



CONSORTIUM of SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

1430 K STREET NW, SUITE 550 • WASHINGTON, DC 20005 • PHONE: (202) 842-3525 • EMAIL: WNAUS@COSSA.ORG • WWW.COSSA.ORG

Testimony in Support of Fiscal Year 2025 Funding for Federal Research Agencies

Prepared for the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations,
United States Senate

Submitted by Wendy Naus, Executive Director,
Consortium of Social Science Associations

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On behalf of the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), I offer this written testimony for inclusion in the official committee record. For fiscal year (FY) 2025, COSSA urges the Committee to appropriate:

- **\$51.303 billion** for the **National Institutes of Health**;
- **\$220 million** for the **National Center for Health Statistics**;
- No less than **\$500 million** for the **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality**;
- No less than **\$900 million** for the **Institute of Education Sciences**; and
- **\$91 million** for the Department of Education's **International Education and Foreign Language programs**.

First, allow me to thank the Committee for its long-standing, bipartisan support for scientific research. Strong, sustained funding for all U.S. science agencies is essential if we are to make progress toward improving the health and economic competitiveness of the nation.

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 and behavioral science research enterprise. We represent the collective interests of all STEM disciplines engaged in the rigorous study of why and how humans behave as they do as individuals, groups and within institutions, organizations, and society.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

COSSA joins the 372 [organizations](#) in support of at least **\$51.303 billion** for the **National Institutes of Health (NIH) base budget in FY 2025**. COSSA appreciates the Subcommittee's leadership and its long-standing bipartisan support of NIH, especially during difficult budgetary times. We also appreciate the Congress's interest in innovating and pushing the agency forward through support for high-risk, high-reward endeavors. It is critical that efforts to accelerate discovery in new, creative ways work in tandem with—not at the expense of—robust, sustainable support for fundamental and curiosity-driven research.

To that end, COSSA urges the Subcommittee to ensure that funding for the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H) supplement the \$51.303 billion recommendation for NIH's base budget, rather than supplant the investments NIH makes to biomedical and behavioral research across its institutes and center. To be truly transformative, increased investment is needed on all fronts.

Understanding behavioral influences on health is critical in battling the leading causes of morbidity and mortality, including obesity, heart disease, cancer, HIV/AIDS, diabetes, age-related illnesses, accidents, substance abuse, and mental illness. As we all witnessed, recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the need for better understanding of the behavioral and social factors at play when tackling health-related challenges and preparing for future public health crises. Investment in NIH—particularly social and behavioral science at NIH—has direct impact on the health and wellness of the population today and in the future.

To that end, COSSA urges the Subcommittee to prioritize investment in NIH's **Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR)**, housed within the Office of the NIH Director. This critical office coordinates basic, clinical, and translational research in the behavioral and social sciences in support of the NIH mission, and co-funds highly rated grants in the behavioral and social sciences in partnership with individual institutes and centers. Essential research, including topical issues such as social determinants of health, research that seeks to understand health disparities across the U.S., and research initiatives that focus on violence prevention within communities, rely on continued funding to produce evidence-based research that can be used to draft informative policy. As underscored by the new director of the office, Dr. Jane Simoni, "Many deaths are preventable, if only we better implemented the effective public health outreach and behavioral health interventions we have developed." **We urge the Committee to emphasize support for OBSSR and direct NIH to finally support the office at levels commensurate with the need for these critical insights.**

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS

COSSA urges the Subcommittee to appropriate \$220 million for CDC's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). As the Department of Health and Human Services' principal statistical agency, the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) produces data on all aspects of our health care system, including opioid and prescription drug use, maternal and infant mortality, chronic disease prevalence, health care disparities, emergency room use, health insurance coverage, teen pregnancy, and causes of death. As a result of the rising costs of conducting surveys and years of flat or near-flat funding, NCHS has had to focus nearly all its resources on continuing to produce the high-quality data that communities across the country rely on to understand their health. Additional funding would allow NCHS to respond to rising costs, declining response rates, and an ever-more complex health care system and capitalize on opportunities surrounding advances in statistical methodology, big data, and computing to produce better information more quickly and efficiently, while reducing the reporting burden on local data providers.

AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH AND QUALITY

COSSA urges the Subcommittee to appropriate no less than \$500 million for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), which would allow AHRQ to rebuild portfolios terminated as a result of years of cuts and expand its research and training portfolio to address our nation's pressing and evolving health care challenges. AHRQ funds research on improving the quality, safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of America's health care system. It is the only agency in the federal government with the expertise and explicit mission to fund research on improving health care at the provider level (i.e., in hospitals, nursing homes, and other medical facilities). Its work is complementary—not duplicative—of other HHS agencies and requires robust support.

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

COSSA requests no less than \$900 million for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) in FY 2025. Within the Department of Education, IES provides the nation with important statistics, research, and evaluation that improve education policy and practice and allows us to understand trends in student populations, as well as in schools and universities. In light of the declines seen in the math and reading results from the [2023 National Assessment of Educational Progress \(NAEP\) Long-Term Trend assessments](#) of young students, its ongoing work is critical to the use of evidence-based practices, increasing student achievement, and addressing the mental health needs of students and educators. IES has also funded regional research networks that are addressing the short- and long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in K-12 and postsecondary education. With increasing demand for evidence-based practices in education, adequate funding for IES is essential to support studies that increase knowledge of the factors that influence teaching and learning and apply those findings to improve educational outcomes.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION & FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

The Department of Education's International Education and Foreign Language programs play a major role in developing a steady supply of graduates with deep expertise and high-quality research on foreign languages and cultures, international markets, world regions, and global issues. **COSSA urges a total appropriation of \$91 million (\$79.9 million for Title VI and \$11 million for Fulbright-Hays)**, which would help make up for lost investment and purchasing power over many years of flat-funding. In addition to broadening opportunities for students in international and foreign language studies, such support would also strengthen the nation's human resource capabilities in strategic areas of the world that impact our national security and global economic competitiveness.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony on behalf of the social and behavioral science research community.