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APPROPRIATIONS ENDGAME IN SIGHT

Despite some predictions following September 11 that Congress would move the FY 2002 spending bills swiftly, the usual haggling over funding priorities between the Democrats and Republicans has once again stretched the process almost two months into the fiscal year. After passing five Continuing Resolutions to keep the government running, it appears that sometime after Thanksgiving this year's budget game will end.

As of November 19, five of the thirteen bills have been signed into law. Three more, which are discussed below, have been sent to the President. Four others, including the Labor, HHS, Education bill, are in conference. Finally, the Defense bill is still under discussion since it will be the vehicle for further September 11 emergency relief spending.

NSF Gains 8.4 Percent Increase; SBE Receives Small Boost

The VA, HUD Conference Committee provided \$4.789 billion for the **National Science Foundation** (NSF) for FY 2002, a \$363 million or 8.4 percent increase over FY 2001. The House had provided a 9.4 percent boost; the Senate, only 5.6 percent.

For the Research and Related Activities account, Congress appropriated \$3.598 billion, up from \$3.35 billion in the FY 2001 current plan, a 7.4 percent raise.

For the first time in recent years, the conferees provided funding figures for each of the research directorates. The **Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences** directorate (SBE) received \$168.9 million, a \$4.5 million increase over last year. This small 2.7 percent increase compared unfavorably to an 8.4 percent boost for Mathematics and Physical Sciences, an 8.6 percent raise for Geosciences, and an 8.7 percent increase for Engineering. The Biological Sciences received a 5 percent increase, including \$75 million for further research on plant genomes, a favorite of Senator Kit

Editor's note: The final Update issue of 2001 will be published December 10.

Bond (R-MO), Ranking Republican of the Senate's VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Subcommittee.

One explanation provided for these disparities was an attempt by the conferees to restore "balance" to the science portfolio. Many spokespersons, including former National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Harold Varmus and MIT President Charles Vest, have argued in recent years that the large increases in federal spending for the life sciences, particularly at NIH, have come at the expense of the physical sciences and engineering. They have argued further that the major advances in the medical sciences could not have occurred without scientific breakthroughs in the physical sciences and engineering.

The conference report did not include any language on the Children's Research Initiative. This means that the House report language stands and removes the privileging language from last year's report (see *Update*, June 18 and July 16, 2001).

The **Education and Human Resources Directorate** received \$875 million, up almost \$100 million from the FY 2001 current plan. The

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Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCOR) increases to \$80 million, with another \$30 million to come from the research directorates to help faculty in universities in certain states enhance their capacity to conduct basic science research. The President's Math and Science Partnership program, requested at \$200 million, was appropriated \$160 million.

Two new programs – Noyce Scholarships and a new undergraduate workforce initiative – received funding for the first time. Both programs encourage undergraduates to enter science and engineering careers.

Finally, the conferees increased NSF's graduate student programs to \$105 million. This would allow NSF to raise the graduate fellows' stipend level to \$21,500.

In other action, the VA, HUD conferees provided \$50.3 million for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's **Office of Policy Development and Research**. This is a \$3.7 million decrease from the FY 2001 level. A significant portion of the decrease comes from funding for the Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing initiative (which is lowered from \$10 million to \$7.5 million). The administration had requested the elimination of the program.

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Slight Increases for Justice Research

The House and Senate approved the conference report for the \$39 billion Commerce, Justice, State FY 2002 appropriations bill, on November 14 and 15, respectively.

The **National Institute of Justice** (NIJ) would receive \$54.9 million, identical to the President's request and \$15.1 million less than FY 2001 (reflecting elimination of an earmark). This does not include transfers. NIJ, as in previous years, would receive another \$5.2 million for research and evaluation on violence against women and \$20 million for technology research and development from the Local Law Enforcement Block Grant. The conferees also appropriated \$251.5 million for counterterrorism, of which \$47 million is for research and development.

The President's request of \$54.9 million included funds for the expansion of NIJ's Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program (ADAM). NIJ's new Director, Sarah Hart, will review the specifics of this and other programs.

The **Bureau of Justice Statistics** would receive \$32.3 million, the same as the request and \$3.5 million more than last year (see related note in Announcements on page seven).

The **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention** would receive \$305.9 million, about \$7.3 million more than last year. This includes \$11 million for grants, contracts, cooperative agreements, and other assistance for developing, testing, and demonstrating programs designed to reduce drug use among juveniles. Elsewhere, the conferees expressed their concern about the effectiveness of the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program, the most widely implemented youth drug prevention program in the country (see *Update*, January 29, 2001). The program is to receive \$2.8 million in FY 2002. The conferees encouraged DARE to continue the restructuring effort currently underway.

ACS Continues to Move Forward

The **Bureau of the Census** is to receive \$544.4 million (which includes \$54 million in deobligated funds from prior year decennial census activities). Periodic Censuses and Programs would receive

\$375.4 million. This also includes \$65 million for expenses related to planning, testing, and implementing the 2010 decennial census. Other Periodic Programs would be funded at \$171.1 million, \$27.1 million of which is for Continuous Measurement (the American Community Survey or ACS).

Agriculture: NRI Sees Increase

The FY 2002 Agriculture and Rural Development bill has cleared both Houses and is ready for the President's signature. The conferees provided a significant boost to the **National Research Initiative** (NRI) Competitive Grants Program, from \$105.8 million in FY 2001 to \$120.5 million in FY 2002, an increase of almost 14 percent.

The conferees funded the Hatch Act formula programs at last year's level of \$180.1 million. The **Economic Research Service** received the administration's request of \$67.2 million, a slight increase over FY 2001's \$66 million. Included in the FY 2002 funding is \$9.2 million for "food program studies and evaluation."

The conferees allocated \$113.8 million for the **National Agricultural and Statistical Service**, again the same level as the administration's request and a 14 percent increase over FY 2001. Of that total, \$25.3 million will go for the Census of Agriculture.

Despite the arguments of the administration and Senator John McCain (R-AZ), the appropriators' prerogative to fund special projects continued unabated. The allocations for Special Grants, also known as pork or earmarking, accounted for \$97 million for FY 2002, slightly less than FY 2001's \$99.2 million. These included over \$1 million for the Rural Policy Research Institutes and \$560,000 for the Rural Development Centers.

In addition, the conferees prohibited any funds from this year's appropriation to be used for new grants for the Fund for Rural America and the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems, essentially killing both programs for the moment.

ASS'T SECRETARY FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION INTRODUCED TO RESEARCH COMMUNITY

Susan B. Neuman, the new Assistant Secretary for the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), introduced herself to the research community at the latest education policy forum of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) on November 9.

Neuman is the first "bona fide education researcher in this position," observed Jerry Sroufe, AERA's Director of Government Relations, introducing the new Assistant Secretary. (In the past, this position has been held most often by superintendents of schools.) Neuman was Professor in Educational Studies at the University of Michigan and Director of the Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement before joining the Education Department. Like other Bush administration Education appointees, Neuman is a specialist in literacy.

OESE is charged with promoting academic excellence, enhancing educational opportunities and equity, and improving the quality of teaching and learning by providing leadership, technical assistance, and financial support. It provides over \$14 billion per year to "expand education opportunity and excellence in the nation's K-12 education system." According to Sroufe, OESE has moved from stressing the issue of equity to that of academic excellence.

Neuman described the structure of OESE as "very bizarre." Rather than reorganize the office, however, she wants to try to get the different components talking to each other. She described the people at OESE as high-quality – many are Ph.D.s and most have "true commitment" and want to work with a new agenda, she said.

Like Assistant Secretary Russ Whitehurst at a previous AERA policy luncheon (see *Update*, October 22, 2001), Neuman placed her mission in the context of President Bush's education agenda. Research is one of the agenda's "four pillars," and it is the job of OESE to apply that research, she said. The bottom line, Neuman stressed emphatically, is achievement.

She also expressed her desire to build on current research – on “what we know” – and to “stop asking the same questions.”

Specifically, Neuman wants to “put reading first,” building upon the Reading Excellence Act, which is designed to teach every child to read by the third grade, employing scientifically-based reading research. She referred to the President’s Reading First program, for which he has requested \$1 billion for fiscal year 2002, and Early Reading First, a program to focus on reading in early childhood.

Legislation note: Negotiations are still in progress to resolve the differences between the House and Senate’s bills to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Rep. John Boenher (R-OH), chairman of the House-Senate education panel, predicted the conference report will be completed by the end of the year.

SOCIAL SCIENTISTS DISCUSS THE ETHICS OF RESEARCHING HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES

There are an estimated 53 million refugees and internally displaced persons in the world today, more than three times as many as 20 years ago, according to the U.S. Committee for Refugees. On October 18, the National Research Council’s Roundtable on the Demography of Forced Migration, held its fourth meeting to discuss research ethics in complex humanitarian emergencies.

The roundtable, which is part of the Committee on Population, represents a diverse group of disciplines. It is designed to open a dialogue around the issue, explained Charles Keeley of Georgetown University, Chair of the roundtable. He observed that there is currently no single body of work addressing the topic. The group will survey the research that is being conducted in various disciplines, what needs to be illuminated, and what present humanitarian situations may reveal about the demography of current and future complex humanitarian emergencies.

Ethical Issues and Social Science Research

William Seltzer of Fordham University discussed the nature of social science research and the associated threats and ethical issues.

Seltzer identified anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, and sociology as some of the main social science disciplines, with history, public health, and statistics closely related. With the exception of the medical side of public health and therapeutic psychology, he observed, all of the disciplines are unlicensed and their practitioners unregulated by the state.

This has important implications for ethics, said Seltzer, “in that ethical norms, standards, and sanctions – outside the area of federally funded research – are in the hands of individual researchers, their employers, and the relevant professional and scientific associations.” Unlike medical doctors and lawyers, social science researchers have very limited legal grounds for asserting privilege in legal proceedings to protect respondent disclosures, he remarked.

Seltzer identified other relevant aspects of the social sciences that have ethical implications. Most social science disciplines have strong traditions in both quantitative and qualitative research. Many practitioners, he said, recognize the complementary importance of both research traditions.

Social scientists use a variety of approaches to obtain research material and subjects, including direct observation, obtaining responses from research subjects in censuses or other surveys, and using secondary information originally obtained at other times and places for wide ranges of administrative, research, and other purposes.

Also, much social science research focuses on understanding the behavior or the characteristics of groups or individuals, Seltzer said. Most of it is not experimental, although a few disciplines, such as psychology and to a far lesser extent economics, have true experimental research.

Granting that on occasion some social science research can pose stress risks, the bulk of it, according to Seltzer, is minimally intrusive compared to research in the biomedical field. The primary purpose of most non-experimental social science research is simply to collect information, he explained.

The threats that can pose real risks to research subjects are “information threats,” Seltzer asserted, and social scientists have only recently begun to

study these in the context of social science research ethics. “Much of the information obtained is about the individual and his or her relationship to groups. In some circumstances, this information has been associated with major harms including genocide, forced migration, and internment,” said Seltzer.

Historically, the risks posed by these information threats, to both individual research subjects and other members of their group, have had particularly serious consequences for those in small, politically weak groups or in groups that were otherwise targeted. By explicitly addressing the more likely threats associated with their research, Seltzer suggested, social scientists can better avoid the ethical lapses and tragedies that have occurred in the past.

There are safeguards, ethical and otherwise, in social science research, Seltzer informed the group. Non-ethical safeguards can play a very important role in reducing information threats. They include substantive, methodological, technological, organizational, operational, and legal safeguards, he concluded.

The Dynamics of Human Emergencies

Turning to the dynamics of humanitarian emergencies, Felice Levine, Executive Officer of the American Sociological Association, discussed research and ethics in these critical situations.

Human emergencies involve the displacement or destruction of populations due to civil or international war or gross attempts to restructure society or the state, Levine explained. More broadly, they might include natural disasters, epidemics, or unforeseen accidents of catastrophic scope; external attacks by other nations; terrorist operations that are national, regional, or transnational in scope; and internal threats, including state-sponsored and political repression.

Levine, who is also the Co-Chair of the Social and Behavioral Science Working Group of the National Human Research Protections Advisory Committee, noted that in considering research ethics in humanitarian emergencies, it may be instructive to reflect on lessons learned about human subjects research in other contexts. She also recommended studying the range of work on complex humanitarian emergencies and how they are handled. This

includes needs assessments and evaluations, programmatic interventions, experimentation, case and field studies, surveys, and even the preservation of extant records and indicators data, she stressed.

In complex emergency circumstances, such research may have unique risks and, of course, unique benefits, as it may help to protect people’s very lives from threat, Levine informed the workgroup.

In addressing research ethics in this area, Levine underscored the importance of considering:

- The full spectrum of research activities or research data that may be initiated or used
- How the deployment of multiple research activities in the same or proximal time and place may interact
- How risk, harm, and benefits can and should be assessed in circumstances far different from non-emergencies

On this last point, Levine suggested the importance of fully characterizing the range of harms, benefits, and risks as well as the probability of occurrence.

She explained that harms can be physical, psychological, social, economic, legal, or – particularly in this case – political. The most common risks of harm from behavioral and social science research, Levine noted, are to the subject’s identity and confidentiality. In humanitarian crises, she observed, they may have far greater physical, political, or legal consequences.

At the same time, it may be necessary to think differently about research risks in emergencies, Levine explained. What is reasonable, customary, or acceptable may be different. Although human subjects should continue to have comprehensible information on risks and the option of whether to participate, it may be tricky to determine what voluntary means in a social context that is less voluntary, where the risks are far less clear, and when alternatives may not be readily available.

Finally, Levine remarked, how to characterize the benefits of such research can be challenging. Benefits can range from lowering the probability of

harm to the population to “getting the word out” in the troubled area in order to help overcome ignorance or address silence, and to improving the conditions for social groups (e.g., refugees). Conversely, research on humanitarian emergencies offers fewer of the more traditional benefits of social science research.

Human Subjects Protection System

In protecting human subjects in humanitarian emergencies, a more flexible, dynamic process may be required than would be the case under non-emergency situations, said Levine. The human subjects protection system, including Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) and research investigators, Levine urged, needs to develop decision strategies with the awareness that complex humanitarian emergencies can change rapidly.

According to Levine, her recommendation is not designed to encourage new or more regulations but to develop pathways for ongoing field advice. Peer advisory committees could be available to researchers, research teams, and even clusters of research teams for guidance and counsel in the face of highly ambiguous or unusual circumstances, she suggested.

Levine likened these committees to consensus panels rendering “best” diagnoses or intervention strategies. This approach or some similar strategy, maintained Levine, has the virtue of providing expeditious assistance to researchers when and where they need it and in a way that is respectful both of participants in research and of the importance of scientific knowledge being produced.

Next Steps

As the goal of the meeting was to stimulate further research, the expected outcome is a report that excludes recommendations. Established in 1997 upon recognition of the need for more and better demographic information, the Roundtable has held a series of workshops on specific aspects of the demography of refugee and refugee-like situations. For more information see www4.nationalacademies.org/dbasse/cpop.nsf.

DEVELOPING A RESEARCH AGENDA ON STIGMA AND GLOBAL HEALTH

Stigma is a pervasive problem that affects health globally, threatening individuals’ psychological and physical well-being. It prevents people from coming forward for diagnosis and impairs their ability to access care or participate in research designed to find solutions for these conditions. In response to the health and social ramifications of stigma in the U.S. and other parts of the world in particular, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently held a three-day international conference, *Stigma and Global Health: Developing a Research Agenda*.

Notably, the conference is the first international NIH meeting to address the relationship between stigma and global health, the latter including infectious and noninfectious diseases and behavioral and physical conditions rather than only one category of disease. More exceptional is that a significant number of the participants were from resource-poor countries where stigma involves an enormous burden.

According to FIC Director Gerald Keusch, health practitioners, medical and social scientists, and policy and media experts from around the world met to explore the relationship between stigma and public health, examine the social and cultural determinants of stigma, explore how stigma prevents people from seeking or getting treatment for disease, and determine future research opportunities. The conference was designed not only to better understand stigma’s social and cultural determinants, but also to address the need to identify and test for effective new behavioral interventions.

“Stigmatization of diseases is universal, affecting all countries, all societies, all populations,” said Keusch. It results from a belief that there are differences between individuals; that belief is accompanied by fear, he explained. Stigma research is related to health because it deals with one of the major consequences of health problems. While not all health problems lead to stigma, he said, many of them do, and it has powerful consequences for the people who are stigmatized, for the health care system, and for societies.

While focusing on a small group of conditions (HIV/AIDS, epilepsy, mental health, alcohol and drug abuse, and physical anomalies), the conference

addressed a broad scope, addressing such questions as: How does stigma contribute to the disparities in care we often see in many societies throughout the world? In what ways are the effects of stigma tied to poor health? How do differing levels of stigma in developed countries and resource-poor countries affect health services?

According to Arthur Kleinman of Harvard University, evidence is beginning to reveal the processes that produce stigma. Additional research, he said, is needed to address how to prevent or reduce it.

Led by the Fogarty International Center (FIC), 14 NIH Institutes and Centers (including the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research and the Office of AIDS Research), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the National Science Foundation cosponsored the meeting.

The complete conference was videotaped and is available on the NIH website. Continuing updates about stigma and global health research can also be found at www.stigmaconference.nih.gov.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The President announced his intention to nominate Lawrence A. Greenfeld to be Director of the **Bureau of Justice Statistics** (BJS) at the Department of Justice on October 26. Greenfeld is presently Acting Director. He started as a staff statistician at BJS in 1982, and later served as Chief of the Correctional Statistics Programs, Deputy Director of the National Statistical Programs, and Principal Deputy Director. Greenfeld received his Master's degree from American University.

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.

National Institute of Justice: Investigator-Initiated Research

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) receives and reviews research proposals in response to the broad mandate of the Institute's solicitation for investigator-initiated research. Proposals may be submitted under this program to explore topics of relevance to State or local criminal justice policy or practice with potential for informing policy and practice on a national basis, and proposals to fill important gaps in the development of key areas of scientific knowledge.

In recent years, the investigator-initiated solicitation has focused on concerns such as community crime prevention, policing research, juvenile and criminal justice systems improvement, corrections, alcohol- and drug-related crime and treatment, and criminal behavior.

NIJ encourages researchers from all disciplines to explore opportunities for collaborative efforts presented in this and directed solicitations. Partnerships between researchers and practitioners are encouraged. Collaboration is a critical element of a researcher-practitioner partnership.

Applications should address management of partnership activities such as problem definition, development of assessment tools, collection of data, and issues of privacy, confidentiality, and research involving human subjects. Additionally, while a proposed partnership may have State or local utility, it should also have implications for national knowledge building.

NIJ's Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) is providing some structure to the 2002 Investigator-Initiated Solicitation by requesting that proposals be submitted under four broad topic areas: violence and victimization, drugs and crime, crime control and prevention, and justice systems and criminal behavior research, although any specific topic may be proposed.

For more information, see www.ncjrs.org/txtfiles1/nij/sl000496.txt. Applications are due **January 16, 2002**. The application package is available at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/funding_app.htm.