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FEATURED ARTICLE

AAA&S *Restoring the Foundation* Report Calls for Increased Federal Investment in Research

On September 16, the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, a COSSA member, released a new report, [Restoring the Foundation: The Vital Role of Research in Preserving the American Dream](#). The report makes the case that America's economic successes in the twentieth century have largely been due to our investments in scientific research and that failure to maintain sustainable funding for research "could threaten the very principles-opportunity, social mobility, innovation-that have inspired our nation for the past century." Ranking Member on the House Science Committee Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) issued a [statement](#) praising the report, calling it "a stark reminder that we can no longer accept stagnating or falling research budgets and expect to avoid the negative economic consequences."

[Read on](#) for more from the public release event and the report's recommendations.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & NEWS

Funding Bills Punted Until After Midterm Elections

The House and Senate easily passed a continuing resolution (CR), or temporary spending measure, last week to keep the federal government operating through December 11. With fiscal year (FY) 2015 approaching on October 1, Congress was not able to complete its work on the FY 2015 appropriations bills before adjourning again to campaign for November's midterm elections. The CR ([H.J. Res. 124](#)) totals \$1.012 trillion and extends current year (FY 2014) funding and policy directives into the first 10 weeks of FY 2015. In addition, the bill includes an across-the-board cut of 0.0554 percent to keep spending within the discretionary budget caps set in late 2013.

Election-year politics coupled with the need for immediate action to address the Ebola crisis in West Africa and authorization for U.S. action in Syria contributed to the speedy, bipartisan action on the CR. However, much less certain is what will happen after the November elections when Congress returns for a short lame duck session and attention will turn once again to avoiding a government shutdown and enacting final FY 2015 funding legislation. As previously [reported](#), the final outcome largely hinges on whether the Republicans are able to win majority of the Senate next year. House and Senate appropriations chiefs are calling for consideration of a 12-bill omnibus appropriations package in the lame duck session so that the 114th Congress can start fresh in January with a clean slate. However, should the Senate flip, there may be attempts to enact

another short-term CR to give a new Senate Republican majority control over the final product.

Regardless, federal agencies will once again begin the new fiscal year with little clarity about their long-term budget outlook. Under a CR, agencies generally will be conservative with their spending and refrain from entering into new contracts and beginning new initiatives until funding questions are settled.

Rep. Johnson Defends Social Science and Education Research at Dyslexia Hearing

The full House Science, Space, and Technology Committee held a hearing on [The Science of Dyslexia](#) on September 18. The panel heard from the co-chairs of the Congressional Dyslexia Caucus, researchers whose work focuses on dyslexia, and other advocates. Much of the discussion focused on how to better leverage the wealth of scientific evidence we have to help children and adults with dyslexia succeed. However, in her [opening statement](#), Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX), pointed out that much of this knowledge is the product of those disciplines members of the Committee have disparaged in the past: "A significant amount of the NSF [National Science Foundation] research relevant to dyslexia is funded out of the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate and the Education and Human Resources Directorate. That is why I have fought efforts in this Committee to slash funding for these important NSF Directorates, which fund valuable research that turns out to have broader, and often unanticipated, applications to other high-priority research - as we are seeing here today."

Education Research, NCES Bill Clears Senate Panel

On September 17, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee [marked up](#) and reported out the [Strengthening Education through Research Act](#), or SETRA (H.R. 4366). The bill, which was passed by the full House of Representatives in May, would amend and reauthorize the *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002* (ESRA) through 2020. ESRA serves as authorizing legislation for the Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Research, National Center for Education Statistics, and other components within the U.S. Department of Education.

COSSA joined the American Educational Research Association (AERA), a COSSA Governing Member, and other groups on a [letter](#) earlier this summer outlining a number of concerns with SETRA, particularly relating to the independence and stature of NCES as a federal statistical agency. The bill as approved by the HELP Committee last week does not address the concerns expressed by the community. The bill now heads to the full House and Senate for final consideration before heading to the President for signature, which could occur when Congress returns for the lame duck session this fall.

House Appropriations Committee Democrats Introduce FY 2015 Labor, HHS, and Education Bill

On September 15, the Democratic members of the House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations Subcommittee (Labor-HHS), led by Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), introduced their version of a fiscal year (FY) 2015 funding bill for the programs within the Subcommittee's jurisdiction. The Labor-HHS bill is the only appropriations bill that has yet to be considered by the full House Appropriations Committee. Thus far, the Subcommittee's Republican majority has given no indication that it intends to introduce a Labor-HHS bill this year. This is the

second consecutive year and third year out of the last four that the Subcommittee has not introduced the always contentious appropriations measure. It is very unlikely that the Democratic measure will be considered by the Subcommittee. The House and Senate recently passed a short-term continuing resolution (CR) to fund the federal government through December 11, 2014, postponing consideration of any funding bills until after the midterm elections.

[Read on](#) for more details on the bill.

House Subcommittee Discusses Suicide Prevention and Treatment

On September 18, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations held a hearing, "Suicide Prevention and Treatment: Helping Loved Ones in Mental Health Crisis." Subcommittee Chairman Tim Murphy (R-PA), a psychologist, explained that the hearing was an attempt to "take the conversation about suicide out of the dark shadow of stigma and into the bright light of truth and hope. Suicide is the deadly outcome of mental illness. Suicide is when depression kills. Suicide is an epidemic and its impact is staggering."

Murphy noted that in 2013, 9.3 million Americans had serious thoughts of suicide, 2.7 million made suicide plans, 1.3 million attempted suicide, and nearly 40,000 died by suicide; suicide is an American public health crisis that results in more lost lives than motor vehicle crashes, homicide, or drug abuse. It is the third leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 24, and the second leading cause of death for adults ages 25 to 34. He emphasized that in 90 percent of suicides, an underlying diagnosis of mental illness was a contributing factor. The Chairman emphasized that the research is lagging and evidence-based treatments often fail to reach those who can help. "Suicides and suicidal behavior remains underreported, undertreated, and cloaked in a stigma," said Murphy.

[Read on](#) for more on the hearing.

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES & NEWS

NIH Issues Final Genomic Data Sharing Policy

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently issued its final NIH Genomic Data Sharing (GDS) policy designed to promote data sharing as a way to accelerate the translation of data into knowledge, products, and procedures that improve health but also protect the privacy of research participants.

Beginning in January 2015, the policy will apply to all NIH-funded, large-scale human and non-human projects that generate genomic data. The GDS policy replaces the Genome-Wide Association Studies (GWAS) data sharing policy. According to the NIH, "A key tenet of the GDS policy is the expectation that researchers obtain informed consent of study participants for the potential future use of their de-identified data for research and for broad sharing."

[Click here](#) for more on the new GDS policy.

NCHS and Census Release Data on Health Insurance Coverage

New statistics released by the federal government last week provide insight into the number of Americans without insurance in 2013 and the first quarter of 2014 (after the insurance coverage expansion of the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) had gone into effect). The Census Bureau published [Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2013](#), based on data from the 2014 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC), which found that 42 million people, 13.4 percent of Americans, had no health insurance for the entirety of 2013.

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), released [Health Insurance Coverage: Early Release of Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey \[NHIS\], January-March 2014](#). This report found that in the first quarter of 2014, 41 million people (13.1 percent) were uninsured at the time of the interview, and 165.8 million people (61.8 percent) were covered by private health insurance plans--including 3.7 million people (1.4 percent) who obtained coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace or state-based exchanges. This data may not be reflective of the surge in enrollment under the ACA that occurred late in the first quarter of 2014.

For more on these statistics, see [COSSA's report](#) from the September 8, 2014 edition of Update.

PCORI Seeks Public Comment on Draft Peer Review and Public Release Proposal

On September 15, the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute's (PCORI) Board of Governors approved the release of the Institute's draft plan for peer review and public release of its research, [Getting the Word Out: PCORI's Proposal for Peer Review of Primary Research and Public Release of Research Findings](#). The Institute is seeking comments from the public on the proposal, which may be submitted on its [website](#) through November 7, 2014. PCORI will also hold a [public forum](#) to discuss the proposal on Monday, September 29 (the event will also be available as a [webinar](#)).

PCORI's authorizing legislation mandates that the Institute ensure that all primary research is peer reviewed and release research findings to clinicians, patients, and the general public in a timely manner. The draft proposal combines these two responsibilities (meaning that findings will not be made public until they have undergone peer review). The proposed peer review process opts not to rely on scientific journals' peer review, due to concerns about timeliness and the necessity of assessing researchers' compliance with PCORI's methodology standards. Instead, it proposes that PCORI coordinate the peer review of the research it funds.

NASS Invites Nominations to Advisory Committee

The National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS) is seeking to fill six open seats on its [Advisory Committee on Agricultural Statistics](#). The Advisory Committee "draws on the experience and expertise of its members to form a collective judgment concerning agriculture data collected and the statistics issued by NASS. This input is vital to keep current with shifting data needs in the rapidly changing agricultural environment and keeps NASS informed of emerging issues in the agriculture community that can affect agriculture statistics activities." Members are appointed to two-year terms by the Secretary of Agriculture and represent fields and disciplines including production, agricultural economics, rural sociology, farm policy and analysis, education, and agriculture-related business and marketing. More information on the Committee and the nomination process is available in the [Federal Register](#). Nominations must be received by October

24, 2014.

BEA Names New Director

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) has named [Brian C. Moyer](#) as its next director, effective September 21. Moyer joined BEA in 1993 and most recently served as Deputy Director and Acting Director upon the retirement of [Steve Landefeld](#) in May.

NOTABLE PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS

Social Scientists Honored for "Golden Goose" Ideas

On September 18, eight scientists were honored with the [Golden Goose Award](#) at a ceremony in Washington, DC. The Golden Goose Award honors scientists whose research funded by the federal government has yielded major benefits to society, which could not have been anticipated at the time of funding. COSSA congratulates this year's awardees, which includes social scientists whose research has had profound impacts on [premature infant development](#) and [federal auctions of the telecommunications spectrum](#).

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

DOD: 2015 Minerva Funding Opportunity Released

The Office of the Secretary of Defense within the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) has issued the [Broad Agency Announcement](#) (BAA) for the 2015 Minerva Research Initiative. Established in 2008, [Minerva](#) is DOD's signature social science research program that seeks to "improve DOD's basic understanding of the social, cultural, behavioral, and political forces that shape regions of the world of strategic importance to the U.S." It awards grants to university investigators and teams and funding is derived from the Office of Naval Research (ONR), Army Research Office (ARO) and Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR).

Proposals are sought across four topics (with 11 corresponding subtopics): (1) Identity, Influence, and Mobilization; (2) Contributors to Societal Resilience and Change; (3) Power and Deterrence; and (4) Innovations in National Security, Conflict, and Cooperation.

White papers are due October 31 with full proposals due January 30, 2015.

COSSA ACTION & OUTREACH

COSSA Joins Community in Opposing *Conference Accountability Act of 2014*

On September 8, COSSA joined 122 organizations representing health care providers, public health leaders, and medical researchers and the patients that benefit from their work on a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and Republican Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) urging them to oppose S. 1347, the *Conference Accountability Act of 2014*.

The joint sign-on [letter](#) strongly urges Senators Reid and McConnell to resist bringing the measure

to the Senate floor for consideration; the bill was reported out of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on July 30. According to the letter, "This legislation would place harmful restrictions on medical and scientific meetings that would threaten scientific progress and increase federal expenditures on unnecessary administrative and reporting requirements. Federal support for, and participation in, scientific meetings has dramatically decreased over the last several years due to federal budget constraints and other policies enacted by the White House Office of Management and Budget. The proposed additional restrictions would further handicap research, implementation and collaborative efforts necessary to address serious public health threats and advance discovery of life saving treatments and diagnostics."

COSSA signed on to a similar [letter](#) prior to the Senate Homeland Security Committee's consideration of the bill in July.

Coalition for National Science Funding Endorses Senate COMPETES Bill

The Coalition for National Science Funding, of which COSSA is a member, has issued a [statement](#) in support of the *America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2014 (S. 2757)*, which was introduced in the Senate by Sen. John D. Rockefeller IV (D-WV) in July. As the statement reads, "The upward funding trajectory for [the National Science Foundation] provided in this bill would go a long way toward closing the innovation deficit that has been building with recent stagnant U.S. research budgets." COSSA issued its own [statement](#) in support of the bill in August.

More information on the America COMPETES Act can be found in COSSA's [analysis](#). While NSF reauthorization legislation is not expected to become law this year, the Senate bill provides an important marker for consideration in 2015.

Consortium of Social Science Associations Members

Governing Members

American Anthropological Association
American Association for Public Opinion Research
American Economic Association
American Educational Research Association
American Historical Association
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association
American Society of Criminology
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Association of American Geographers
Association of American Law Schools
Law and Society Association
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Midwest Political Science Association
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Society for Research in Child Development

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American Evaluation Association

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is an advocacy organization promoting attention to and federal support for the social and behavioral sciences.

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