
CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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COSSA TESTIFIES BEFORE CONGRESS

In the final week before the congressional Easter Recess, COSSA testified four times on research budgets in the social and behavioral sciences.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on HUD-Independent Agencies, under Chairman Edward P. Boland (D-MA), held hearings for public witnesses on the FY 1985 budgets of agencies under its jurisdiction. Roger W. Shuy, a professor of linguistics at Georgetown University, testified on behalf of COSSA on the proposed budget for the National Science Foundation (NSF). Dr. Shuy urged the Appropriations Committee to follow the lead of the House Science and Technology Committee, which added \$5 million to the authorization of the Directorate for Biological, Behavioral, and Social Sciences (BBS). The authorization bill, which is scheduled for House debate and vote on Wednesday, April

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Dell H. Hymes, *President*

Roberta Balstad Miller, *Executive Director*

25, specifies that \$3.6 million of this amount is to be spent on the social and behavioral science programs and \$1.4 million on the information sciences. (For further information, see "Upcoming NSF Budget Debate: Telephone Calls Needed," p. 5, this issue.)

Sandra Newman, Assistant Professor of Public Policy at the Johns Hopkins University, testified before the Boland Subcommittee on the research budget of the Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) in the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Dr. Newman pointed out that although the HUD research budget has been declining for several years, there has been little change in the research and data collection demands made on HUD by the Congress. At the present time, congressionally mandated studies absorb most of the research funds at HUD, leaving almost nothing for the development of a research program to meet emerging problems or for the conduct of research and evaluation of current HUD programs.

Charles Wellford, Director of the Institute of Criminal Justice and Criminology, University of Maryland, testified for COSSA before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary and Related Agencies. Dr. Wellford asked the Subcommittee to increase the FY 1985 appropriations for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) over the level requested in the administration's FY 1985 budget. He also called for continued funding for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), which the administration has not funded in FY 1985.

COSSA Executive Director Roberta Balstad Miller testified before Senator Lowell P. Weicker, Jr. (D-CT), Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education, on the research budget in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) in HHS. Dr. Miller testified to the importance of maintaining a strong policy research program in ASPE that has responsibility for issues that cut across the narrower mandates of the HHS operating divisions -- the Public Health Service, the Social Security Administration, the Health Care Financing Administration, and the Office of Human Development Services. The ASPE research budget was \$24 million in FY 1980; the administration has requested \$8 million for this office in FY 1985.

For copies of any of the above mentioned testimony, contact Eileen Chotiner at the COSSA office. After May 1, the address will be: Suite 520, 1200 Seventeenth Street NW, Washington, DC 20036 (telephone: 202/887-6166).

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESEARCH NOTES PROTECTED BY LAW

The research notes of a social scientist are to be recognized as confidential and protected under the law, according to a federal court ruling in Brooklyn earlier this month. In his opinion on a case involving Mario Brajuha, a graduate student in sociology at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, U.S. District Court Judge Jack B. Weinstein quashed a subpoena that would have required Mr. Brajuha to release his notes to a New York grand jury.

Mr. Brajuha was working as a waiter at a Long Island restaurant and collecting information from co-workers for a study of the sociology of the American restaurant. After a suspicious fire at the restaurant, Mr. Brajuha testified before the grand jury, but refused to turn his fieldnotes over to the grand jury on the grounds that he had promised confidentiality to his interview subjects.

In his decision, Judge Weinstein wrote: "Serious scholars are entitled to the same protection as journalists. Affording social scientists protected freedom is essential if we are to understand how our own and other societies operate. Recognized by cultural anthropologists since at least the turn of the century as a basic tool, fieldwork [such as Mr. Brajuha was engaged in] is used widely in other disciplines, particularly sociology and political science." In his opinion, Judge Weinstein cited a letter from Professor John Lofland, Chairman of the Committee on Professional Ethics of the American Sociological Association, and a joint amicus brief prepared by the American Anthropological Association, the American Political Science Association, and the American Sociological Association in a 1973 case on a similar issue. COSSA also submitted a statement to the court in defense of Mr. Brajuha's refusal to violate the confidentiality he promised his subjects.

SUBCOMMITTEE GRILLS OJJDP DIRECTOR ON NON-COMPETITIVE GRANTS

On April 11, the House Subcommittee on Human Resources of the House Education and Labor Committee grilled Alfred Regnery, Director, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), on the awarding of non-competitive grants by his agency. By the calculations of the Subcommittee, almost 80% of the money awarded in grants and contracts while Mr. Regnery has been Director of OJJDP have been distributed non-competitively.

The Subcommittee has included a provision in its reauthorization of the OJJDP (H.R. 4971) requiring the awarding of research grants and contracts on a competitive basis. The bill would also require OJJDP to announce publicly its research interests and the procedures that will be used in reviewing proposals. (For additional information on this legislation, see the COSSA Washington Update, April 6, 1984.)

DOD REPORT ON LANGUAGE AND AREA STUDIES COMPLETED

A comprehensive assessment of the status of foreign language and area studies, "Beyond Growth: The Next Stage in Language and Area Studies," has just been completed and will soon be sent to members of the House and Senate Armed Forces Committees and to federal officials. In accordance with a 1983 congressional mandate, the Department of Defense (DOD) commissioned the Association of American Universities to conduct a study assessing the nation's research and education capabilities in foreign languages and area studies and to make recommendations for improvement in problem areas. The study was coordinated by the Working Group on Foreign Language and Area Studies of the DOD/University Forum, an official DOD advisory body composed of university presidents and DOD officials.

The objectives of the study were several: to assess the condition of the nation's research and advanced education resources in basic language and area studies; to identify those components of language and area studies in greatest jeopardy; to determine which aspects of language and area studies need to be strengthened and/or changed to serve national needs; and to determine the need for and appropriate role of various government agencies in support of language and area studies.

Under the chairmanship of Richard Lambert, University of Pennsylvania, the survey panel found that the cumulative effect of independent federal research policy decisions and the laissez-faire selection of research topics had resulted in important gaps in some geographical and disciplinary areas. The report also expressed concern over the scarcity of research relevant to current public and business policy decisions and the lack of large, interdisciplinary field projects. Dr. Lambert indicated that these problems were due in part to the lack of support in the National Science Foundation (NSF) for area studies in the "hard social sciences" corresponding to that provided for humanities research in area studies at the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

As a possible next step in restoring the growth and vitality of language and area studies, "Beyond Growth" calls for the establishment of an independent institute similar to NSF and NEH that could provide a secure funding base and an on-going monitoring mechanism for research projects in area studies.

Dr. Richard DeLauer, Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, said that his department will begin making plans for implementing the recommendations of "Beyond Growth" applicable to DOD. DOD will also urge the Congress, the Department of Education, and other federal officials to hasten implementation.

UPCOMING NSF BUDGET DEBATE: TELEPHONE CALLS NEEDED

When Members of the House of Representatives return from the Easter Recess on April 24, they will be asked to approve the FY 1985 authorization for the National Science Foundation (H.R. 4974). The budget originally requested by the administration for NSF is \$1.502 billion. However, the House Science and Technology Committee has proposed an authorization of \$1.560 billion for NSF in FY 1985, an increase of \$58 million. This proposed authorization includes an addition of \$5 million to the budget of the Directorate for Biological, Behavioral and Social Sciences (BBS). Of this amount, \$3.6 million is to be added to the budgets of the social and behavioral science research programs and \$1.4 million to the information science research programs.

Because of the size of the budget deficit, some observers fear that an amendment will be introduced to the Committee bill to reduce the NSF authorization to the level requested by the administration. This would eliminate the additional funds for the social and behavioral science research programs.

Social and behavioral scientists are urged to telephone their Representatives before Wednesday, April 25, requesting that they support the Science and Technology Committee bill for the NSF authorization in FY 1985. Information on how to call your Representative is given below.

- 1) Call 202/224-3121 and ask to be connected to your Representative's or Senator's office.
- 2) Once connected, ask to speak with the Congressman's (or Senator's) staff person who handles the specific issue in which you are interested.
- 3) If for some reason no one has been assigned to this issue, ask to speak with the Administrative Assistant.
- 4) Once connected to the right person, identify yourself first as a constituent, then as a professional. Try to say something positive about the Member or Senator before asking for his or her support on a specific issue.
- 5) Follow up your phone call with a short note to the staff member you spoke with, emphasizing both your original point and your appreciation of his or her attention to this issue.

SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT: THE
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE RESEARCH DIVISION

This is the second in a series of occasional articles which will examine intramural social and behavioral science research programs in federal departments and agencies.

The Research Division of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) conducts a broad program which includes studies of tax law compliance, survey research, cost-benefit analysis, development of models for resource allocation, and other research.

One of the major areas of research is compliance with tax regulations. This effort consists of several programs which seek to increase voluntary compliance and to determine the extent and causes of noncompliance. The Taxpayer Compliance Measurement Program (TCMP) is a long-range research and enforcement program which measures levels of compliance and changes in those levels. Tax gap research identifies sources of noncompliance, such as the failure to file returns and understatement of income.

The IRS also studies the factors affecting compliance by using broad attitude surveys and interviews of selected groups to examine the sociological, psychological, and demographic influences on compliance. A series of three Taxpayer Opinion Surveys was initiated in 1968 to measure taxpayer opinion on issues affecting compliance, to identify taxpayer behavior with regard to preparation of returns, respondents' opinions of IRS services, and knowledge of tax regulations, and to examine public perceptions of the IRS role in tax administration. The last phase of the series is expected to be completed by the fall of 1984.

The IRS supports a number of studies which involve the analytic methods of the social sciences such as projection, forecasting, and statistical methods. For example, in projecting the number of income tax returns which will be filed, a mathematical model is developed from the economic and demographic variables that affect the filing of returns. Sampling methods have been developed to provide statistical estimates for the IRS Large Case Audit Program.

The IRS plans additional research on the relative effects of the factors influencing compliance. This will require an examination of the taxpayer's willingness to comply with the regulations, including such factors as community values, perception of the fairness of laws, individual psychology, and the cost of compliance. It will also include research on taxpayers' ability to comply, which involves level of education, understanding of tax laws, and the type of assistance which is available. The third factor influencing compliance is the opportunity not to comply, which covers the complexity of the taxpayer's economic situation, sources of income, chances of detection, and benefits of noncompliance. In a related area, the IRS hopes to determine whether taxpayers' knowledge of enforcement capabilities encourages voluntary compliance.

Sources of Research Support: Department of Health and Human Services

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the agency rather than COSSA for more information.

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
Retirement Policy Studies

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) sponsors policy research and evaluations. ASPE is the only research agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with the authority and flexible mandate to examine issues of national policy significance in health, health care financing, income security, and social services. ASPE is currently seeking grant applications for research and policy analysis in the area of retirement policy.

Purpose of Program: Six research areas have been designated as priority topics: women and pensions; firm decisions on fringe benefits; savings for old age; tax-deferred retirement savings accounts; retirement benefits in divorce settlements; and who pays the payroll tax. The research is intended to guide policy-makers on such topics as pension regulation, tax caps on health insurance, private alternatives to social security, earnings sharing at the time of divorce, payroll taxes, and IRAs.

FY 1984 Funds: ASPE's budget for FY 1984 is \$10.0 million; a total of \$700,000 has been set aside for retirement policy studies.

Funding Mechanisms: Grants

Review Process: Initial screening by in-house staff; second review by peer panel.

Restrictions on Awards: Project budgets should be in the \$20,000 - \$100,000 range, covering a 12 to 15 month period.

Success Rate: 10% to 20% of submitted proposals are funded.

Disciplines Funded: Any social science discipline, particularly economics, statistics, political science, sociology, demography, anthropology, and labor relations.

Deadlines: Grant proposals for retirement policy studies must be submitted by May 29. Initial inquiries and requests for applications must be made by May 9.

Contact: Robert Schmitt or Neil Briskman
ASPE/HHS
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 457F
Washington, DC 20201
202/245-1880

4/20/84

COSSA MOVES ITS OFFICES

As of May 1, 1984, the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) will move to a larger suite of offices in a new location. Please note COSSA's new address and phone number:

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