

Testimony of Howard Silver, Executive Director, Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), to the House Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee, House Appropriations Committee. Honorable Alan Mollohan, Chairman. April 14, 2010.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

My name is Howard Silver and I am the Executive Director of the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA). The Consortium represents over 110 professional associations, scientific societies, universities and research institutes concerned with the promotion of and funding for research in the social, behavioral and economic sciences. COSSA functions as a bridge between the research world and the Washington community. A list of COSSA's membership is attached.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed FY 2011 budgets for the National Science Foundation (NSF), for which we recommend at least \$7.424 billion; the \$70 million requested for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), for which we support \$70 million; the Bureau of Justice Statistics (NIJ) for which we recommend \$62.5 million; the Bureau of Economic Analysis, for which we support \$109.2 million; and the Census Bureau, for which we support the President's request of \$1.267 billion to complete the 2010 Census and enhance the American Community Survey. Each of these five agencies has a significant impact on support for research in the social and behavioral sciences and provides data for these scientists to analyze and disseminate as they investigate issues important to the future.

COSSA is well aware that each year you confront difficult choices among competing agencies under the Subcommittee's jurisdiction. We appreciate your past generosity to these five agencies and we hope that you will give their FY 2011 requests the same generous consideration.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)

In 2010 NSF celebrates 60 years as the premier agency that supports excellent basic scientific research across all disciplines. We congratulate NSF and thank this Subcommittee for its continued willingness to provide NSF with the resources it needs to maintain its excellence. We are especially grateful for the \$3 billion in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) as well as the enhancement in the regular FY 2010 appropriations. We strongly support the Administration's proposed eight percent increase for NSF in the FY 2011 budget boosting its funding to \$7.424 billion.

The \$2.5 billion for the Research and Related Activities account included in the ARRA helped fund more excellent science projects across all the disciplines that NSF supports and improved the dismal success rates that limited NSF budgets had created in recent years. COSSA has some concern that without sufficient funding these rates will decline again. Thus, we also strongly support the proposed \$6.019 billion for the Research and Related Activities account. We also want to express our appreciation to the Subcommittee for its support of ALL the disciplines that NSF funds.

NSF remains extremely important for federal support for basic research in the social, behavioral, and economic (SBE) sciences. For some fields in these sciences, NSF is the only source of federal support for basic research and infrastructure development. Although the proposed 5.3 percent increase for NSF's SBE directorate is smaller than we would like, the steady growth over the past few years and the addition of the ARRA funds have allowed the directorate to move forward. COSSA is delighted with the appointment of Dr. Myron Gutmann as SBE's new AD, who in addition to being a superb researcher, is our former president.

It has also become clear that the SBE sciences, because they focus on human activity at every level, from an individual's brain, to behavior, to the actions of groups and organizations, have become important to conducting scientific research that helps confront the difficult challenges facing the nation and the world. These include mitigating climate change, altering energy policy, combating terrorism, and explaining political, economic, and social behavior.

The SBE sciences have been able to take advantage of methodological advances, enhanced computing power, and the increasing interdisciplinarity of science to produce important results. These sciences now have the capability to collect and manage data on a much larger scale, such as the Integrated Public Use Microdata Sets (IPUMS), compiled by Steven Ruggles and his colleagues and housed at the University of Minnesota. The IPUMS International data set has harmonized data for 1960 forward, covering 279 million people in 130 censuses from around the world, while IPUMS USA contains harmonized data on people in the U.S. census and American Community Survey, from 1850 to the present. In addition, SBE continues its support for its three major long-term data bases: the Panel Study on Income Dynamics, the General Social Survey, and the American National Election Studies. These extraordinary sets of time-series data continue to paint a portrait of American's economic, social, and political attitudes and behavior over five decades, while updating their methodology and expanding their scope.

Data sets are part of the SBE infrastructure along with functional MRIs, economic and political laboratories, and geographic information systems. SBE needs the funding to support these just as other sciences need support for their infrastructure such as Very Large Array telescopes and Ocean Drilling Vessels.

The social and behavioral research portfolio is enormous and supports science of tremendous intellectual excitement and substantial societal importance. Part of the proposed FY 2011 increase for SBE will support its contribution to the NSF initiative Science, Engineering and Education for Sustainability (SEES). SBE research in the human and social dimensions of sustainability include: social and cultural influences on human perception of value and risk; the influence of perceptions on decisions-making under uncertainty; the interplay of individual and collective decisions and actions; changing land use and migration patterns; the life cycles and governance of socio-technological systems, particularly energy-based technologies; the role of social networks in influencing behavior; and the social and political trade-offs of taking costly actions today for uncertain benefits in the future.

In 2009, SBE kept up its record of support for future winners of the Nobel Prize in Economics having provided awards to foster the careers of political scientist Elinor Ostrom and economist Oliver Williamson. Ostrom won for her pioneering work on how common property can be

successfully managed by user associations who develop sophisticated mechanisms for decision-making and rule enforcement. Williamson's prize was for his theory that business firms and competitive markets can serve as structures for conflict resolution.

The proposed FY 2011 budget provides enhanced SBE support for its Science of Science and Innovation Policy (SciSIP) initiative. Led by SBE, SciSIP has now become an interagency program supporting research designed to develop, improve and expand models, analytical tools, data and metrics that can be applied in the science policy decision making process. Part of the SciSIP program is investigating the implementation of ARRA funding by science agencies as a natural experiment. Both the Science Resources Statistics division and the new Office of Multidisciplinary Activities support this program.

SBE continues to play a role in researching the societal implications of new technology with its Centers for Nanotechnology in Society. It also participates in the Long Term Ecological Research sites to understand the transformations in urban and non-urban areas fostered by environmental activities.

The movement of the Science and Learning Centers program from the Office of Integrative Activities into SBE is welcome. The Centers, which will have a new competition in 2011, support research on quantitative behavioral and brain modeling of normal and abnormal learning, spatial and temporal learning, and learning in informal settings.

The Science Resources Statistics Division (SRS) has a slight increase proposed for FY 2011. Having just released its major effort, *Science and Engineering Indicators 2010*, SRS hopes, with its increased resources, to start a Microbusiness R&D Innovation Survey for firms with less than five employees. This will improve our understanding of innovation activities in the U.S.

With regard to the Education and Human Resources directorate (EHR), COSSA supports the proposed increases for building a knowledge base and providing evaluations of STEM education programs as conducted by the Research on Education in S&E and Project and Program Evaluation accounts of the Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings. We also strongly agree with the Administration's proposal to triple the number of NSF graduate fellowships.

COSSA also believes that broadening participation in science, across ALL the sciences, is important. We support NSF's programs to ensure that all students get a chance to become scientists; including SBE scientists. COSSA continues its leadership role in the science community's efforts to enhancing diversity in the sciences. The COSSA-led Collaborative for Enhancing Diversity in Science (CEDS) has held a retreat in February 2008, a congressional briefing in March 2009, and expects to organize a follow-up meeting on data collection in the fall of this year. The report from the retreat and a summary of the congressional event can be found at www.cossa.org

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE (NIJ) and the BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS (BJS)

The NIJ and BJS are the research and statistics arms of the Department of Justice (DOJ). COSSA appreciates the Subcommittee's past strong support for enhancing BJS's budget as recommended in the National Academies' report: *Ensuring the Quality, Credibility, and Relevance of U.S. Justice Statistics*. We also appreciate the importance you have given to restoring and revitalizing the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). We are delighted with the Administration's nomination of Dr. James Lynch, an extraordinary, well-qualified statistical scientist, to lead BJS and we hope he is confirmed soon.

It is now time to revitalize NIJ. The nomination and the upcoming confirmation of Dr. John Laub of the University of Maryland to lead NIJ is a significant step toward accomplishing that push. He will provide key scientific leadership to this agency. The upcoming report on NIJ from the National Academies will provide another step.

The Administration has requested a significant increase for NIJ in the FY 2011 budget proposal. COSSA strongly supports the enhancement to \$70 million and NIJ's effort to create an evidence base to crime and criminal justice policy. Police chiefs are seeking this too! Tom Casady, police chief in Lincoln, NE has written: "There are a lot of smart people serving as police chiefs in cities large and small; they are very interested in using quality research to engage in evidence-based policing." Similarly, Jim Bueermann, chief in Redlands, CA has noted: "We just need more evidence about the things that really work to control crime if we are to be better stewards of taxpayers' investments in public safety." Cincinnati Police Department Commander Jim Whalen said about researcher-supported gang violence prevention work: "We will never engage in this kind of gang work again without academic support...No police department should."

NIJ-supported research has produced important results regarding criminals and criminal careers, "hot spot" policing, community policing, recidivism, crime and drug use, sentencing, and many other areas. David Kennedy of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice has worked with police and community leaders all over the country implementing his research-based approach to ending gang warfare and street-level drug markets. The Project Safe Neighborhoods approach has also seen researchers and police leadership work together with significant crime reduction results. As NIJ suggests "a commitment to the next generation of crime-fighting research programs appears in order." Therefore, we strongly support the additional \$10 million NIJ seeks to reinvigorate its social science research mandate.

COSSA is pleased that the Administration has proposed an increase to \$62.5 million for BJS, which includes funding for two new programs: data on indigent defense and tribal statistics. BJS' wide range of programs include data on correctional populations and facilities; courts and sentencing; prosecution; sex offender registries; and criminal history records. Given the widespread problem of prison crowding at a time of dire financial conditions, there is increased demand for more data on recidivism and reentry to inform policy and program changes. Therefore, we also support the set-aside within the Second Chance Reentry funding for enhanced data collection on reentry and recidivism.

The Academies' report also emphasized the value of the state Statistical Analysis Centers, which receive support from BJS through the State Justice Statistics program. The SJS program will provide approximately \$3.5 million to the states in 2010, representing the first increase in 15 years. It is critical that that minimal level of funding be sustained.

In addition, we strongly support the Administration's proposed set-aside of three percent of formula grant program funds, for "research, evaluation, or statistical purposes." We appreciate the Subcommittee's support for a similar proposal of a one-percent set-aside in the FY 2010 budget and we hope you can support this upward adjustment.

THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU and BUREAU OF ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The year of the Census is upon us! COSSA believes the Bureau has a superb leader in Dr. Robert Groves to carry out this enormous and important task of counting the people of the U.S. As a member of the 2010 Census Advisory Committee, we greatly appreciate the CJS Subcommittee's strong role in providing the funds needed to make the decennial happen.

As the FY 2011 budget recognizes, the Bureau's needs subside substantially next year. However, there is still much to be done to provide the results, analyze the operation, and begin to prepare for what may believe will be a much different kind of count in 2020. Thus, COSSA supports the Administration's overall number of \$1.27 billion for the Bureau.

As an organization that promoted its development, COSSA strongly supports the Administration's call for additional funding to enhance the sample size of the American Community Survey (ACS). The upcoming release of the five-year data will provide a significant picture of America and the changes that have occurred from 2005 to 2009. The other Bureau activities are also important to maintaining the economic statistical databases that play an important role in employment policy, housing policy, and economic policy, and their funding should be sufficient.

COSSA also supports the \$109.2 million requested for FY 2011 for the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). BEA produces economic accounts' data that enable government and business decision-makers, researchers, and the American public to follow and understand the performance of the Nation's economy. This is of major importance in these perilous economic times.

BEA's significant increase would provide it the ability to publish data on GDP by industry on a quarterly basis thus enhancing the capability of analyzing and monitoring the economy for risks. Another part of the increase will boost the capacity to understand how changes in the economy impact individual households by examining other measures, already part of the data collected, such as discretionary income. Again in FY 2011 BEA seeks budget enhancements to improve its collection of foreign direct investment data and the economic impact of the energy sector. Both would improve the measurement of the economy and COSSA supports the increase.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our views.