants it has awarded since the program began in FY 2002. These are budgeted under the Integrative Activities part of the NSF budget, which is included in the Research and Related Activities account. House Science Committee Chairman Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY) has vowed to vigorously fight against the transfer of MSP to ED, where, despite assurances, peer review might not operate.

The Integrative Activities budget also includes \$20 million for the continuation of the Science of Learning Centers program. The major boost for the NSF budget is in the Salaries and Expenses account, which is proposed to climb by almost 35 percent for FY 2005.

This reflects Director Colwell's repeated assertions that this was her number one priority for the Foundation, whose workload, in terms of grant proposals, has increased enormously in recent years without any corresponding increase in staff.

National Institutes of Health

For the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the FY 2005 budget request is \$28.8 billion, an increase of \$764 million or 2.7 percent over the FY 2004 funding level. For the NIH Roadmap for Medical Research, the FY 2005 budget allocates \$237 million, an increase of \$109 million over the FY 2004 funding level. This sum includes \$60 million in the Office of the Director, a \$25 million increase, and \$177 million in the budgets of the Institutes and Centers, an increase of \$84 million. In FY 2005 the NIH's budget places a higher priority on the support of additional research project grants.

The FY 2005 NIH **HIV/AIDS-related research** budget is \$2.9 billion, an \$80 million or 2.8 percent increase over the previous year. This sum includes \$100 million in the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Disease's budget to continue HHS contributions provided since FY 2002 to the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.

In FY 2005 the NIH plans to expand its **obesity research** portfolio by \$40 million, providing a total of \$440 million. This includes a targeted, \$22 million trans-NIH initiative that will seek to "better understand the neurobiological, genetic, behavioral, and environmental basis of obesity and its co-morbid conditions; and improve strategies for maintaining healthy weight in adults and children."

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The FY 2005 budget request for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is \$6.9 billion, a reduction of \$58 million from the FY 2004 funding level. The reduction reflects one time Congressional projects that are not being continued in FY 2005, including funding for research activities totaling \$16 million.

For the CDC's **Chronic Disease Prevention And Health Promotion**, the FY 2005 budget includes \$915 million, an increase of \$62 million over the FY 2004 level.

To fund the Secretary's **Steps to a Healthier US**, the budget provides \$125 million, an increase of \$81 million. Of this request, \$115 million (including \$71 million of the increase) will be used to expand the State and community

grant program initiated in September to reduce the prevalence of diabetes, obesity, and asthma-related complications through prevention initiatives.

For the **National Center for Health Statistics**, the FY 2005 budget request is \$150 million, an increase of \$22 million over the FY 2004 level. This amount would come from interagency transfers of evaluation funds. The increase will allow the agency to expand contracts with States to purchase birth and death data and move forward on its e-government initiatives to update the content of birth and death records. The increase will also allow for “robust sample sizes” necessary for the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey and the National Health Interview Survey to provide needed information on a wide range of conditions, diseases, and population subgroups. Funds are also provided to address major emerging data gaps in the National Health Care Survey, such as long-term care and assisted living facilities.

For CDC’s **Domestic HIV/AIDS Prevention and Research** activities, the FY 2005 budget requests \$790 million, of which \$696 million is in the National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention and \$94 million is in the National Center for Infectious Diseases and the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

CDC’s **Injury and Prevention and Control’s** FY 2005 budget is \$154 million and includes funding to support programs focused on residential fire deaths, intimate partner violence, non-fatal fall traumatic brain injury, child abuse and neglect, rape prevention and education, and other injury prevention and control initiatives.

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

For the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the President’s FY 2005 budget request is \$304 million, the same as FY 2004. The budget proposes that AHRQ be fully funded through inter-agency transfers of evaluation funds.

The budget request continues to support improvement through research on the cost effectiveness and quality of health care and provides \$246 million for this activity. Of this total, \$84 million, an increase of \$4 million, is provided for patient safety efforts.

The FY 2005 budget request for the Medical Expenditure Panel Surveys is \$53 million, the same as the previous year.

For the annual National Healthcare Quality Report and the National Healthcare Disparities Report, \$3 million has been allocated for FY 2005.

HHS Policy Research

The FY 2005 budget request for Policy Research is \$29 million, an increase of \$8 million above the FY 2004 funding level. The Administration proposes that the entire amount come from interagency transfers of evaluation funds. Included in the increase is \$2 million to support the National Electronic Health Information Initiative to focus on electronic health information systems. The remaining \$6 million is slated to support the Current Population Survey, which is conducted by the Bureau of the Census.

Department of Education

The FY 2005 budget includes \$57.3 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Education, an increase of \$1.7 billion or 3.0 percent over last year’s appropriation. The Administration is trumpeting its request of an extra billion dollars for both Title I grants to local educational agencies and special education grants to states.

The **Institute of Education Sciences’** research, development, and dissemination account received \$185.0 million in the budget. This marks a boost of \$19.5 million (11.8 percent) over the FY 2004 appropriation. Education statistics and assessment were level funded at \$91.7 million and \$94.8 million respectively.

It’s also worth noting that, for the second straight year, the Administration proposes elimination of the **Regional Education Labs**. The Labs received \$66.7 million for FY 2004 in the omnibus appropriations act are unlikely to be cut by a supportive Congress. Departmental officials assert that the Labs “have not consistently provided high quality research and development products or evidenced-based training and technical assistance,” and that Congress has not done enough to “improve the structure and function” of the Labs.

Department of Justice

The Administration continues its attack on earmarked spending by significantly reducing funds for state and local law enforcement. It also proposes to eliminate the Byrne Program and the COPS program, moves which Congress has previously rejected. There is an increase of \$8.6 million in the proposed base

budget of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to \$56.6 million. NIJ will also continue to receive \$5.2 million for research and evaluation of the Violence Against Women program.

The Administration is proposing \$38.7 million for the Bureau of Justice Statistics, an increase of \$6.6 million. The major focus of the Office of Justice Programs remains the President's DNA Initiative, with \$175.8 million, of which \$14 million would be for research, development, demonstration, and evaluation.

Department of Agriculture

The Department of Agriculture's **Research, Education, and Economics** account was budgeted at \$2.435 billion for FY 2005. This marks a drop of \$64 million or about 2.6 percent from the FY 2004 appropriation. Most of this occurs due to elimination of earmarked projects.

Within the **Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service**, the Hatch Act formula funds program received \$180 million, essentially the same as the enacted level for last year. The Administration proposes a budget of \$180 million for the National Research Initiative, a boost of \$16 million (9.8 percent) over the FY 2004 appropriation.

The **Economic Research Service** is budgeted at \$80 million for FY 2005, a \$9 million or 12.7 percent increase from last year. The request for the **National Agricultural Statistics Service** is \$138 million, \$10 million (7.8 percent) above the FY 2004 figure of \$128 million.

ZERHOUNI, (Continued from Page 1)

Zerhouni notes that the agency's mandate (Section 301 of the Public Health Service Act) requires the NIH to "conduct and support research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations, and studies related to the causes, diagnosis, treatment, control, and prevention of physical and mental diseases and impairments of man."

Constant Battle against Illness and Disease . . . Has To Include Behavioral and Social Factors

In the letter, the NIH Director allows that "much of the success in improving the Nation's health is

attributable to research advances furthering the understanding of human biology." He emphasizes, however, that "the constant battle against illness and disease . . . cannot be limited to biological factors but has to include behavioral and social factors as well. Unhealthy human behaviors have been estimated to be the proximal cause of over half of the disease burden in our country. . . [T]he spread of sexually transmitted diseases, and sex-related or other violent behaviors are at the core of many of the illnesses we are trying to prevent and control in our diverse society today."

Zerhouni acknowledges the "important role" that both the Congress and the Administration have in priority setting. Noting that NIH "must be accountable to both, as well as the American public," he announced that he is "initiating discussions with NIH Institute Directors about mechanisms the agency could establish to ensure that this research is better presented to the public so that they may understand its relevance to public health and "that it is in fact prioritized appropriately."

Zerhouni explained that he arrived at his conclusion after directing NIH officials to conduct a comprehensive review of the human sexuality research that is supported by the agency "with a particular focus on the lists of grants that have been cited by some Members of Congress." Directors of the relevant Institutes were also asked by Zerhouni "to review each and every grant to help answer the following questions . . . which [he believes are] the essence of the objections raised by some Members."

1. Are these grants relevant to the public health needs of our country; i.e., is this research a good use of taxpayers' dollars and why?
2. Are the research and its methods scientifically and ethically appropriate?
3. Was the integrity of the process by which these grants were reviewed and funded at NIH compromised?
4. Is the funding for this research area disproportionate relative to the burden of sexually related diseases as compared to that of other diseases?

Letters were sent to Senators Judd Gregg (R-NH) and Edward Kennedy (D-MA), Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; and Reps. W.J. "Billy" Tauzin (R-LA) and John D. Dingell (D-MI), Chair and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. Letters of

explanation were also sent to Senators Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Tom Harkin (D-IA), Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Reps. Ralph Regula (R-OH) and David Obey (D-WI), Chair and Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services.

MEMBERS PRESS THOMPSON ON POLITICAL INTERFERENCE AT HHS

Taking the unusual step of sending correspondence under the authority of a rarely used statute, the “Seven Member Rule,” more than a dozen members of the House Government Reform Committee wrote to Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Tommy Thompson insisting upon responses to a series of unanswered letters regarding the appearance of political interference with science at HHS over the last 15 months. The Seven Member Rule is “a shorthand term for a Federal law that gives members of the Government Reform Committee and its counterpart in the Senate a legal right to information from Executive Branch agencies.”

“We are taking this unusual step because the Administration’s obsession with secrecy has shut down the flow of information to Congress,” said Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA), Ranking Minority Member of the Committee. “Members of Congress have a right to information. Our government is based on a system of checks and balances, and oversight is a critical part of that.”

In their letter to Thompson, Waxman, joined by 14 other members of the Committee, states that “the letters sought information about whether political considerations interfered with the dissemination of scientific facts on HHS websites, the composition of scientific advisory committees, the conduct of scientific research, and the auditing and other intrusive reviews of Federal grantees.”

The Members state that the Secretary’s failure to respond has “impeded our oversight efforts and hindered our consideration of the need for additional legislation.” Invoking the Seven-Member Rule, they specifically requested all communications since January 2001 between HHS officials and any person outside the executive branch:

1. Regarding the removal or alteration of any scientific or technical information from any HHS website.
2. Making recommendations for or against individuals possibly serving on any HHS scientific advisory committee.
3. Regarding organizations or persons carrying out Federally-funded sex education, abstinence education, or HIV/AIDS prevention programs. This request does not include communication between HHS officials and the organizations or persons carrying out the programs.
4. Regarding organizations or persons carrying out Federally-funded research related to sex practices or preferences or the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. This request does not include communication between HHS officials and the organizations or persons carrying out the research.
5. All communications since January 2001 between HHS officials and the Traditional Values Coalition or any person representing the Traditional Values Coalition.

BUSH HOLDS ROUNDTABLE WITH ECONOMISTS

On January 30, President Bush convened a roundtable discussion with a group of prominent economists about the state of the American economy. Though the session was held behind closed doors, the President told reporters at the end of the meeting that topics included how to promote growth, ways for Congress to sustain positive economic indicators (including extending tax cuts), and the need for free trade and less regulation. Bush also asserted that it’s important “to control the cost of medicine without nationalizing health care.” The economists who attended the roundtable were:

- **Robert Hahn**, Executive Director of the American Enterprise Institute-Brookings Joint Center for Regulatory Policy
- **Douglas Irwin**, Professor of Economics, Dartmouth College

- **Daniel Kessler**, Professor in the Graduate School of Business, Stanford University; also holds appointments as a Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution and as a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER)
- **Edward Lazear**, Professor of Human Resources Management and Economics in the Graduate School of Business, Stanford University
- **John Lipsky**, Chief Economist and Director of Research, JP Morgan Chase; also serves as a Director at NBER
- **David Malpass**, Chief Global Economist and Senior Managing Director, Bear Stearns
- **James Sweeney**, Professor of Management Science and Engineering, Stanford University and Senior Fellow at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research; also holds an appointment as Senior Fellow at the U.S. Association for Energy Economics
- **Gail Wilensky**, Senior Fellow at Project HOPE and Co-Chair of the President’s Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation’s Veterans
- **Paul Willen**, Professor of Economics in the Graduate School of Business, University of Chicago

AAAS’ ALAN LESHNER CHAIRS WORKGROUP EXAMINING NIMH’S BASIC SCIENCE PORTFOLIO

On February 6, the National Advisory Mental Health Council held its 205th meeting. National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Director Tom Insel informed council members that since its last meeting in September 2003, the Institute had made progress on many fronts, including the formation of a workgroup, *Setting Priorities for the Basic Sciences of Mental Health*, of its Council to address priority setting for the basic sciences in mental health. Specifically, the workgroup is charged with “reviewing the existing NIMH portfolio in molecular, cellular, and behavioral neuroscience, basic behavioral and basic cognitive science,” along with considering relevance to mental disorders and recommending priority areas for research funding. (See *Update*, November 3, 2003).

The workgroup is being chaired by Alan Leshner, Chief Executive Officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and Executive Publisher of *Science*. Leshner, the former Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse and former Acting and Deputy Director of NIMH updated the Council on the workgroup’s progress.

Noting, “We are living in interesting times,” Leshner informed Council members that budget growth is over, and the NIH “is expecting very small increases in the coming years.” Referencing the successful campaign to double the budget of the NIH in five years, led by Senators Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Tom Harkin (D-IA) and former Rep. John Porter (R-IL), and the relatively small increases provided to the other science agencies, particularly the National Science Foundation, Leshner lamented that the imbalance in funding for Federal science agencies “is extremely unhealthy for all of science.” “Take turn funding” ignores that science is interdependent and we “cannot afford to leave some fields behind,” he asserted.

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), an advocacy organization for federal support for the social and behavioral sciences, was founded in 1981 and stands alone in Washington in representing the full range of social and behavioral sciences.

Update is published 22 times per year. Individual subscriptions are available from COSSA for \$80; institutional subscriptions - \$160; overseas mail - \$160. ISSN 0749-4394. Address all inquiries to COSSA:

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Leshner explained that the NIMH's commitment base is quite high which will result in the Institute making fewer grants. For the Institute to continue to move forward, it will require doing new things and setting priorities, he observed. The financial situation for the NIMH has changed; accordingly, it will require the Institute to set priorities.

Leshner observed that the domains given the workgroup are "incredibly broad" as is the panel itself. It is a "very luminary group representing all the basic sciences," he noted. Richard Davidson is chairing the subgroup focused on NIMH's basic behavioral and behavioral neuroscience portfolio and Eric Nestler is heading the subgroup focused on molecular, cellular, and genomic aspects of the portfolio. The workgroup, which has been meeting since January, is scheduled to report their findings and recommendations at the May council meeting.

COSSA STAFF UNDERGOES CHANGE

COSSA is pleased to announce that Julie Egermayer has been hired as COSSA's new Assistant Director for Government Relations. She replaces William Tatum, who has moved on to a new position at the Washington, D.C.-based Alliance for Aging Research. Egermayer comes to COSSA from the office of Senator Ben Nelson (D-NE), where she served as a Staff Assistant. She held a previous appointment as a Constituent Services Representative for then-Senator Jean Carnahan (D-MO) in 2002. She graduated from Washington University in St. Louis in December 2001 with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. She will assist COSSA's lobbying efforts, provide research support, and manage the office. Her tenure commences on February 17.