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FULL HOUSE PASSES LABOR-HHS; SENATE PANEL PROPOSES \$3.4 BILLION INCREASE FOR NIH

On October 11, the House of Representatives passed its version of the FY 2002 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education (Labor-HHS) Appropriations Bill. On the same day, the Senate Labor-HHS subcommittee marked up its version of the bill; the Senate Appropriations Committee approved the measure on Thursday without amendment. The preliminary appropriations figures for agencies that support social and behavioral science research are arranged in the chart on page seven.

Health Research

In line with the House Appropriations Committee recommendations, the full House provided the **National Institutes of Health (NIH)** with a budget of \$22.8 billion, \$2.6 billion or 12.3 percent above the FY 2001 funding level. The bill, however, would delay the obligation of \$2.875 billion in funding to NIH until September 30, 2002, the last day of the fiscal year.

Reflecting the Senate Appropriations Committee's view that NIH is one of its very highest priorities, the Senate Appropriations Committee increased the NIH budget by \$3.4 billion (16.7 percent) to \$23.7 billion in FY 2002. The Senate bill, however, increases the authority for the evaluation transfer to other Public Health Service agencies from one to two percent of the NIH budget. In the report accompanying the bill, the committee observes that while it is "firm in its commitment to budget restraints, it believes that the funding of biomedical research is an important investment in the future health and economic well-being of our nation."

The report accompanying the House's version of the legislation notes that the funding levels provided in the bill for each of the institutes and centers are the same as those requested by the President. The

House, however, adjusted the appropriation for each institute and center based on a one-percent Public Health Service evaluation tap amount. The administration had proposed to increase this amount to two percent.

Observing a growing public awareness of the behavioral underpinnings of disease, the Senate urged NIH to incorporate behavioral research as part of its core public health mission. The agency is further urged to provide a detailed description of its ongoing work in the behavioral sciences, including funding levels by institute, and, within each institute, funding levels for research and training activities included in NIH's behavioral and social science portfolio.

The committee also encouraged NIH to "significantly expand its support for studies that examine the biological, behavioral, and environmental risks for disease." The Senate is "especially interested in the assessment of prevention-focused interventions designed to enhance health status, the exploration of health disparities across population subgroups, the examination of strategies designed to move the findings of laboratory-based research from individuals to population-wide applications, and the

Inside *UPDATE* . . .

- **Science Advisor Nominee Sails Through Hearing**
- **Census Bureau Rejects Adjustment for Allocating Federal Funds**
- **New OERI Head Shares His Agenda for Education Research**
- **NSF Seeks New Proposals on Learning and Development, Funds Children's Research**
- **COSSA Welcomes New Contributor**
- **Preliminary FY 2002 Funding Chart**

exploration of potential uses of communication technologies to enhance human health.” The agency is also encouraged to submit a report to the committee in April 2002 indicating total dollars spent on population-based prevention research by institute and relevant disease areas where possible.

Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) — The House expressed its concern that outside of its traditional home at the National Institute of Mental Health and a number of other Institutes, “there is insufficient NIH support for behavioral and social science investigators.” At the same time, the House expressed its support for the institutes, such as the National Cancer Institute and the National Institute on Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, that have begun to expand their behavioral and social science programs.

The House also requested that NIH report back “with a plan for a coordinated system of increased training in basic and applied behavioral and social research, a plan for increasing basic and applied behavioral research support in non-traditional institutes, and other measures intended to ensure that NIH scientific priorities and policies appropriately reflect the central role of behavior in health.”

The Senate urged OBSSR to develop working

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), an advocacy organization for federal support for the social and behavioral sciences, was founded in 1981 and stands alone in Washington in representing the full range of social and behavioral sciences.

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groups or groups in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in order to speed translation of behavioral research to practice. Recognizing that without dedicated funding it is difficult for staff in different agencies to collaborate as closely as may be needed, NIH is advised to use its increased funding to intensify collaboration and facilitate communication and the transfer of information.

Education Research

Funding for education research at the **Office of Educational Research and Improvement** remains level at \$120.6 million, despite a \$27 million increase in the House bill which is earmarked for the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards and the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program and Clearinghouse.

The Senate Appropriations Committee has kept funding level for the **National Center for Education Statistics** and the **Regional Education Labs** (at \$80 million and \$65 million, respectively), while the bill passed by the full House increased both of those accounts slightly, by \$5 million each. The House committee report noted that within funding for research and development are funds to continue all existing grants and contracts for comprehensive school reform research and development, capacity, and dissemination activities.

In other education accounts, both the House and the Senate committees level-funded two graduate fellowship programs: the **Javits** program that provides funds for students in the Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, and the **Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN)**. The House, but not the Senate, continued funding for the **Thurgood Marshall scholarships**. The House allocated a \$1 million increase for the program to \$5 million. The funds would go to the Council on Legal Education Opportunity to help minority, low-income college students gain access to and complete law school.

The administration seems to have won one battle against earmarking as the House and the Senate committees provided funding for the **Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)** that fell close to the President's request. This year's bill did not include the over \$90 million in directed funding that appeared in the FY 2001

appropriations. The Senate committee did list a number of projects that they were “aware of” and urged the Department of Education “to give them full and fair consideration,” but unlike in previous years, the panel did not provide specific amounts for these projects. FIPSE will absorb the Learning Anytime Anywhere Program and the \$22.7 million necessary to continue funding 63 current grantees. This program provides funds for the development and improvement of distance learning technologies.

Finally, the Senate committee provided \$200 million to fund teacher recruitment and retention, professional development, educational technology, parental involvement, and improved student achievement in rural districts with schools of less than 600 students. The House appropriated \$125 million for similar purposes.

Labor Research

Both the Senate Appropriations Committee and the full House provided increases for the **Bureau of Labor Statistics**. The House allocated \$477.1 million and Senate Appropriations provided \$476 million, slightly higher than the President’s request of \$475.8 million and about five percent higher than last year’s appropriation.

SCIENCE ADVISOR NOMINEE SAILS THROUGH HEARING

On October 17, the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee unanimously recommended the confirmation of President Bush’s nomination of John Marburger to be the director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). The full Senate is expected to concur with the committee in the near future.

The committee’s action followed a friendly confirmation hearing for Marburger, the director of the Brookhaven National Laboratory and former President of SUNY-Stony Brook, on October 9. At the hearing, Marburger pushed the now-familiar argument for a balanced research portfolio, echoing many who have urged increased funding for other scientific research besides biomedical studies supported by the National Institutes of Health. He noted, “Balance in this broad research portfolio recognizes that advances in one field, such as medicine, are often dependent on gains in other

Rural Prosperity Transcripts Available

Transcripts are now available from COSSA’s July 20 Congressional briefing on *Rural and Community Prosperity* (reported in *Update*, August 13, 2001). Please e-mail coffa@coffa.org or phone 202/842-3525 for a complimentary copy.

disciplines.” He referred in particular to the importance of chemistry, engineering and mathematics.

Marburger expressed interest in scientific research to help combat terrorist attacks and mitigate global climate change. He also indicated that he had discussed with the President the issue of financing stem cell research. Some senators raised the question of access to the President, particularly since OSTP’s offices have been moved out of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building for security reasons. Marburger reassured the senators, claiming “I will have appropriate access.”

House Science Committee Chairman Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY) praised the nominee at the hearing, calling him an excellent manager and a natural leader. Rep. Felix Grucci (R-NY), whose district includes the Brookhaven Laboratory, also gave strong support for Marburger.

CENSUS BUREAU REJECTS ADJUSTMENT FOR ALLOCATING FEDERAL FUNDS

Several months after the Census Bureau’s decision not to use adjusted census figures for Congressional redistricting (see *Update*, March 12, 2001), Acting Director William Barron announced the Bureau’s decision not to use adjusted figures for distributing federal funds either. The distribution of billions of dollars in federal program funds will therefore be determined by the Bureau’s “head count,” which many complain still excludes too many, mostly minority, Americans.

Barron explained at the October 17 press conference that “considerable new evidence” indicates substantial error in the Bureau’s accuracy and coverage evaluation (A.C.E.). New research,

according to ESCAP (the Executive Steering Committee for A.C.E. Policy, comprised of senior Bureau officials), found that Census 2000 counted many more people twice than A.C.E. originally estimated. As a result, the members believe that the overcount (the number of people counted twice), originally estimated at 3.1 million, is really closer to 6.1 million. When combined with the estimated 6.4 million who were missed by the Census, the net undercount is estimated at a relatively small 300,000.

National Academies Weigh-In

However, a recent report, *The 2000 Census: Interim Assessment*, issued by the National Academies of Science (NAS) Committee on National Statistics and conducted by a panel chaired by COSSA President Janet Norwood, challenged this justification. The panel noted that “a small (or zero) net undercount . . . is not a reason for or against adjustment because net undercounts can mask sizable gross errors. . . The issue is how the balance between these components of error differs among population groups and geographic areas.”

The panel also explained the process behind the Bureau’s revision of the net undercount, finding that the reduction was largely achieved by imputation, a process whereby the census records of people with insufficient information are completed using data from the household or a neighboring household.

About 5.8 million people requiring imputation were included in the 2000 census, roughly three times as many as in 1990. These people, the report observed, “were disproportionately found among minorities, renters, and children,” and thus accounted for a large part of the reduction in the differential net undercount. The use of some kinds of imputed census records is being challenged by the state of Utah in a lawsuit. The panel recommended thorough investigation of the factors that contributed to some of the imputation.

Referring to the report, Rep. William Lacy Clay (D-MO) called the Bureau’s decision “both disappointing and troubling,” and said the explanation “ignores significant concerns raised just last week” by the NAS panel. Clay went on to suggest that the reduced net undercount “does not allay the concerns of cities and communities seeking their fair share of funds for critical services.”

Chairman of the House Subcommittee on the Census Dan Miller (R-FL) remarked that the NAS panel endorsed the Bureau’s original decision not to adjust for redistricting and re-iterated the often-heard statement that the 2000 Census was the most accurate in the nation’s history.

The NAS panel, commenting on the Bureau’s March decision on adjustment for redistricting, concluded that the Bureau “followed its specified process and, thus, that its recommendation to release the [unadjusted] counts from the census enumeration for redistricting was justifiable.” The report noted, however, that since the adjusted numbers themselves are not available, it is not possible to comment on what the adjustment decision (for redistricting) should be. The panel has not yet evaluated the Bureau’s recent decision to use unadjusted numbers for allocating federal funds.

The ESCAP committee acknowledged that although Census 2000 lowered the differential undercount, it did not eliminate it. The Bureau will therefore conduct further research to improve future post-censal estimates, according to the report.

An Exhausted Issue?

Now that the Bureau has decided against adjustment for the last major government application of census numbers, will the adjustment issue go away for a while? Chairman Miller said “It’s time to put adjustment, for political purposes, to rest. . . The millions of dollars spent, in the past two decades, on two failed adjustments, could have been better spent.” Apparently promising that the issue will not die, Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), another member of the subcommittee, remarked that “The taxpayers paid 200 million dollars for A.C.E. in order to measure the accuracy of the census. Why is the Bush administration continuing to refuse to release all of the A.C.E. data so that the public can review that data and judge for itself?” Seeming to take a cautious middle road, former Census Director Kenneth Prewitt defended the latest adjustment decision to the *New York Times*, but urged the Census Bureau to release the block-level data for scientific review.

The Bureau’s decision and the ESCAP report can be accessed at www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/2001/webcast10_17event.html. The NAS

panel's report is at <http://search.nap.edu/books/0309076498/html>.

NEW OERI HEAD SHARES HIS AGENDA FOR EDUCATION RESEARCH

In two recent meetings, newly appointed head of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) Russ Whitehurst introduced himself to the education research community (see *Update*, May 21, 2001) and discussed his priorities for improving the support and application of education research.

Acknowledging poor student achievement, inadequate literacy, inconsistent quality and high turnover of teachers, poorly managed schools, and often harmful regulations, Whitehurst conceded, "There's a lot that needs fixing" in American education. While society's approach to solving problems, he said, is generally to fund more science and technology, Whitehurst called for a different strategy – one that tells us simply what works, so that we can implement successful programs and curriculum.

For this he proposed something along the lines of the Campbell Collaboration (<http://campbell.gse.upenn.edu>), which screens studies to reveal what works. He suggested that in a few years, perhaps, we will require evidence of effectiveness before a program can appear in schools.

Suggesting that the administration's dedication to research goes straight to the top, Whitehurst noted that the fourth pillar of President Bush's education agenda is high quality research. Secretary of Education Roderick Paige, he said, is a particularly strong proponent, having turned around the Houston school system in part by calling on researchers to separate effective curricula from the ineffective.

Whitehurst has several goals for OERI and some specific ideas for reaching them. The policies for addressing some of these goals may be contained in the reauthorization legislation for OERI. Because the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is still not complete, OERI's bill will probably not pass until sometime next year.

Himself a scholar and author of several books and dozens of journal articles, Whitehurst aims to

increase the quality of science at OERI. He lamented that fewer than ten OERI employees (excluding those at the National Center for Education Statistics) are trained as scientists and only one of the five institutes is headed by a Ph.D. Whitehurst wants to put scientists in high positions to provide leadership, and asked the research community to suggest candidates for several positions yet to be filled in the agency. He also advocated holding research to high standards and improving the peer review process, which he describes as scattered, in part by organizing peer review by topic area.

Another of Whitehurst's goals is to increase research capacity in the field. He pointed to a lack of well-trained researchers, which he suggested might be addressed by pre- and post-doctoral programs for education research and summer institutes on research practice. The paltry and inconsistent funding that makes the field unattractive as a career choice, Whitehurst declared, needs to be fixed. He also remarked that schools of education are drifting away from quantitative research, and should fund interdisciplinary training.

Seeking Increased Independence from Political Influence

Whitehurst acknowledged the perception that OERI is more subject to political influence than other research agencies, and shared some ideas to increase its independence. He remarked that the person in his position should serve for a fixed term (rather than at the pleasure of the President). He also opined that more evaluation efforts should flow through OERI.

OERI also needs more focus, according to Whitehurst. He plans to develop a list of research priorities soon, but it is expected that reading and early childhood cognitive development will top the list. In addition to focus, Whitehurst called for better coordination of existing research programs, many of which are scattered across departments and institutes.

Finally, Whitehurst announced the appointment of Valerie Reyna as Senior Research Advisor to the Assistant Secretary. Reyna served as Professor of Surgery, Medicine, Biomedical Engineering, Mexican-American Studies, and Women's Studies at the University of Arizona, Tucson. Her research has

focused on false memories in children and risky decisionmaking in youth.

NSF SEEKS NEW PROPOSALS ON LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT, FUNDS CHILDREN'S RESEARCH

The National Science Foundation (NSF) seeks proposals for studies that increase the understanding of cognitive, linguistic, social, cultural, and biological processes related to children's and adolescents' development. As part of continuing support for a Children's Research Initiative (CRI), NSF hopes to fund research that focuses on the mechanisms of development that explain when and how children and adolescents acquire new skills and knowledge and to elucidate the underlying development processes that enhance learning.

The Developmental and Learning Science program, which is shepherding the solicitation, wants developmental research to become more integrated in focus, particularly through combining qualitative and quantitative approaches across the sciences. There is also a need to develop mechanisms that make collaboration and data sharing easier among researchers.

NSF will support individual investigator research projects, centers, workshops and small conferences. Research priorities have been culled from the 1997 President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology Report, *Investing in Our Future: A National Research Initiative for America's Children for the 21st Century*. It is available at www.OSTP.gov/Children/Report.html.

Full proposals are due on January 15, 2002. For more information contact Rodney Cocking, 703/292-8732 or rcocking@nsf.gov.

CRI Awards Announced

The Foundation has also announced its awards for the first round of the Children's Research Initiative. The new grants include funding for three multidisciplinary, multi-site research centers that will each receive funds for five years. One, the Research Center on Children and Media, is a collaboration across four universities – Georgetown, UCLA, Northwestern, and the University of Texas at

Austin – that will focus on the types and impacts of emergent digital media on children, their social and academic adjustment, and the influences of media on the developing brain.

The second award goes to the North Carolina Child Development Research Collaborative. It will build upon existing multidisciplinary activities across the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Duke University, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and North Carolina State University. Investigators from diverse areas of developmental inquiry will analyze human development from the neural and genetic to the cultural and societal levels.

The Cornell Center for Research on Children also received an award. It will conduct, synthesize, and disseminate developmental science to benefit children and society. The center will support scientists who will study policy-relevant questions and create a consensus for dissemination. The center hopes to bridge the schism that presently exists between empirical researchers and the decision makers who translate research findings into practice.

The CRI also funded 11 collaborative planning grants, 16 workshops and small conferences, and 20 individual investigator awards. Aside from the congressionally-designated \$5 million, the CRI also received support from other NSF programs that provided co-funding for some of the grants. Through the use of research collaborations more than 90 scientists will participate in CRI projects.

COSSA WELCOMES NEW CONTRIBUTOR

COSSA welcomes Vanderbilt University as our newest contributor. We look forward to working with the University on issues of interest to its social and behavioral scientists.

**Preliminary Fiscal Year 2002 Appropriations for Agencies that Support
Social and Behavioral Science Research**

AGENCY / PROGRAM	(figures are in millions)	FY 2001 Approp.	FY 2002 Request	FY 2002 House	FY 2002 Senate¹	FY 2002 Conference
<u>Department of Agriculture</u>						
National Research Initiative		106.0	105.8	105.7	105.8	
Economic Research Service		67.0	67.2	66.9	66.9	
<u>Department of Commerce/Census Bureau</u>						
Census Bureau (Total)		720.8 ²	543.4	519.8	517.1	
Periodic Censuses and Programs		275.8	374.8	375.4	348.5	
Continuous Measurement (Amer. Community Survey)		21.6	27.1	27.1	26.2	
Bureau of Economic Analysis		53.6	56.6	62.5 ³	62.5 ³	
<u>Department of Education</u>						
Research		120.6	123.1	147.6	120.6	
Regional Education Laboratories		65.0	65.0	70.0	65.0	
Education Statistics		80.0	85.0	85.0	80.0	
Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education		146.7	51.2	52.4	51.2	
International Education and Foreign Language		78.0	78.0	93.0	78.0	
Javits Fellowships		10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	
Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need		31.0	31.0	31.0	31.0	
Assessment		40.0	109.1	111.6	109.0	
<u>Department of Health and Human Services</u>						
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality		269.7	306.2	306.2	291.2	
Asst. Sec. for Planning and Evaluation		16.7	20.5	20.5	20.5	
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention		3,862.7	4,092.8	4,077.0	4,118.3	
National Institutes of Health		20,295.3	23,100.0	22,874.9	23,695.3	
Aging		786.3	880.0	873.2	909.2	
Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism		340.5	382.0	379.0	390.8	
Cancer		3,757.2	4,177.2	4,146.3	4,258.5	
Center for Complementary and Alt. Medicine		89.1	100.1	99.3	110.0	
Child Health & Human Development		978.7	1,096.7	1,088.2	1,123.7	
Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases		1,303.5	1,457.9	1,446.7	1,501.5	
Drug Abuse		780.8	907.4	900.4	902.0	
Environmental Health Sciences		502.9	562.0	557.4	585.9	
Human Genome Research Institute		382.0	426.7	423.5	440.4	
Mental Health		1,106.5	1,238.3	1,228.8	1,279.4	
Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities ⁴		132.0	158.4	157.2	158.4	
Nursing Research		105.1	117.7	116.8	125.7	
<u>Department of Housing and Urban Development</u>						
Office of Policy Development and Research		53.4	43.0	46.9	53.4	
<u>Department of Justice</u>						
National Institute of Justice (without transfers)		70.0	54.9	54.9	54.9	
Bureau of Justice Statistics		28.8	32.3	32.3	32.3	
Juvenile Justice programs		298.6	291.3	297.9	297.9	
<u>Department of Labor</u>						
Bureau of Labor Statistics (includes Trust Fund)		450.9	475.8	477.1	476.0	
<u>National Endowment for the Humanities</u>		120.0	120.5	123.5	125.5	124.5
<u>National Science Foundation</u>						
Total		4,426.1	4,472.0	4,840.2	4,672.5	
Research and Related Activities		3,350.0	3,327.0	3,642.3	3,514.5	
Education and Human Resources		787.4	872.4	885.7	872.4	

¹figures for Agriculture, Education, HHS, and Labor are from appropriations committee; the full Senate has not yet passed the bills

²includes \$300 million in carryover funds; ³Includes funding for the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs; ⁴created November 2000