



WASHINGTON UPDATE

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FEATURED NEWS

Kelvin Droegemeier Nominated to Lead OSTP

On August 1, President Trump [nominated Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier](#) to serve as the Director of the [White House Office of Science and Technology Policy \(OSTP\)](#). The OSTP director has traditionally, but not always, held the title of Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, otherwise known as the president's science advisor, but it is not clear if Droegemeier would fill this role as well. Dr. Droegemeier holds a Ph.D. in atmospheric science and has served on the faculty of the University of Oklahoma in Norman for 33 years and as the university's vice president for research since 2009. OU is a COSSA member university. Additionally, he was nominated by President George W. Bush to the National Science Board in 2004, was reappointed by President Obama in 2011, and served as the vice-chair of the board for four years.

Droegemeier's nomination now awaits approval by the Senate but has come as a relief to much of the scientific community. President Trump took twice as much time as any other modern president to name an OSTP Director and his administration has routinely eschewed scientific expertise in its decision making. OSTP is responsible for providing scientific and technological analysis and judgment to the President, leading interagency science and technology policy coordination efforts, and assisting the Office of Management and Budget with an annual review and analysis of Federal research and development in budgets.

COSSA IN ACTION

COSSA and 25 Science Organizations Call for Removal of Census Citizenship Question

In a [joint comment](#) to the Department of Commerce, COSSA and 25 other science and research organizations urged the Department to remove the citizenship question from the 2020 Census. The letter, which was submitted in response to a federal request for input on data collection activities related to the 2020 Census, focuses on the science and research implications of the citizenship question, arguing that "the inclusion of a question on citizenship in the 2020 Census will increase the burden on respondents, add unnecessary costs to the operation, and negatively impact the accuracy and integrity of one of the most valuable data resources the government produces." COSSA previously released a [statement](#) opposing the question after it was announced. While formal approval of 2020 Census questionnaire by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is all but certain, several law suits to remove the question are currently pending.

In response to the same request for comments, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAEM) Council on National Statistics (CNSTAT) Task Force on the 2020 Census submitted a letter concluding that "the decision to add a question on citizenship status to the 2020 census is inconsistent with the 'proper performance of the functions' of the Census Bureau." The CNSTAT letter is available on the [National Academies' website](#).

The Lab @ DC Answers "Why Social Science?"

This latest *Why Social Science?* guest post comes from David Yokum, Director of the The Lab @ DC, who writes about how cities are using insights from the social sciences to test and improve policies and inform decisions. Read it [here](#) and [subscribe](#).



CONGRESSIONAL NEWS

House Holds Hearing on Cures Implementation

On July 25, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health held an [oversight hearing](#) on *21st Century Cures Implementation: Updates from FDA and NIH*. The [21st Century Cures Act](#) is legislation enacted in 2016 that, among other things, provides for additional funding for biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Authorized in the act, the Cures funding is provided through the [annual appropriations bills](#) to boost funding for priority research in areas, including the Beau Biden Cancer Moonshot initiative, the BRAIN initiative, and the *All of Us* Precision Medicine Initiative. The hearing offered an update from agency officials on the progress of the Cures investments. Witnesses included Francis Collins, Director, National Institutes of Health; Stephanie Devaney, Deputy Director, NIH *All of Us* Research Program; Scott Gottlieb, Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration; and Norman Sharpless, Director, National Cancer Institute. A [related hearing](#) on the mental health provisions within Cures was held on July 19.

In his prepared remarks, Dr. Collins highlighted NIH's efforts and successes through the Cancer Moonshot and the *All of Us* Precision Medicine Initiative, both made possible through Cures Act investments. Committee members asked questions on a variety of topics, including concerns about privacy of patients and patient data within the All of Us program, NIH's efforts to relieve administrative burden on investigators, and progress made toward cures and treatments for specific diseases and conditions.

Video of the hearing and witness testimony can be found on the Energy and Commerce Committee [website](#).

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS

White House Outlines FY 2020 R&D Budget Priorities

On July 31, Director of the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Mick Mulvaney, with Michael Kratsios, Deputy Assistant Secretary to the President, Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), issued a joint memorandum to federal agency and department heads on "[FY 2020 Administration Research and Development Priorities](#)." The R&D memo lays out key White House priorities as agencies begin working on their budget submissions for the next fiscal year.

The FY 2020 memo shares many priorities with the [FY 2019 memo](#), including acknowledging the important role of science and technology to America's global leadership and emphasizing national security, American energy dominance, and medical innovation as research and development priorities. The memo also adds new priorities including space exploration, artificial intelligence, quantum information sciences, advanced communication networks, and

agriculture. Specific science priorities for the Trump Administration in FY 2020 include research "to improve the security and resilience of the Nation and its critical infrastructure from natural hazards, physical threats, cyber-attacks, and emerging threats from autonomous systems and biological agents;" fundamental and applied artificial intelligence (AI) research; research to "safely and efficiently integrate autonomous driving systems and unmanned aircraft systems;" and basic medical research for personalized medicine, areas underserved by industry, disease prevention, and health promotion."

Unlike the FY 2019 memo, the FY 2020 memo does not include specific language about federal funding for research and development playing a supporting role to that of industry. The memo does reiterate, however, the administration's view that federal research and development dollars should be used primarily on basic and early-stage applied research. Additional details can be found in the [memorandum](#).

Census Bureau Seeks Input on 2020 Data Products

In order to inform its plans for 2020 Census data products, the Census Bureau is soliciting feedback on how data products from prior decennial censuses (including summary and detailed tables, national and state demographic profiles, and topical briefs) have been used. According to the [Federal Register notice](#), privacy concerns may lead the Bureau to reduce the amount of detailed data released to the public, so input on how to prioritize products for the 2020 Census is being sought. More information, including specific questions of interest to the Bureau and a spreadsheet containing a complete list of data products and tables, is available in the [Federal Register](#). Comments must be submitted by September 17, 2018.

NSF Prepares to Launch the 2026 Idea Machine

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is preparing to launch the [NSF 2026 Idea Machine](#) in late August. The NSF 2026 Idea Machine is a competition to help set the U.S. agenda for fundamental research in science and engineering. Participants in the Idea Machine have the opportunity to win prizes and receive public recognition by suggesting the research questions that need to be answered in the coming decade - these questions will become NSF's next series of "[Big Ideas](#)." This is an opportunity for researchers, the public, students and other interested parties to suggest pressing research questions.

The window to submit entries to the Idea Machine will run from late August 2018 to late October 2018. After entries have been submitted online, NSF staff will judge and select a representative group of submissions which will be available for public comment and invited to submit accompanying video pitches. Blue-Ribbon panels and NSF leadership will select two to four winning entries for public recognition, cash prizes, and other awards.

NSF is seeking ambitious and challenging entries that require the talents of the research community and will attract creative contributions from many researchers while benefiting stakeholders both inside and outside of the research community. Stay tuned to COSSA Washington Update and the [NSF Website](#) for updates on the launch of the [NSF 2026 Idea Machine](#).

Nomination Opportunities

- **NEW:** Census: [Census Scientific Advisory Committee](#) (Closes: September 25, 2018)
- Census: [National Advisory Committee on Racial, Ethnic, and Other Populations](#) (Closes: September 4, 2018)
- USDA: [National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board](#) (Closes: August 10, 2018)
- EPA: [Science Advisory Board and Standing Committees](#) (Closes: August 8, 2018)

Funding Opportunities

- NIH: [Predoctoral Training in Advanced Data Analytics for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research \(BSSR\) Institutional Research Training Program \[T32\]](#) (Opens: October 16, 2018)
- NIH: [Obesity Policy Evaluation Research \(R01\)](#) (Closes: October 5, 2018)
- NIFA: [AFRI Foundational and Applied Science Program](#) (Closes: September 30, 2018)

Notices & Requests for Comment

- **NEW:** Census: [Soliciting Feedback From Users on 2020 Census Data Products](#) (Closes: September 17, 2018)

Fellowships & Professional Development

- **NEW:** NSF: [Coastlines and People \(CoPe\) Scoping Session Workshops](#) (Closes: August 12, 2018)

COMMUNITY NEWS & REPORTS

Event Highlights State Evidence-Based Policymaking

On July 24, the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) hosted an event entitled "[How States Use Data and Evidence for Policymaking: Current Trends and Future Opportunities](#)." The event began with a fireside chat between Nick Hart, Director of the Evidence-Based Policymaking Initiative at BPC, and Sara Dube, Director of the Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative at the Pew Research Center, who defined evidence-based policymaking (EBP) as "the systematic use of findings from program evaluations and outcome analyses to guide government policy and funding decisions." Much of the conversation revolved around a report from Pew, "[How States Engage in Evidence-Based Policymaking](#)." The report found that successful EBP efforts include four characteristics: (1) engaging decision makers, (2) building champions for evidence-building, (3) developing staff capacity, and (4) creating mechanisms for effective and continued use.

A panel moderated by Kira Fatherree, Senior Policy Analyst at BPC, highlighted several examples of state- and city-level evidence-based policymaking and discussed the challenges of implementing it. Jessica Corvinus, Research and Evidence-Based Policy Manager at the Colorado Office of State Planning and Budgeting, went over the work the Colorado Governor's Office has been doing to increase the use of EBP since 2014. Eric W. Trupin, Director of the Division of Public Behavioral Health and Justice Policy at the University of Washington, discussed his work on incorporating evidence in the field of juvenile detention and youth recidivism. David Yokum, Director of The Lab @ DC, explained that a big hurdle in implementing evidence-based policymaking is that most states and cities don't have the means to collect survey data themselves, and the data that is available to them is often not in a format that is easily used. Overall, the speakers agreed that the best way to normalize and increase use of evidence-based policymaking is to build a culture where it is expected and where policy that isn't evidence-based is not accepted.

This article was contributed by COSSA's summer intern, Catherine Cox of the University of Michigan.

Funding Opportunities

- WhatsApp: [Research Awards for Social Science and Misinformation](#) (Closes: August 12, 2018)

Funding Opportunities

- WhatsApp: [Research Awards for Social Science and Misinformation](#) (Closes: August 12, 2018)

Recent Reports

- NEW: [NASEM: CNSTAT Task Force on the 2020 Census Letter Report](#)

Fellowships & Professional Development

- NASEM: [Christine Mirzayan Science and Technology Policy Graduate Fellowship Program](#) (Closes: September 7, 2018)

COSSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Funding Opportunities

- NEW: SSRC: [Social Media and Democracy Research Grants](#) (Rolling; First review period: August 9, 2018)

EVENTS CALENDAR

- [American Psychological Association Annual Convention](#), August 9-12, 2018, San Francisco, CA
- [American Sociological Association Annual Meeting](#), August 11-14, 2018, Philadelphia, PA
- [American Political Science Association Annual Meeting & Exhibition](#), August 30-September 2, 2018, Boston, MA
- [Golden Goose Award Ceremony and Reception](#), September 13, 2018, Washington, DC
- [Southwestern Social Science Association Annual Meeting](#), October 10-13, 2018, Orlando, FL
- [Evaluation 2018](#) (American Evaluation Association), October 29-November 3, 2018, Cleveland, OH

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

EDITOR'S NOTE

COSSA Washington Update will be on hiatus for the remainder of August. We will return to our normal schedule on September 4.

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to promote sustainable federal funding for and widespread use of social and behavioral science research and federal policies that positively impact the conduct of research. COSSA serves as a united voice for a broad, diverse network of organizations, institutions, communities, and stakeholders who care about a successful and vibrant social science research enterprise. The COSSA membership includes professional and disciplinary associations, scientific societies, research centers and institutes, and U.S. colleges and universities.

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