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# WASHINGTON UPDATE

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## **FEATURED NEWS**

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### **Congress Passes Stopgap Funding Bill, Returns to Campaign Trail**

Congress successfully passed a stopgap funding bill on September 28 to keep the government operating into fiscal year (FY) 2017, which began October 1. The bill will fund the government until December 9 and includes a number of policy and funding provisions that have been hotly debated in recent months, including funding to combat the Zika virus and the opioid epidemic, as well as aid in response to the drinking water crisis in Flint, Michigan and flooding in Louisiana. The text of the Continuing Resolution is available [here](#). Congress will reconvene

following the elections in November and what happens next remains uncertain. For full details of the fiscal year (FY) 2017 spending debate as it pertains to social science research, check out [COSSA's state of play analysis](#).

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## COSSA IN ACTION

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### COSSA Releases Third Issue of "Setting the Record Straight on 'Wasteful Research'"

COSSA has released the third issue of [Setting the Record Straight on "Wasteful Research"](#) (PDF available [here](#)). This series features interviews with researchers whose work has been called out in Congressional wastebooks or other attacks. Through this series, researchers are given the chance to set the record straight about the value and potential of their work--and confront misconceptions about social science research funded by the federal government. [This edition](#) features Kimberley Phillips (Trinity University), whose grant to study the effect of exercise on neurodegenerative diseases was caricatured in Sen. Jeff Flake's 2015 "The Farce Awakens" wastebook.

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## CONGRESSIONAL NEWS

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### Congressional Supporters of 21st Century Cures Bill Hope for Passage by End of 114th Congress

Supporters of the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures* legislation have not given up on seeing the legislation become law in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress. On September 28, the Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA), respectively, released the following statement: *"We continue our work on bipartisan legislation to spur cures and treatments and better health for Americans. We've been working for a year and a half on behalf of patients and scientists, and we are committed to getting a result this year that will lead to lifesaving medical breakthroughs and advance President Obama's Precision Medicine Initiative and Vice President Biden's Cancer Moonshot."*

Similarly, a bipartisan group of House advocates for the House-passed [21st Century Cures Act](#) (H.R. 6) reiterated their support the legislation. The sponsors of H.R. 6, Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Fred Upton (R-MI), Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO), and others noted: *"We have been working hard for months, and we will continue to work toward an agreement that can pass both chambers and be signed by the president... At hand is a once-in-a-generation opportunity and we're committed to getting 21st Century Cures signed into law this fall."*

It is unclear whether enough time remains to get a bill to the President's desk before the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress concludes at the end of the year, especially given that the House and Senate are now on recess until after the November 8 elections, leaving only about 6 weeks to get it done.

### House Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Academic Research Regulatory Relief

The [Subcommittee on Research and Technology of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology](#) held a hearing on September 29 to review recommendations related to regulatory relief for academic research. Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-VA), the Subcommittee Chair, and Rep. Daniel Lipinski (D-IL), the Ranking Member, have both introduced legislation to help ease the administrative burden on federally-funded researchers. [The hearing](#) highlighted a report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) that provides recommendations to the Department of Energy, NASA, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the National Science Foundation on how to streamline administrative requirements. Witnesses included John Neumann of the GAO; Dr. Larry Faulkner, President Emeritus of the University of Texas at Austin; Jim Luther, Associate Vice President for Finance and Compliance Officer at Duke University; and Dr. Angel Cabrera, the President of George Mason University.

See [COSSA's Hot Topics piece](#) for more information and analysis about the efforts to reduce the administrative burden on federally-funded researchers.

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## FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS

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### **ABCD Study Begins Enrollment; Congressional Briefing Highlights Study's Potential**

On September 16, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced the beginning of participant recruitment for the [Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development \(ABCD\) Study](#). The project is the largest long-term study of brain development in the United States, with [19 research sites](#) positioned around the country to examine "how childhood experiences affect brain, social, emotional, and cognitive development, including those that directly affect classroom behavior and academic success." In addition to looking at brain development, the study will allow researchers to examine health outcomes, such as weight, growth, sleep quality, mental health, substance use, and injury. It will also let them examine life outcomes and experiences. Specifically, ABCD will follow the biological and behavioral development of more than 10,000 children beginning at ages nine and ten through adolescence and into early adulthood. Participants will be recruited over a two-year time frame via partnerships with public and private schools near the 19 sites. The de-identified dataset created by the study will be shared broadly in an effort to allow researchers to address unforeseen scientific questions.

On September 19, the Friends of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and the Friends of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) in cooperation with the Congressional Addiction, Treatment, and Recovery Caucus sponsored a Congressional briefing, [Brain Development and Our Kids' Future: The Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development \(ABCD\) Study](#). The briefing's speakers included: Sandra Brown (University of California, San Diego), Thomas Brock (Institute of Education Sciences), Sharon Levy (Boston Children's Hospital), and Kevin Gray (Medical University of South Carolina). NIAAA Director George F. Koob and NIDA Director Nora Volkow served as discussants. COSSA joined 34 other organizations in cosponsoring the standing room only event. Several principal investigators attending the briefing also participated in meetings with their Congressional delegations to promote the project.

### **GAO: Agencies Involved in the Indirect Cost Rate-Setting Process**

## Need to Improve Controls

A September 7 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, *NIH Biomedical Research: Agencies Involved in the Indirect Cost Rate-Setting Process Need to Improve Controls* ([GAO-16-616](#)), includes 12 recommendations for the Department of Health and Human Service's Cost Allocation Services, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Division of Financial Advisory Services, and the Department of Defense's Office of Naval Research. According to GAO, the recommendations are designed to improve controls over the agency's indirect cost rate process. GAO was asked to "review the internal controls for overseeing the validity of indirect cost rates for NIH's research organization." The study was initiated by Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee Fred Upton (R-WI) and Chair of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations Tim Murphy (R-PA).

## NIA Council Approves Continued Support of Health and Retirement Study and Other Research Programs

On September 28, the National Advisory Council on Aging of the National Institute on Aging (NIA) approved a concept clearance allowing the Institute to move forward with the next *Health and Retirement Study* (HRS) funding opportunity announcement. HRS, a longitudinal study, is the "leading source for information on the health and economic well-being of adults age 50 and older in the United States." The Council also approved four other concept clearances related to behavioral and social research: development of socially assistive robots, pragmatic trials for dementia care, delirium and Alzheimer's and Related Dementia, and multi-morbidity in Alzheimer's impacts choice of ancillary treatments.

## NIH Launches ECHO Program

On September 21, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced the launch of the seven-year [Environmental Influences on Children Health Outcomes \(ECHO\) program](#) designed to "investigate how exposure to a range of environmental factors in early development--from conception through early childhood--influences the health of children and adolescents." The agency planned to allocate \$157 million in funding in fiscal year (FY) 2016 for ECHO. Presenting at the September 21 [National Advisory Child Health and Human Development \(NACHHD\) Council](#), ECHO Director Matthew Gillman outlined the goals of the study. Gillman noted that the aims for ECHO are consistent with the agency's goals for the now [discontinued](#) National Children's Study, however, the approach is different.

In addition to examining such exposures as air pollution, ECHO will also examine "societal factors such as stress, to individual behaviors like sleep and diet." The program will use the Institutional Development Awards (IDeA) program to create pediatric clinical research networks in rural and medically underserved areas in an effort to allow children in these areas the opportunity to participate in clinical trials. The ECHO infrastructure will include: pediatric cohorts, a coordinating center, a data analysis center, the Children's Health and Exposure Analysis Resource (CHEAR) core, a Patient Reported Outcomes (PRO) core, and an IDeA States Pediatric Clinical Trials Network (ISPCTN), which has been funded up front for four years.

## NIGMS/NRMN Announces New Web-Based Platform for

## Mentoring; Highlights Special Journal Issue on Broadening Participation

The National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently announced the launch of [MyNRMN](#), part of the [National Research Mentoring Network](#) (NRMN). NIGMS manages NRMN for the NIH's [Common Fund Diversity Program Consortium](#), which in addition to the NRMN includes the [Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity](#) (BUILD) initiative and the [Coordination and Evaluation Center](#) (CEC). In a recent *NIGMS Feedback Loop* [blog post](#) announcing MyNRMN, NIGMS staff explained that the new web-based platform is intended to help researchers and students connect professionally and is "designed for scientists at every level." Additionally, it can be used as a "complementary networking tool" to NRMN's established [Guided Virtual Mentoring Program](#).

The blog post also highlighted the September 1 special issue of [CBE-Life Sciences Education](#), "Broadening Participation in the Life Sciences." Eleven of the 35 features, editorials, essays and articles are authored by NIGMS leadership, staff and grantees. Additionally, NIH Chief Diversity Officer Hannah Valentine, in collaboration with the Institute's staff, [describes plans](#) to "integrate and coordinate efforts across NIH to catalyze enhancements in biomedical research workforce diversity." The issue also includes a contribution, [From the NSF: The National Science Foundation's Investments in Broadening Participation in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education through Research and Capacity Building](#), which discusses the agency's investment in broadening participation.

## NIGMS Director Updates Council on Second Phase of MIRA Pilot

During the September 16 meeting of the National Advisory General Medical Sciences Council, National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) Director Jon Lorsch provided an update on the second phase of a two-part pilot program for funding research supported by the Institute. The goal of the [Maximizing Investigator's Research Award \(MIRA\) for New and Early Stage Investigators \(R35\)](#) pilot is to "increase the efficiency and efficacy of NIGMS funding." Lorsch defined *new investigators* as individuals who have not had a major NIH grant, and *early stage investigators* (ESI) as individuals within 10 years of their terminal degree, research, or medical residency. Of the 320 applications reviewed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), NIGMS will make a total of 94 awards, a success rate of 29.4 percent compared to the 19.6 percent NIH-wide success rate.

Acknowledging concerns of the Council and others regarding the review process, which is focused on the individual's track record and therefore could potentially "exacerbate bias in the application, review, or funding decision processes," Lorsch noted that they did not observe "any significant differences in gender, race, or ethnicity between the applicants and the awardees." In fact, one unexpected outcome of the competition was that individuals receiving MIRA funding were 1.5 years younger on average than individuals in the unsuccessful applicant pool; MIRA awardees, on average, are two years younger than last year's early stage investigator awardees.

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## PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS

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### Members of Congress, Scientific Community Celebrate Golden Goose Award Recipients

The fifth annual Golden Goose Award Ceremony was held on September 22 in Washington, DC to honor seemingly obscure federally-funded research that has resulted in "tremendous human

and economic benefit". Many members of Congress joined the honorees in recognizing the importance of federally-funded scientific research, including Rep. Jim Cooper (D-TN), the visionary behind the Golden Goose award, Rep. Bill Foster (D-IL), Rep. Randy Hultgren (R-IL), Rep. Bob Dold (R-IL), Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE), and Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-IL). The honorees included the social and behavioral scientists that conducted the [National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health \(Add Health\)](#). More information about the award, and complete coverage of the event can be found [here](#).

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## FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

AHRQ: AHRQ Conference Grant Programs (R13) ([PA-16-453](#))

NIH: NIH Peer Review Online Briefings for Fellowship and R01 Grant Applicants, and Basic Research Grant Applicants and Reviewers ([NOT-OD-16-152](#))

FIC: International Bioethics Research Training Program (D43) ([PAR-16-454](#))

NIDA/NCI/NIAAA: Multi-Site Studies for System-Level Implementation of Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Services (R01) ([PAR-16-455](#))

NIDA/NIAAA: Multi-Site Pilot and Feasibility Studies for System-Level Implementation of Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Services (R34) ([PAR-16-456](#))

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## COSSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### 'Statisticians Share Insights for Applicants and Reviewers' with NIH Center for Scientific Review

In its September 2016 edition of [Peer Review Notes](#), the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Center for Scientific Review (CSR) shared a recent discussion the Center had with members and staff of the [American Statistical Association](#) (ASA). According to CSR, the discussion "covered many important topics and insights... including how statisticians can (1) help improve rigor and reproducibility, (2) be key members of a research team, (3) identify common statistical issues, and (4) play valuable roles in peer review meetings." The American Statistical Association is a COSSA Governing member.

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## EVENTS CALENDAR

- [Future Directions in Mental Health Research: The View from Psychological Science](#), Washington, DC, October 4, 2016
- [Summit on Social and Behavioral Sciences for National Security, National Academy of Sciences](#), Washington, DC, October 4-5, 2016
- [Center for Public Scholarship 35th Social Research Conference](#), New York, NY, October 13-14, 2016
- [Evaluation 2016](#) - American Evaluation Association, Atlanta, GA, October 22-30, 2016
- [Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Annual Convention](#), New York, NY, October 27-30, 2016

A list of COSSA members' annual meetings and other events can be found on the [COSSA webpage](#).

COSSA members who have an upcoming event they would like to see listed in the Events Calendar and on our website should send an email to [jmilton@coffa.org](mailto:jmilton@coffa.org).

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### SAVE THE DATE!

**COSSA's 2017 Annual Meeting & Social Science Advocacy Day will take place  
March 29-30, 2017 in Washington, DC**

# Consortium of Social Science Associations Members

## Governing Associations

American Anthropological Association  
American Association for Public Opinion Research  
American Economic Association  
American Educational Research Association  
American Political Science Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Society of Criminology  
American Sociological Association  
American Statistical Association  
Association of American Law Schools  
Law and Society Association  
Linguistic Society of America  
Midwest Political Science Association  
National Communication Association  
Population Association of America  
Society for Personality and Social Psychology  
Society for Research in Child Development

## Membership Organizations

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences  
American Association of Geographers  
American Evaluation Association  
American Historical Association  
American Psychosomatic Society  
Association for Asian Studies  
Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies  
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management  
Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations  
Association of Research Libraries  
Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences  
Council on Social Work Education  
Economic History Association  
History of Science Society  
Midwest Sociological Society  
National Association of Social Workers  
North American Regional Science Council  
Rural Sociological Society  
Social Science History Association  
Society for Research on Adolescence  
Society for Social Work and Research  
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues  
Society of Behavioral Medicine  
Southern Political Science Association  
Southern Sociological Society  
Southwestern Social Science Association

## Centers and Institutes

American Academy of Arts and Sciences  
American Academy of Political and Social Science  
American Council of Learned Societies  
American Institutes for Research  
Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences  
Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research  
Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan  
Institute for Social Science Research,  
University of Massachusetts, Amherst  
Institute for Women's Policy Research  
NORC at the University of Chicago

## Colleges and Universities

Arizona State University  
Boston University  
Brown University  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Clark University  
Columbia University  
Cornell University  
Duke University  
Fielding Graduate University  
George Mason University  
Georgetown University  
Harvard University  
Howard University  
Indiana University  
John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY  
Johns Hopkins University  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Michigan State University  
New York University  
North Carolina State University  
Northwestern University  
Pennsylvania State University  
Princeton University  
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey  
Stanford University  
Texas A&M University  
The George Washington University  
The Ohio State University  
University of California, Berkeley  
University of California, Irvine  
University of California, Los Angeles  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
University of Chicago  
University of Colorado, Boulder  
University of Illinois  
University of Iowa  
University of Maryland  
University of Michigan  
University of Minnesota  
University of Missouri  
University of Nebraska, Lincoln  
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill  
University of Oklahoma  
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*The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to promote sustainable federal funding for social and behavioral science research and federal policies that positively impact the conduct of research.*

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