

SENATE PANEL, HINDERED BY ALLOCATION, LIMITS NSF INCREASE

The Senate VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee marked up its bill on July 19. Its decisions were ratified by the full Senate Appropriations Committee that same day. Hindered by a smaller allocation than its counterpart House panel, the Senate Subcommittee provided the National Science Foundation (NSF) with \$4.673 billion, a \$256.1 million or 5.8 percent increase over last year's appropriated level. Despite the commitment of panel Chair Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) and Ranking Republican Sen. Christopher Bond (R-MO) to double NSF's budget in five years, they found themselves constrained by the budget resolution and the need to take care of certain agencies like the Corporation for National and Community Service that the House had zeroed out. The President's request of \$4.473 billion for NSF was slightly more than one percent higher than last year's appropriation. The House gave NSF considerably more – an increase of 9.3 percent.

For Research and Related Activities (R&RA), the Senate Subcommittee allocated \$3.514 billion, \$171.9 million or 5.1 percent above last year's appropriated level. The House Committee provided \$3.642 billion, and the President requested \$3.327 billion. Unlike the House panel, the Senate Subcommittee did not break down the R&RA appropriation by directorates. It did provide recommendations to increase certain elements above the requested level, such as plant genome research (+\$10 million to \$75 million), mathematics (+\$5 million to \$25 million), and information technology and nanoscience engineering and research, each up \$25 million.

The Committee report expands on these recommendations and also directs NSF to spend \$10 million for a Regional Innovation Cluster Initiative to support the development of strategic plans that bring competing and cooperating companies, suppliers, and institutions of higher education that (see *NSF Increase*, page 6)

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS PASSES CJS FUNDING BILL

The Senate Appropriations Committee, chaired by Sen. Robert Byrd (D-WV), passed the Commerce, Justice, State fiscal year 2002 funding bill on July 19. The Senate's appropriations for the following programs did not differ dramatically from the House version, which passed the full House on July 18.

For the **National Institute of Justice** (NIJ), the Committee provided \$54.9 million, the same as the President's request and the House appropriation. NIJ would also receive \$5.2 million from Violence Against Women Act programs for research and evaluation in the area of violence against women.

For the **Bureau of Justice Statistics**, the Committee recommended \$32.3 million, the same as the House amount and \$3.6 million more than the current year.

The **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention** would receive \$328.5 million, \$25 million above the budget request and \$30.6 million more than in the House bill.

(continued)

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For the **Census Bureau**, the Committee provides \$517.1 million, \$26.3 million below the budget request. Periodic censuses and programs would receive \$348.5 million which, while \$26.3 million below the request, would fully fund this account when combined with a \$27 million carryover. This would fund planning for the 2010 census and other periodic programs, including the American Community Survey (ACS). It would also provide \$27.1 million for continuous measurement (which covers data collection at ACS test sites), \$52 million for economic censuses, and \$6 million for intercensal demographic estimates.

The Committee provided \$62.5 million for Economic and Statistical Analysis, which includes the **Bureau of Economic Analysis**. A nearly \$9 million increase, this level is the same as the request and was also provided by House Appropriations. The increase includes \$3 million to improve core statistics, including Gross Domestic Product.

Finally, for **educational and cultural exchange programs** at the State Department, the Committee provided \$242 million, \$5 million more than the House and \$11 million more than the current year. This includes \$127.8 million for the Fulbright program.

The full Senate will not take up the bill until after the August recess.

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SENATE PANEL INCREASES FUNDS FOR AGRICULTURE COMPETITIVE GRANTS

On July 17, the Senate Appropriations Committee, following the lead of its Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, reported out the FY 2002 funding bill for programs in this policy area.

The good news is that the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants program (NRI) received \$137 million, a \$31.2 million increase over FY 2001 and the President's request. The House, by contrast, had provided the same as last year and the President's request.

The bad news is that the Senate joined the House in eliminating an appropriation for the Funding for Rural America. The Senate did allow the Department of Agriculture to use FY 2001 funds to keep the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems alive at \$120 million.

In other actions, the panel provided \$67.2 million, the same as the House and the request, for the Economic Research Service (ERS). The amount recommended includes \$9.2 million for food assistance studies and evaluations. The Committee allocated \$113.8 million for the National Agricultural Statistics Service. This is the same as the request and slightly less than the \$114.5 million allocated by the House. The Senate figure includes \$25.4 million for the Census of Agriculture. Hatch Act formula fund payments are level-funded at \$180.1 million, the same as last year, the President's request, and the House amount.

For Special Grants, the Senate committee appropriated slightly more than \$84 million, just above the House's number of \$82.4 million, clearly rejecting the Bush administration's attempt to rein in

Corrections : The July 2 edition of *Update* incorrectly identified Cora Marrett as the new president of the University of Wisconsin system. Her new title is Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The July 16 edition incorrectly listed the amount provided by the House Appropriations Committee for juvenile justice programs. The correct figure is \$297.9 million.

earmarking. The Rural Development Centers received \$600,000 from the Senate panel – \$100,000 less than they received from the House, but above last year's level of \$522,000. The Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) garnered \$820,000 from the Senate panel – the same as last year, but considerably less than the \$1.3 million appropriated by the House. The Senate panel also included \$8.4 million for Youth-At-Risk extension programs and \$1.2 million for Geographic Information System development.

With Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD) abandoning his intention to get nine of the thirteen appropriations bills through the Senate before the August recess, floor action on the Agriculture and Rural Development funding bill will most likely occur in September.

OJP NOMINEES APPEAR BEFORE SENATE JUDICIARY

As the Senate continues to try to move the confirmation process forward for the President's nominees, the Judiciary Committee, chaired by Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT), examined two Department of Justice nominees on July 24. The Committee considered Deborah Daniels for Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) (see *Update*, March 23, 2001) and Sarah Hart for Director of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) (see *Update*, April 9, 2001).

In her opening statement, Daniels discussed her experience assisting victims of crime and affirmed her belief in the importance of research. Research should inform policy, she said, and must measure the outcomes. Policies that research demonstrates to be effective should be replicated.

Although the Senators tried to inject some substance into the conversation, questioning of Daniels was not heated. Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL) opined that OJP (which is charged with developing the nation's capacity to prevent crime) is a tremendous bureaucracy, and that each dollar must work to protect victims and drive down crime. He also expressed his belief that there are some gaps in statistics and evaluation at OJP. While speaking favorably of drug courts, Sessions specifically expressed disappointment that OJP has not

determined which aspects of drug courts work and which do not.

Acting Chair Russ Feingold (D-WI) expressed concern with Daniels' support of minimum mandatory sentencing, asking Daniels whether she considers alternatives to incarceration to be a priority. Acknowledging that research shows abuse to be a risk factor in later delinquency, Daniels, as with other issues, addressed this question indirectly, saying that one of the best things we can do is mentoring.

Turning to NIJ, Sessions expressed his support for NIJ and his opinion that the research at NIJ is of high quality, and that maintaining the integrity and quality of that research is critical. He qualified, however, that the research could be more practical and directed towards specific problems.

Feingold began his questioning of Hart by noting that, while the law requires the Director of NIJ to have research experience, Hart's background is not in social science but in the practice of law. Hart replied that she has worked on projects in the past that involved research.

Seeming to anticipate Feingold's next question, Hart also expressed her belief in the integrity of research, asserting that research results must be heeded whether or not one likes what they say.

Feingold asked specifically about research on the death penalty, which NIJ recently solicited (see solicitation on p. 7). After a lengthy exchange, he received assurance from Hart that, if the research concludes the existence of bias in the application of or determination to seek the death penalty, the results would nevertheless be released.

NEW CENSUS DIRECTOR ANNOUNCED

President Bush announced his intention to nominate Louis Kincannon to be Director of the Census Bureau. Kincannon has served as Deputy Director, Chief Operating Officer, and Acting Director of the Bureau at various times between 1982 and 1992, and also served in various Bureau positions between 1963 and 1974. More recently, he served as Chief Statistician for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris from 1992 to 2000. He has been working as a

statistics consultant since. Kincannon is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin.

The choice does not appear controversial, as both former Bureau Director Kenneth Prewitt (a Clinton appointee) and House Census Subcommittee Chair Dan Miller (R-FL) praised Kincannon's qualifications.

BRIEFING REVEALS DEMAND FOR CONTINUAL CENSUS DATA; ACS PROGRESS REPORTED

As progress continues towards development of the American Community Survey (ACS), a diverse group of scientists, practitioners, and policymakers gathered at a Congressional briefing on the applications of continuous survey data, at which the words "statistical event" and "exciting" were uttered in close proximity. Held on July 16, the briefing was sponsored by the Population Resource Center and co-sponsored by COSSA.

The ACS, currently in the development stage, would replace the decennial Census long form and provide yearly data to communities, scientists, and policymakers (see *Update*, June 18, 2001). Calling the ACS "a visionary project," Richard Boykin, Chief of Staff for Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL), said it would provide an up-to-date profile of America's communities in a time of rapid demographic change.

Nancy Gordon of the Census Bureau described some of the benefits of the ACS and the process of its development. Policymakers, she said, would be able to do a better job with any issue at the state and local level if they had ACS data. Development of the ACS, Gordon explained, includes the reengineering of the decennial census. The long form, which would be replaced by the ACS, would be dropped from the 2010 Census, greatly simplifying and streamlining the decennial census and improving its accuracy.

Gordon emphasized the need to fund early planning for 2010, which would include modernizing the geographic databases. These changes, plus the implementation of ACS, would be cheaper than the cost of implementing another long form in 2010, Gordon argued.

Also speaking was Cynthia Taeuber, who has a joint appointment with the University of Baltimore and the Census Bureau to develop state and community uses of the ACS. Taeuber discussed the importance of statistics as tools for developing policy. Education statistics, she explained, are used at all levels, for distributing funding, evaluating programs, forecasting school enrollment, planning, and more. Not only is ACS data more timely, she pointed out, but the annual frequency of release, as opposed to the decennial frequency of long form data, enables a much better analysis of trends.

Ron Haskins, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, called the ACS the "most important statistical event in the U.S. in decades." Haskins related how, when serving on the staff of the House Ways and Means Committee, he was constantly faced with "crummy data . . . A great nation should have great data collection." Timely, quality data, he said, can enable better distribution of federal funds according to the directives of Congress. Staff at the Congressional Research Service, scholars, federal agencies, and many others, Haskins envisioned, will all find a use for such data.

Specific areas where we lack data that the ACS can provide, Haskins mentioned, include child poverty in smaller communities and big cities, marriage, the use of food stamps, and family dynamics.

After relating his experience using existing federal data to produce the annual *Kids Count* data book at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, William O'Hare said, "You can imagine my mouth watering about ACS." Not only would it continually update aging datasets, but it would also increase the accuracy of state-level data. The *Kids Count* data book paints a statistical portrait of the condition of America's children (see *Update*, September 13, 1999).

O'Hare explained that welfare reform legislation contained provisions directing states to measure child poverty and provide remediation if it increases. The ACS would be able to provide that data in a timely manner, O'Hare explained, allowing public money to go to the children who need it most.

First ACS Data Available Soon

The Census Bureau is scheduled to release data from the Census 2000 Supplementary Survey on July 31. This is the first national-scale test of the ACS and contains questions similar to those on the decennial long form. The bureau will release national and state-level economic, demographic, and housing data from a sample of 700,000 housing units, as well as data from 21 of 31 ACS test sites for areas with a population of 65,000 or more. Data will be available at www.census.gov/c2ss/www.

Full implementation of ACS is planned for 2003. Whether the Bureau needs a new authorization from Congress is unclear, but Congressional support for moving forward with the ACS seems strong. Both Congressional appropriations committees funded continued development of the ACS for fiscal year 2002 (see appropriations story, page 1).

OMB SEEKS COMMENTS ON INFO DISSEMINATION GUIDELINES

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), responding to a provision of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act of 2001, has issued proposed guidelines for "Ensuring and Maximizing the Quality, Objectivity, Utility, and Integrity of Information Disseminated by Federal Agencies" (*Federal Register*, June 28, 2001, pp. 34489-93). Comments are due by August 13, 2001.

The focus of these guidelines is the Federal government's information dissemination activities. OMB notes that it has designed the proposed guidelines to apply to a wide variety of government-wide dissemination activities that are generic enough to fit all media, and that it is not trying to impose undue administrative burdens or hurdles that would inhibit or deter agencies from disseminating information beneficial to the public.

In attempting to define "quality, utility, objectivity, and integrity," OMB suggests these are closely interrelated concepts. Collectively, these terms address the following three aspects of information dissemination: 1) whether the information is useful to all who use it, including the public; 2) whether the disseminated information is presented in an accurate, clear, complete, and

unbiased manner; and 3) whether the information has been protected from unauthorized access or revision. In explaining number two, OMB notes that "with respect to scientific research information, the results must be substantially reproducible upon independent analysis of the underlying data."

Congress has also required that, one year after OMB issues these guidelines, agencies must issue their own implementation plans. These must include "administrative mechanisms allowing affected persons to seek and obtain correction of information maintained and disseminated by the agency." In the current proposal, OMB suggests these mechanisms "should be consonant with established agency practice, flexible, and appropriate to the nature of the disseminated information."

Comments should be addressed to Brooke Dickson, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503. For further information contact Ms. Dickson at 202/395-3191 or informationquality@omb.eop.gov.

GAPS IN DATA ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH IDENTIFIED

Although indicators of child well-being in America show improvement, there are critical gaps in the data available on children and youth, according to *America's Children: Key Indicators of Well-Being, 2001*. The report is the fifth in an annual series prepared by the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics which consists of 20 federal agencies. The report is designed to provide the nation with a broad annual summary of national indicators of child well-being and monitors changes in these indicators over time.

The data included in the report answer such questions as: How many children are there in the United States? What proportion of the population is under age 18? How racially and ethnically diverse are our children? In what types of families do they live? What is the quality of their environment?

The 24 key indicators of child well-being are drawn primarily from national surveys and vital records, which provide the best available measures of the conditions of U.S. children. These indicators are monitored through official Federal statistics

covering children's economic security, behavioral and social environment, health, and education. The data collected offers insight into how well children are faring in these areas.

The economic security indicators document poverty and income among children and the accessibility of basic necessities. The health indicators document the physical health and well-being of children by presenting information on their health status, immunization coverage, death rates, and teenage births. The behavioral and social environment indicators present information about young people's participation in illegal or high risk behaviors. The education indicators examine how well America is succeeding in educating children, measuring preschoolers' exposure to reading and early education, student achievement, rigorous course-taking in high school, and the number of young people who complete high school and college.

The report also includes two special features which consists of measures that are not available with sufficient frequency to be considered as regular indicators: childhood asthma prevalence and youth employment.

Critical Data Gaps

The report reveals that there are many important aspects of children's lives for which regular indicators are lacking or in development, such as homelessness, long-term poverty, mental health, disability, neighborhood environment, and early childhood development. The report emphasizes that current data collection systems at the national level do not provide extensive information on children's lives, their families, and their caregivers. Specific data gaps include:

- **Family interactions** – children's interaction with non-resident parents, particularly fathers.
- **Time use** – how and where children spend their time and how these patterns change over time.
- **Economic Security** – changes in children's economic well-being over time anchored in an average standard of living context.
- **Long-term poverty for families with children** – regular estimates are needed.

- **Homelessness** – no regularly collected data exist on the number of homeless children in the U.S.
- **Disability** – many definitions of disability are used by policy makers and researchers, but there is little agreement regarding which components should be included or how they are best measured.
- **Mental health** – efforts are underway to evaluate data from a mental health indicator that could be used in national surveys to estimate the number of children with mental, emotional, and behavioral problems.
- **Child abuse and neglect** – regular, reliable estimates of the incidence of child abuse and neglect are needed that are based on sample surveys rather than administrative records.
- **Indicators of positive behaviors** – additional research to strengthen our understanding of positive activities and the aspects of those activities that protect youth from risk.
- **Neighborhood environment** – a survey is being implemented that would, for the first time, enable the monitoring of America's communities and neighborhoods over time and identify distressed neighborhoods in which children are living.
- **Youth violence** – additional work is needed to produce a more comprehensive and useful measure of the prevalence of violence among young people.
- **Early childhood development** – a regular source of data that can be used to monitor specific social, intellectual, and emotional skills of preschoolers over time is needed.

The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics is a formal structure for collaboration among 20 Federal agencies that produce or use statistical data on children and families.

For more information see the Forum's website, <http://childstats.gov>.

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focus on research, education and training to identify "best practices in regional innovation development

and university knowledge and technology transfer activities.”

The report includes language about “several exciting ongoing NSF initiatives in the behavioral sciences,” encouraging NSF to support young investigators in these sciences. It also notes that “research on how people think, learn, remember, work in groups, apply learned information in new ways, and other related research holds a great deal of potential for enhancing educational practices and increasing student achievement.” There is no report language about a Children’s Research Initiative.

For the Education and Human Resources Directorate, the Subcommittee allocated \$872.4 million, \$86.8 million or 11 percent above the FY 2001 appropriated level. This is the same as the President’s request. The House Committee provided \$886 million. The Senate panel agreed with NSF that graduate student stipends are too low and supported the 20 percent requested increase so that the stipends can be boosted to \$21,500.

Unlike the House Committee, which gave NSF the full \$200 million for President Bush’s Math and Science Partnership Initiative, the Senate Subcommittee recommended a total of \$190 million. The appropriated level would be \$130 million, with the other \$60 million derived from the H-1B Nonimmigrant Petitioner Receipts the agency receives. As reflected in its hearings (see *Update*, June 18, 2001), the panel hedged its support for this program and wants to know how it will build on the systemic reform and teacher and student development programs currently supported by NSF.

For the Office of Policy Development and Research at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Subcommittee recommended \$53.4 million, a slight \$22,000 increase over last year and \$10 million above the President’s request. The difference is that the Senate continued funding for the Partnerships in Advancing Technology in Housing (PATH) program. The Administration wanted to abolish PATH.

The full Senate is expected to take up the VA, HUD bill before the August recess. The House version of this appropriations bill was on the floor as *Update* went to press.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the sponsoring agency for further information. Additional application guidelines and restrictions may apply.

Examining the Federal Death Penalty System

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) requests proposals to conduct research examining how homicide cases come into the Federal system. Of particular interest is the identification of factors that may help to explain the geographic distribution and racial/ethnic composition of capital cases.

The investigation must be either national in scope or be a multijurisdictional design capable of answering a range of research questions discussed below. The research design should examine how homicide cases are investigated and how and why some of those cases enter the Federal system and others enter the State system. Research should also examine those cases that never enter the State or Federal system to understand why they remain uncleared by arrest, and address issues of race/ethnicity and geography. Relevant questions include:

- What are the characteristics of homicide cases and offenders indicted in State systems compared to those indicted in the Federal system?
- What is the role of Federal law enforcement and its interaction with local and State law enforcement in these cases?
- What are the significant decision-making factors that determine whether a case is prosecuted in the Federal or State system and whether a capital offense is charged?
- What are the significant geographic, case, or other factors that help explain the resulting distribution of homicide cases prosecuted in the Federal and State systems and indicted on capital or noncapital charges?

Applications are due **October 19, 2001**. For further info, see www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/s1000490.pdf.