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Stories Related to Crime, Criminal Justice Research,
and the Office of Justice Programs (OJP)
COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE, Volume 19, Year 2000

COMINGS . . . AND GOINGS

January 10, 2000, Number 1

Although NSF claims it is "very close" to appointing a new Assistant Director for the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE), it has named **Wanda E. Ward** the Acting Assistant Director, until the new person arrives. Ward replaces Bennett Bertenthal, who has returned to academia as Professor of Psychology at the University of Chicago, after a three year stint as head of the SBE. Ward had recently been appointed Deputy Assistant Director for SBE. She came to the Directorate from her previous position as Assistant to the Deputy Director for Human Resource Development in NSF's Education and Human Resources Directorate (EHR). She also held the position of Senior Staff Associate for Planning and Policy for the EHR. Ward arrived at NSF in 1992 from the University of Oklahoma where she was an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and Founding Director of the Center for Research on Multi-Ethnic Education. She has a Ph.D. in Psychology from Stanford and a B.A. from Princeton. Also at SBE, **Hilleary Everist** has announced her intention to leave as Director of the Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences this Spring. The job announcement can be found at <http://www.nsf.gov/home/chart/work.htm>.

Lisa Towne was recently named Assistant Director for the Social and Behavioral Sciences at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). She came to OSTP in January 1999 from the U.S. Department of Education to assist David Stevenson, who had been appointed Assistant Director. Following Stevenson's untimely death in March, Towne served as Acting Assistant Director. At the Department of Education, she worked as an evaluation and policy analyst in the Office of the Undersecretary covering K-12 education issues, including systemic reform and school choice. She was also an evaluation consultant for federal agencies administering programs that serve children and families, including the Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice and Defense. She has an undergraduate degree in mathematics and a graduate degree in public policy and is an adjunct professor of quantitative methods at the Georgetown Public Policy Institute.

The Council of Graduate Schools has named **Debra Stewart**, Vice Chancellor and Dean of the Graduate School at North Carolina State University, as its new President, effective July 1, 2000. Stewart succeeds Jules LaPidus, who is retiring after 16 years as head of CGS. At N.C. State Stewart has developed new interdisciplinary degree programs, established professional development programs, and spearheaded a successful research ethics initiative. She has served on many committees concerned with graduate education and research including the Board of Trustees of the Educational Testing Service, the Graduate Record Examination Board, the National Research Council Committee of the Assessment of

the Research Doctorate, and the Editorial Board of the *International Journal for Graduate Education*.

Stewart has a B.A. from Marquette University, an M.A. in government from the University of Maryland, and a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She is the co-author of *Organizational Behavior and Public Management*, now in its third edition.

The Urban Institute has appointed **Robert D. Reischauer** as its new President, effective February 1, 2000. Reischauer replaces William Gorham, who has led the social and economic policy research institute since its founding in 1968. Since 1995, Reischauer has been a senior fellow of economic studies at the Brookings Institution. Before that he spent six years as the director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), where he also held other management and research positions. He was the Urban Institute's senior vice president from 1981 to 1986. In 1982-83, he served on the COSSA Board of Directors. He is a nationally recognized public policy expert on the budget, health, poverty, state and local fiscal problems, and welfare. He holds an A.B. in political science from Harvard, a Master's in International Affairs, and a Ph.D. in Economics from Columbia University.

On January 1, 2000, **Ruth Kirschstein** was appointed Acting Director of the National Institutes of Health. She replaces Harold Varmus. Before her appointment, Kirschstein served as the NIH deputy director between November 1993 and December 31, 1999. She previously served as NIH Acting Director between July and November 1993.

Laurie Robinson, Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), has announced that she will leave the job at the end of February. Robinson, the longest-serving Assistant Attorney General for OJP, was confirmed by the Senate in September 1994. During her tenure, OJP expanded greatly from an \$800 million, 300 staff agency to an agency that administers over \$4 billion in grants annually with a staff of around 900. The OJP, a component of the U.S. Department of Justice, focuses on improving state and local criminal and juvenile justice systems. It is responsible for administering grant programs, providing training and technical assistance and conducting research and collecting statistics relating to criminal and juvenile justice. Most recently, Robinson has overseen OJP's reorganization effort, which some expect to be approved by Congress in the upcoming legislative session.

OJJDP RELEASES FY 2000 PROGRAM PLAN

January 24, 2000, Number 2

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), an arm of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), recently released its Fiscal Year 2000 Program Plan. The Plan describes the programs that OJJDP plans to fund and undertake during the coming year.

The Plan notes that the youth violence problem facing the nation in the late 1980s and early 1990s seems to have subsided. But, it suggests that not all the news is good. Specifically, the Plan points to the problems of gangs and juvenile drug use. The latter, according to the report, which declined during the 1980s has steadily increased since 1992 . . ." This mix of reassuring and troubling statistics "serves as a reminder that while great progress has been made in reducing juvenile delinquency, violence, and victimization, much more needs to be done." It further notes that beneficial effects of research and

evaluation on the ability of local officials to know “what works in the areas of prevention and intervention.”

A few examples of the programs OJJDP plans to undertake, or continue to fund throughout the year, include:

! OJJDP will continue to provide funds for the **Program of Research on the Causes and Correlates of Delinquency**, a longitudinal study involving three sites: Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado at Boulder; Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, University of Pittsburgh; and Hindelang Criminal Justice Research Center, University at Albany, State University of New York. Since 1986, this study has produced a large amount of information on delinquent behavior. Topics for upcoming reports include: defining characteristics and predictors of very young offending, delinquency and victimization at school, and the causes of violence in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

! The OJJDP will continue to work in a **multiagency effort to fund research projects on child neglect** to address the lack of research focusing specifically on this issue. Along with the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the Department of Education, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Administration of Children, Youth, and Families, the OJJDP will work to consider the “etiology, extent, services, treatment, management, and prevention of child neglect.”

! In FY 2000, the OJJDP will **continue to provide support to the National Academies of Science (NAS)** “for a review and synthesis of existing evidence regarding the effectiveness of community-level intervention and service programs designed to promote positive youth development.”

PRESIDENT RELEASES FY 2001 BUDGET PROPOSAL: SCIENCE GETS BIG BOOST

February 7, 2000, Number 3

President Clinton released the FY 2001 proposed budget on February 7th. As promised, it contained what Presidential Science Adviser Neal Lane called “a historic science and technology budget.” What the administration has called The 21st Century Research Fund will increase by \$2.9 billion over the FY 2000 level. The Fund is an attempt to present science and technology budgets as one package.

As noted in his speech at Cal Tech, the proposed budget for the National Science Foundation (NSF) provides the largest dollar increase in its history. The \$675 million, or 17 percent boost would bring NSF funding to \$4.6 billion. Almost one-half the increase, \$320 million, would go to enhance support for core programs, rather than for new Foundation wide initiatives. NSF’s Research and Related Activities account would increase by almost 20 percent to \$3.54 billion. The Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE) would share in this enhancement with a potential increase of close 20 percent to a total of \$175 million. NSF has also made the cognitive, psychological, and linguistic sciences a special emphasis area in the proposed budget. NSF Director Rita Colwell called her proposed largesse, “a 21st Century budget for 21st Century science and engineering.”

The **National Institutes of Health** would receive a \$1 billion increase to almost \$19 billion. Although only a 5.6 percent increase, it is widely expected that the Congress will keep NIH on the “doubling track” and provide a much larger increase than the President’s proposal. NIH Acting Director Ruth Kirschstein noted that NIH’s priorities for FY 2001 include increased attention to health disparities research. An NIH working group, headed by NIH Acting Deputy Director Yvonne Maddox and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony Fauci, has been established to examine this topic. The NIH budget also includes \$20 million to establish a new Center for Research on Minority Health. Members of Congress have been pushing to create such a center, rather than the current Office of Minority Health in the Office of the Director.

The President’s budget requested a total of \$3.5 billion for the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**, a \$201 million or 6 percent increase over FY 2000. If Congressionally approved, the FY 2001 budget for the **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality** would provide a program level of \$250 million, a \$46 million or 22.6 percent increase over FY 2000.

The **Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)** received \$199 million for research, development, and dissemination activities — \$30 million more than its FY 2000 level. The increase includes funds to double OERI’s commitment for the Interagency Education Research Initiative (IERI) which would increase to \$20 million from \$10 million. The **National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)** received a sizeable 24 percent increase to \$84 million from \$68 million in the current year.

The **National Institute of Justice (NIJ)** received an increase in its base funding to \$49 million from its current funding of \$43.4 million. NIJ’s overall funding, when including budget transfers, will likely be four times its base funding. The **Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)** received a nearly 30 percent increase — to \$33 million from \$25.5 million in FY 2000.

The **Census Bureau**’s funding for the decennial census was reduced, as is common in the year that it is conducted since most of the preparation work is performed in the years leading up to the census. For FY 2001, the Bureau received \$421 million to complete the head count and to compile and publish the data. Additionally, the president’s request included \$25 million for continued development and implementation of the American Community Survey (See related story, page X).

For **Agriculture and Rural Development** spending, the President has proposed increasing the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants program to \$150 million from its current \$119.3 million. The administration also announced that it intends to continue spending for the Initiative for Future Food and Agriculture Systems and the Fund for Rural America. Unlike the past few years, the administration is not proposing to cut Hatch Act funds, but to keep it level funded at \$181 million.

COSSA will fully report on the proposed budgets of all federal agencies affecting social and behavioral science research in its annual special issue of UPDATE. Look for it the week of March 6.

NCES, OJP APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED*February 7, 2000, Number 3*

Ending several months of speculation, President Clinton announced on February 2 his intention to nominate **Laurens L. Wise II** as commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics at the Department of Education. Wise is currently the president of the Human Resources Research Organization, a nonprofit organization that contracts with both the federal government and the private sector to conduct high quality research on human resource issues and to products and services that improve individual and organizational performance. Wise served on the National Academy of Science's committee to evaluate the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). He received his Ph.D. in mathematical psychology from the University of California, Berkeley. Wise's appointment pends Senate confirmation.

Mary Lou Leary has been named Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP). Leary, currently a Deputy Associate Attorney General, replaces Laurie Robinson, who announced her resignation earlier this year. Leary will officially take over OJP's reins at the end of February.

LEARY APPEARS BEFORE CJS APPROPRIATORS; CHAIRMAN "PUZZLED"*March 20, 2000, Number 5*

Only a month into her tenure as Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Mary Lou Leary went before the House Appropriations Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Subcommittee on March 15 to discuss the Administration's Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 budget request. Leary was met by an "absolutely puzzled" Representative Harold Rogers (R-KY), chairman of the Subcommittee. Rogers said he was "shocked" and "disappointed" with the request for the OJP, specifically noting his displeasure with the administration's decision to zero out funding for several block grant programs "in favor of several unauthorized initiatives."

As it did last year, the administration provided no funds for different block grant programs popular among most Republicans, as well as some Democrats: the Local Law Enforcement Block Grant Program (LLEBG) and the Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grant (JAIBG). As expected, this served as a point of contention. Rogers criticized the administration for taking the decisions about how to spend money away from the "locals and putting it in the hands of Washington bureaucrats." Locals, said Rogers, "know better than you" how to spend money to fight crime.

Leary noted that there were many competing priorities for limited funds, resulting in many tough decisions. Leary also pointed out that the administration decided to put its money toward innovative programs that determine what works and what does not work to prevent crime. She alluded to the seminal study conducted by the University of Maryland, *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, and What's Promising*, that states increased funds need to be devoted to research new crime fighting approaches, demonstrations and evaluations of these approaches, and implementation of these prevention strategies in other sites.

Two such innovative programs included in the budget request are: the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) and the Community Mapping, Planning, and Analysis for Safety Strategies (COMPASS) program. SACSI is a comprehensive, information-driven crime-fighting initiative in which United States Attorneys work with local decision-makers and a researcher to identify, analyze, and respond to local crime problems. COMPASS is a data-driven crime fighting approach that combines information such as employment statistics, land-use data, hospital records, drug use, gun tracing, and arrest and victimization statistics into a centralized database. COMPASS incorporates Geographic Information Systems (GIS) which allow local officials to plot crime-related data against a map of a specified community or region to target crime fighting resources. Both programs, administered by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) would receive \$10 million in FY 2001.

Rogers also criticized the fact that a large portion (45 percent, according to Rogers) of the budget for the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) is administered by the Office of Justice Programs. “Isn’t this a charade?,” asked Rogers. He suggested that the now-separate COPS office and OJP be merged. Director Thomas Frazier, on hand to defend the COPS budget request, noted that these funds administered by OJP are devoted to COPS-related initiatives. He further noted that the law enforcement community likes the Office’s independence. Leary explained further that her agency and the COPS office already work collaboratively in many different areas. Rogers left the question on the table, and will likely revisit the issue in future hearings.

Research Set-Aside: Not Included

Conspicuously missing from Leary’s testimony was any reference to the proposed research and evaluation set-aside for the NIJ. Specifically, the budget request calls for one percent of sums appropriated to the OJP be transferred to the NIJ to carry out research and evaluation — similar to the Public Health Service’s (PHS) one percent set-aside for evaluation. Over the past several years, funding for social science research within the NIJ has been stagnant. The set-aside would significantly augment NIJ’s ability to conduct and fund social science research. The budget request for the NIJ would provide a base of \$49.4 million. If congressionally approved, NIJ’s overall budget, including funds transfers, would reach \$200 million in FY 2001.

GUN CONTROL: WHAT WORKS, WHAT DOESN’T, WHAT’S PROMISING

May 1, 2000, Number 8

The gun debate that has languished on Capitol Hill is an example of false choices, according to a noted criminologist. Lawrence Sherman, the Albert Greenfield Professor of Human Relations at University of Pennsylvania, was the featured speaker at the National Institute of Justice’s (NIJ) April 5 Perspectives on Crime and Justice lecture series.

Sherman examined the current gun control policies and the research available to determine their merit in reducing gun violence. Upon reviewing the research and considering the epidemiology (or causes) of gun violence, Sherman concluded that there were only two policies that effectively focused on the high risks of gun violence: uniformed police patrol of gun crime hot spots and background checks before gun sales. Other policies were either labeled “promising” or “doesn’t work.”

The “more laws vs. more enforcement” positions of the opposing sides in the current dispute are not mutually exclusive, he said. In fact, research suggests that a combination of the two policies “could work wonders” in reducing gun violence. He argued that neither side readily employs research into the discussion, and when it is brought into the debate it “has appeared in the usually suspect pattern of selective invocation of the mantle of science to support one argument or another.” Sherman stressed that “far too often, there has been simply no research to cite on the major policy issues.”

The current interest and focus on safe gun technologies — external trigger locks, internal trigger locks, increased trigger pull-back pressure — may be misplaced, said Sherman. Safe gun technology, he noted, seems to be aimed at the middle-class gun owner “who would use a trigger lock as conscientiously as they use their automobile safety belts.” He said that from an epidemiological perspective, the premise of these “‘safe gun’ technologies is the corollary of ‘safe people,’ or the ones who can be trusted to use the gun lawfully and safely.” Therefore, the efficacy of safe gun technologies depends a great deal on how we define “safe people.” Current epidemiological data indicate, said Sherman, that the “current legal boundaries between people declared ‘safe’ and ‘unsafe’ for gun ownership fall very wide of the mark.” The Brady Bill and the current background check debate define safe people as those with no felony convictions. “Yet by that definition, the majority of crimes with guns are committed by people who are legally ‘safe,’ law-abiding citizens for purposes of present gun ownership policy.” He noted that samples of people arrested for using guns in the commission of crimes “consistently find that the majority have no prior felony conviction.”

What Works: Gun Patrols and Background Checks

Sherman pointed out that gun patrols and background checks work. These two strategies, he said, are focused on “high risks of gun violence.” In defense of gun patrols, Sherman pointed to two NIJ-funded studies (Kansas City and Indianapolis) indicating that uniformed patrols against guns reduce ensuing gun violence. Both studies showed a reduction of gun violence resulted after police increased gun patrols and gun seizures.

He similarly explained that research supports the use of background checks as a means to prevent or reduce gun violence. Sherman pointed to two impact evaluations (in California and in Florida). The California study concluded that convicted felons prevented from buying guns were “18 percent less likely to be charged with a gun offense over the next three years than the gun buyers who had felony arrests but no convictions.” The Florida study found that after the state had adopted a mandatory waiting period and background check for gun purchases, homicide rates dropped relative to [control groups].”

Putting background checks on the “what works” list has a definitive policy impact, Sherman noted. It calls for closing the so-called gun show loophole, and also requiring third-party gun transfers to be subject to background checks.

What Doesn't Work: Gun Buybacks Shot Down

Gun buyback programs, in which the police pay individuals for returned guns, do not reduce or prevent gun violence. These programs, he said, do not direct resources to any of the root causes of gun violence. Supporters of this type of “prevention” program claim that every gun bought back is a potential life saved. However, Sherman pointed out that not all guns are at equal risk of being involved in a crime,

which he said depends on “geographical area, type of gun, recency of manufacture, and prior criminal records of the gun owners.”

To support his criticism of these programs, Sherman pointed to three “moderately strong scientific evaluations” of gun buyback programs (two in St. Louis and one in Seattle) that showed no reductions in gun homicides or assaults. Gun buybacks may have an impact on reducing gun violence, he said, if these programs were “limited to residents of the small percentage of all public housing projects nationwide that suffer gun violence problems. But based on the city-wide program results, that seems unlikely.”

What’s Promising: Several Policy Choices

Sherman noted that there were several policy ideas that held promise, largely because they address known risk factors for gun violence. These include: a ban on handgun sales and possession for all convicted misdemeanants, a ban on high caliber handguns, elements of the Smith & Wesson agreement (stronger trigger-pull pressure, serial number system, etc.), ammunition control for all or some sized bullets, ammunition waiting periods, and national one-gun-a-month laws. These policy alternatives, he emphasized, would have to be subject to rigorous evaluations of their effectiveness in reducing gun violence. This list, he said, is far from exhaustive, but in order to find out if they work they need to be tested.

APPOINTMENTS . . .

May 1, 2000, Number 8

Julie Samuels has been named the Acting Director of the National Institute of Justice, the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) lead research and development agency. Replacing long-time NIJ head Jeremy Travis, who departed for the Urban Institute, Samuels has a long history with the Department of Justice. After graduating from the University of California at Berkeley’s Graduate School of Public Policy, she joined the Office of Policy and Management Analysis (OPMA), within DOJ’s Criminal Division, as a Presidential Management Intern in 1979. Samuels became Director of OPMA in 1986, and — with a couple of intervening details and special projects — served in that position until being named NIJ’s Acting Director.

RESIGNATIONS . . .

Eve Blither, Executive Director of the National Education Research Policy and Priorities Board (NERPPB), has resigned from her post, effective June 1. The NERPPB is charged by Congress to advise the United States on the federal educational research and development effort, and works with the Assistant Secretary of Education for the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) to forge a national consensus with respect to a long-term agenda for educational research, development, and dissemination. Blither oversaw the Board’s development and publication of peer review standards to govern research conducted and supported by OERI. The Board is currently seeking a replacement for Blither. All interested persons should contact NERPPB Chair Kenji Hakuta in writing at 80 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

AND A “NO-GO” FOR THE NIH

Gerald Fischbach, head of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, will likely not be nominated by the Clinton Administration to head the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The administration and officials of the Department of Health and Human Services have apparently decided that the Senate would not be able to confirm him quickly enough to allow for a meaningful tenure. NIH deputy director Ruth Kirschstein will continue as acting director.

HOUSE CJS APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVES FUNDING MEASURE; SLASHES NIJ FUNDING

June 12, 2000, Number 11

By a voice vote late in the evening of June 6, the House Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Appropriations Subcommittee approved its Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 funding measure. The bill, which will next go to the full Appropriations Committee, provided a total of \$34.9 billion for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary, \$2.7 billion less than the President's request and \$2.8 billion less than the FY 2000 level.

The panel provided the Census Bureau \$392.9 million to complete the 2000 Decennial Census — over \$4 billion less than the current year funding. However, funding is always much less the fiscal year after the census is conducted since most of the preparations have already been performed. The amount approved by the Committee reflects the transition from actually collecting the data to reporting and disseminating the data.

The Committee was not as generous with the Department of Justice's research and evaluation platform. The base budget for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) was slashed to \$41.4 million from \$43.4 million in FY 2000. The administration had requested \$49.2 million. This was the second year in a row that the House Subcommittee has cut NIJ's funding. In more bad news for the NIJ and criminal justice researchers, the Committee did not support the administration's proposal for a one percent research and program evaluation set-aside. This would have provided as much as \$40 million for the NIJ to support criminal justice research and to conduct evaluations of crime fighting initiatives at the national, State, and local levels. NIJ, though, will still receive considerable funding from other programs.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) received the same amount that it did in FY 2000: \$25.5 million, much less than the request of \$33.2 million. As it did for the BJS, the Committee level-funded the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at last year's level of \$287 million — \$2 million less than the request of \$289 million.

The Committee also provided \$213.8 million for the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs at the State Department, a slight increase over last year's level of \$204.2 million but less than the \$225 million request.

The full House Appropriations Committee is scheduled to consider the Subcommittee-approved bill in a mark-up session on Tuesday, June 13.

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS APPROVES MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR YOUTH VIOLENCE INITIATIVE

June 12, 2000, Number 11

The massive funding bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (Labor-HHS-Education) has passed both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and awaits floor action. As it did in last year's bill, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved funding for the Youth Violence Prevention Initiative, a collaborative effort of several Federal agencies and the White House.

Last year, the Senate Appropriations Committee provided nearly \$900 million for the initiative. This year, the Committee provided \$1.2 billion which, according to the panel, "will improve research, prevention, education, and treatment strategies to address youth violence."

Noting that youth violence is a public health problem, and that "many familial, psychological, biological, and environmental factors contribute to youths' propensity toward violence," the initiative is a collaborative and coordinated approach to "eliminate the conditions which cultivate violence." The funds, reallocated from existing programs, come largely from the National Institutes of Health, particularly the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), and the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), and the Department of Education.

Given its collaborative approach, the Initiative has several research foci. The Committee calls on individual agencies to support and conduct research on various issues related to youth violence. For instance, the NIMH is called upon to undertake research on child abuse and neglect, both of which, claims the Committee, contribute to youth's violent behaviors. NIMH is also requested to support research to determine the most cost-effective features of proven programs for resource-poor communities. The NIAAA is requested to support research on the link between alcohol abuse and violence as well as research on prevention efforts, while NIDA is requested to undertake similar studies on drug abuse and youth violence. The Committee report accompanying the funding bill also identifies four cross-cutting areas in need of further research, including: 1) community interventions, 2) media and its impact on youth violence, 3) health provider training, and 4) information dissemination.

Education as a Key Component

A running theme in the report language is the importance of education. Therefore, the Committee devotes a lot of attention and resources to research on education and how it can be used to prevent the violent behavior of some youth. The Committee points to sociological and scientific studies which suggest that the "first three years of a child's cognitive development sets the foundation for life-long learning and can determine an individual's emotional capabilities." Citing the importance of parents to a child's cognitive development and educational attainment, the Committee provides funds for the Education Department's parent information and resource centers program. It also provides funds for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. The Committee decided to provide funds for this program based on Justice Department research that shows that 50 percent of all juvenile crime occurs between the hours of 2 pm and 8 pm. The 21st Century Centers provide after-school programs for youths that emphasize safety, crime awareness, and drug prevention. Finally, in the area of education, the Youth Violence

Initiative directs resources to youth literacy programs since “studies show that literacy is one tool to prevent youth violence.”

CONTROLLING VIOLENCE OF AMERICA

June 26, 2000, Number 12

On June 9 COSSA held a congressional briefing, “Controlling Violence in America,” before a standing-room only crowd that included Federal agency officials, congressional staffers, and Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA), member of the House Judiciary Committee. Two noted criminologists discussed handgun violence in America, interpersonal domestic violence, and rampage killings.

Handgun Violence in America

Alfred Blumstein, Carnegie Mellon University Professor, Director of the National Consortium on Violence Research (NCOVR), and COSSA President, examined trends in homicide rates over the last two decades and offered explanations for the sharp increase between the mid 1980s and the early- 1990s. He offered explanations for the decrease experienced since the mid-1990s and provided policy prescriptions that might contribute to continued low rates of homicides in the United States.

Between 1985 and the early 1990s the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data showed a large increase in the Nation’s homicide rate. This period, said Blumstein, was followed by a sharp decrease in the rate after 1995. To explain the trend, Blumstein disaggregated the homicide rate by age-specific murder arrest rates for 18, 20, 22, and 24 year olds and by weaponry (handguns, other guns, and non-guns).

He showed that between 1985 and 1993-94 the rise in the Nation’s homicide rate was driven primarily by juveniles (18 years old) arrested for murder. The homicide arrest rate for this group increased to nearly 60 per 100,000 population in 1993-94 from roughly 23 per 100,000 population in 1985. Over this same period, Blumstein showed that the number of handgun homicides committed by juveniles younger than 18 more than quadrupled to nearly 900 in 1993-94 from roughly 200 in 1985. Blumstein suggested that “handguns had shown up in the hands of young people who didn’t know how to deal with them.” Older people, he said, may have had more handguns during this period, but they knew how to deal with them. The major thrust of this data, said Blumstein, is that young people (18 years old or less) with handguns led the rise in the Nation’s homicide rate.

After 1995 that rate experienced a sharp decline that has continued through subsequent years. Blumstein attributed the decline to policy initiatives designed to take the guns out of the hands of those who could not use them. He pointed to the Brady Bill and increased police aggressiveness in taking guns out of circulation as two examples of policies that contributed to the decline in the homicide rate. Declining drug markets, especially for crack cocaine, said Blumstein, also contributed to this decline. He explained that the Nation’s robust economy was also a factor, because “a legitimate job provides a strong incentive for conformity.”

Interpersonal Domestic Violence

Laura Dugan, Georgia State University Professor and NCOVR researcher, led a discussion on interpersonal domestic violence. Her talk centered around a research project funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) designed to determine which “exposure reduction” policies have been effective in reducing intimate partner homicides.

Like the Nation’s overall homicide rate, the rate of intimate partner homicide has declined over the last two decades, according to Dugan. A recent report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, said Dugan, showed that the intimate partner homicide rate had declined 39 percent between 1976 and 1998. During this same period, she said, the number of resources available to women or persons who had been victimized or abused by their intimate partner had “increased tremendously.”

The decline has not been equal across different victim types. For instance, Dugan explained that the rate for intimate partner homicides for black married males as victims dropped by 87 percent between 1976 and 1996. More women, however, were killed in 1996 by their unmarried partners than in 1976. These differences and other disparities, said Dugan, lead to the question: Is there something that is helping to save the lives of some intimates but not necessarily saving the lives of others?

Dugan suggested that “exposure reduction” policies, including women’s increased participation in the labor force, services for domestic violence victims, Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits, and legal advocacy services, benefitted some groups of individuals more than others. Dugan focused her comments on the impact of AFDC benefits, which was replaced in the 1996 welfare reform bill by the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, and legal advocacy services, which help victims navigate through the legal system to obtain protection from abusive partners.

With respect to AFDC, Dugan noted that in areas with higher AFDC benefits fewer black unmarried males, white unmarried males, and black unmarried females were killed. There was no association, she said, between AFDC benefits and unmarried white females. Legal advocacy services, she said, had differing impacts for white and black women. For instance, white married women experienced a decreased homicide rate as legal advocacy services were strengthened, while rates of intimate partner homicide for black women were unaffected by the strength of these services.

Dugan’s research, which she conducted with Carnegie Mellon University Professor Daniel Nagin and University of Missouri, St. Louis Professor Richard Rosenfeld, will be published soon by the NIJ. Check out NIJ’s web site for the final version.
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij.

Rampage Killings

Fox Butterfield, noted *New York Times* crime reporter, was scheduled to discuss his research on rampage killings. However, due to a medical emergency, Butterfield could not attend the briefing. Instead, Blumstein, after consulting with Butterfield, spoke on this provocative topic.

Butterfield, along with several other *Times* reporters, wrote a series on rampage killers that appeared in the newspaper several months ago. Butterfield and his colleagues compiled information on 100 rampage killers. Blumstein's comments revolved around some of their striking observations.

Rampage killers, according to Blumstein, are those who over a relatively short period of time kill multiple individuals. One striking characteristic of the 100 rampage killers studied by the *Times*, said Blumstein, is that over half suffered from some form of mental illness. Half of the rampage killers documented by the *Times* were treated for mental illness, while the other 50 percent were either mentally ill and not treated or not mentally ill. Under Federal law it is illegal to sell a gun to an individual who has been committed to a mental institution. However, a common thread of recent rampage killings is the use of high-powered weaponry. This suggests, said Blumstein, that information regarding mental illness is not always available to effectuate the denials. Blumstein concluded that some steps should be taken to ensure that guns are not placed in the hands of a high-risk population like the mentally ill.

The rampage killers series is available on the Times web site at: www.nytimes.com. COSSA plans to produce a full edited transcript of the briefing which will be available in August.

SENATE COMMITTEE PASSES CJS FUNDING BILL

July 24, 2000, Number 14

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved by a 28-0 margin the Fiscal Year (FY) 2001 funding bill for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies (CJS). The Senate Committee, however, has not yet reported the bill so the details for agency funding levels are unclear. Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-MS) has publicly noted his desire to pass the FY 2001 CJS bill before Congress convenes for its August recess. In order to do that, the Senate Appropriations Committee will have to act during the week of July 24.

According to Office of Justice Programs' officials, the bill would provide the **Justice Assistance Account**, which contains the base budgets for the **National Institute of Justice (NIJ)** and the **Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)**, \$426 million, which is \$119 million more than the administration's request. The Committee provided NIJ a \$2.6 million increase to \$46 million from its FY 2000 base level of \$43.4 million. This is equal to NIJ's funding level in FY 1999. The House-passed version of the funding measure cut NIJ's base to \$42.4 million. In addition to its base funding, NIJ will receive transfers of funds from Crime Act offices and block grant programs for research and evaluation. These details, however, are not yet known. Like the House, the Senate does not provide the one-percent research and program evaluation set-aside for the NIJ (See *UPDATE*, March 6, Number 4).

For the BJS, the Committee provided a \$1.8 million increase to \$27.3 million from its FY 2000 level of \$25.5 million.

The committee provided the **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)** \$279.7 million, less than the \$289 million request.

The **Bureau of the Census** received \$693.6 million, nearly \$30 million more than the House approved, but still short of the \$719 million request.

For the **Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs** at the State Department, the Committee provided \$225 million, equal to the administration's request. However, this amount includes \$1.8 million for the North/South Center, previously outside this account and therefore not included in this total.

MIXED RESULTS FOR CLINTON'S COPS PROGRAM

October 9, 2000, Number 18

An Urban Institute report sponsored by the National Institute of Justice evaluates the first four years of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program. Requested by the Clinton administration and launched by Congress in 1994, the six-year, \$9 billion program was designed to put more officers on the streets, foster interaction between police and communities, encourage innovation in police methods, and develop new technologies to assist officers in reducing crime.

“. . . The COPS program had broad national impact on levels and styles of policing,” according to Jeffrey Roth, director of the Urban Institute's Crime Control Policy Studies. Grants distributed to local police departments under the program through May, 1999 will have contributed to the funding of between 62,700 and 83,900 additional full-time police officers by 2003. “To those who considered the level of policing in 1994 inadequate, this constitutes success, even though it falls well short of the target of 100,000 new cops on the beat.”

The researchers also found that the program's resources went where they were most needed. Thirty-one percent of all COPS funds awarded through 1997 went to COPS grantees with the highest one percent of murder counts. Half of all awards went to grantees with the highest ten percent of murder counts.

In the effort to advance locally-defined versions of community policing, the COPS program has helped to fuel the observed acceleration of such movements, according to the report. Community policing entails establishing partnerships between police and the community, programs for proactive crime prevention, and innovation in police management. The report laments the finding that levels of participation in community policing varied substantially.

The gains from the new technology funding have been limited, according to the report. These funds helped police departments to deploy mobile computers and computer-aided dispatch and to employ computer systems to assist with management and administration. Implementation, though, has been slow in many departments and productivity gains have been lower than expected. Departments with the new technology, however, have benefitted from more accurate and timely incident reports, improved safety of officers, faster recovery of stolen vehicles, and expanded sharing of information with the community and other law enforcement agencies.

Of course, the big question is, has the COPS program reduced crime? The recent study was not designed to answer this question, if indeed this program's effect on crime rates can be isolated.

However, the study suggests that through mid-1998, the COPS program had done reasonably well in meeting the four main goals described above. There is now ample opportunity to investigate which specific tactics reduce crime most reliably at the local scale, and what aspects of their implementation are most effective.

For further information, visit the Urban Institute's webpage on criminal justice publications (www.urban.org/news/focus/focus_crime.html) and the National Institute of Justice homepage at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij.

APPROPRIATIONS SPUTTER TOWARD COMPLETION

October 23, 2000, Number 19

Three weeks into Fiscal Year 2001 and eighteen days before the election, President Clinton and the Republican-controlled Congress continue their annual end-of-session battle over spending priorities. With a fourth Continuing Resolution (CR) in place until October 23 to keep the government open, weeks of non-stop negotiations have brought some progress. Ten of the thirteen bills are now completed, including VA-HUD, which includes funding for the National Science Foundation, and the Agriculture and Rural Development spending bill (see below).

Three bills remain undone. The huge Labor- Health and Human Services-Education appropriation remains stalled over the President's education priorities. The Republicans want to give the states and local school districts flexibility over how to spend federal funds; the President wants them targeted to reducing class size, hiring more teachers and modernizing school buildings. The \$2.7 billion increase for the National Institutes of Health is a non-controversial provision of this bill.

The Commerce-State-Justice bill, which includes funding for the Census Bureau, the National Institute of Justice, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and the State Department's educational and cultural exchange programs, including Fulbright, is mired over immigration measures and an attempt to attach land conservation programs to the legislation. The Foreign Operations appropriation is stuck over the annual battle to bar funding to international organizations that advocate abortion rights.

As both sides seek an end to the gridlock and a chance to close out the 106th Congress, the hope is that adjournment can occur without resort to a fifth CR. Don't bet on it.

PRISONER REENTRY GAINS ATTENTION OF RESEARCHERS, GOVERNMENT

October 23, 2000, Number 19

Nearly 600,000 inmates are to be released from prison and returned to communities in the year 2000. This sounds like a large figure, and it is — more prisoners are returning to communities now than at any point in U.S. history. Prisoner reentry was the subject of a roundtable that attracted many of the top criminal justice researchers and professionals to Washington, D.C. on October 12th and 13th.

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A Timely Topic

Sponsored by the Urban Institute, the Roundtable provided a forum for sharing the latest research and observations on prisoner reentry. With unprecedented numbers of inmates leaving prison and returning to communities, the quality (or lack thereof) of strategies for successful reentry can have far-reaching implications.

Participants voiced concern over the current situation. Not only is the number of releasees high, but their needs appear more serious than in the past and there are few treatment and work programs to assist in their transition, according to Joan Petersilia, Professor of Criminology, Law, and Society at the University of California, Irvine. Furthermore, the rise in mandatory sentencing laws means that fewer inmates are being screened for risk prior to leaving prison, compromising the ability to retain inmates that appear ill-prepared for release.

The recent trend towards mandatory sentencing is a reaction to the previous discretionary system in which offenders' socioeconomic characteristics often influenced their chances of being granted parole. However, the current system (in place in 14 states) of determinate sentencing and automatic release throws "the baby out with the bathwater," according to Sam Myers of The University of Minnesota. Many researchers believe some degree of discretion in the system is important.

Those that are released, Petersilia continued, have limited access to rehabilitation programs that can make their transition to the outside community more successful and reduce their chances of being rearrested. Currently, fully two-thirds of parolees are rearrested within three years, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Increased funding, Petersilia noted, often goes to prison-building programs and not to the rehabilitation programs that might reduce future inmate populations.

The problem of prisoner reentry received top-level attention in President Clinton's FY 2001 budget, which included \$145 million to develop and implement reentry programs.

The Offender's Experience

The Roundtable's keynote speech was presented by *New York Times* correspondent Fox Butterfield, who described his conversations with offenders who had been through California's prison system. Butterfield's speech brought to life some of the issues that researchers had discussed earlier in the day.

For instance, the experiences of Butterfield's subjects confirmed and humanized the researchers' observations of the inadequacy of post-release services. His subjects had difficulty adapting to life outside of prison. They not only found assistance hard to come by, but felt that the system was designed to return them to prison rather than facilitate their transition. The frustration of the offenders interviewed by Butterfield led many of them to remark that the system set them up to fail. One offender joked that parole officers get a bounty for each parolee returned to jail.

Butterfield found that parolees did return to jail frequently. The result was that offenders were often incarcerated for much longer than their sentence demanded. Technical violations of parole sent them back to prison multiple times, extending their sentences indefinitely. Butterfield described this as

incarceration without trial. If the point is to get criminals off the street, he remarked, there are better ways.

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Towards Progress in Prisoner Reentry

Despite the problems in the criminal justice system described by some of the Roundtable participants, most had ideas for future research and for more effective programs to facilitate the ex-offender's successful reentry into society.

One broad goal is to move towards a more holistic or systems-view approach to criminal justice and prisoner reentry. Currently, observed Petersilia, the offender is the unit of analysis. The ties between the offender and other parts of society and the criminal justice system are often overlooked.

Another broad goal emphasized at the Roundtable is to learn more about the successes — those inmates who made the transition to society successfully and those programs that research has shown to reduce recidivism. We know much about the failures, observed Martin Horn, Commissioner of Corrections for the State of Pennsylvania, but little about the successes. Horn has found that sobriety, education and work are three important aspects of successful reentry.

Other recommendations included increasing post-release services, focusing on the social networks that reduce crime, linking state-level administrative data, creating partnerships with the community and private organizations and thinking at smaller geographic scales.

One of the main themes of the Reentry Roundtable appeared to be that more research needs to be conducted on the subject. Despite the need for more study, there is much that the Roundtable participants and others in the criminal justice community do know about reentry, and there is considerable opportunity to apply this knowledge to public policy to improve the lives of ex-offenders and the residents of the communities to which they return.

CONGRESS APPROVES FUNDING FOR CJS; BILL AWAITS POSSIBLE VETO

November 6, 2000, Number 20

On October 25, Congress approved FY 2001 funding for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, and related agencies. The bill, which includes funding for the Census Bureau and the National Institute of Justice, passed by small margins in both houses.

The President has indicated he will veto the bill as the Republicans' immigration proposal does not meet his approval. The major point of contention concerns GOP disapproval of President Clinton's amnesty proposal for illegal aliens. Despite the likely veto, it is unlikely that the final bill will contain major changes in funding levels given that the disagreement concerns authorizing language.

Census Bureau Shifts Gears

The bill that cleared Congress provided \$733.6 million for the Census Bureau. This huge reduction from \$4.759 billion last year reflects the transition of Census 2000 from data collection to analysis and data dissemination.

Within the Census Bureau, funding for the American Community Survey (ACS) increased to \$21.6 million from \$20 million in FY 2000. The yearly survey, which is designed to provide timely economic, social, and housing data, is expected to replace the long form of the decennial census by 2010. The Bureau plans to implement the ACS in every U.S. county beginning in 2003 (see *Update*, August 7, 2000). Funding for the Bureau of Economic Analysis increased from \$43.8 million to \$48 million.

National Institute of Justice Sees Increase

Although the House and Senate proposed about \$41.5 million and \$46 million, respectively, for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the conference agreement provides the Institute with \$70 million. This is a large increase over the \$43.4 million allocated last year. The difference includes \$24.5 million for three new earmarks (one of which is an \$8 million appropriation for smart gun technology research and development) and \$5.8 million for three continuation earmarks.

In addition to the \$70 million appropriation, the agreement provides \$42.7 million to other sources to be administered by NIJ. This includes \$20 million (as was provided in previous years) from the Local Law Enforcement Block Grant to assist local units to select, develop, and purchase new law enforcement technologies; \$17.5 million from technology funding in the Community Oriented Policing Services account for safety technologies for safe schools (\$2.5 million more than last year); and \$5.2 million for NIJ research and evaluation on the causes and impact of domestic violence under the Violence Against Women Grants program (the same amount that was allocated last year).

The agreement provides the Bureau of Justice Statistics \$28.8 million, \$1.5 million more than the Senate amount, \$3.3 million more than the House amount, and \$3.3 million more than last year. This figure includes \$2 million to collect tribal criminal justice statistics and \$725,000 for Computer Crime and Cyber-Fraud statistics.

Juvenile Justice programs will receive \$298.6 million. This includes \$279.1 million for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention programs, \$11 million “to develop, demonstrate and test programs to increase the perception among children and youth that drug use is risky, harmful, or unattractive,” and \$8.5 million for various programs authorized under the Victims of Child Abuse Act.

Education Programs Receive Increase

The Education and Cultural Exchange Programs under the Department of State were allocated \$231.6 million, a substantial increase of \$26.6 million over FY 2000. Of this amount, the Fulbright Program will receive \$114 million. Other programs include Humphrey Fellowships, the Muskie Fellowship Program, the Citizen Exchange Program, the International Visitors Program, and more.

RESEARCHERS DISCUSS THE DECLINE IN CRIME, LOOK TO FUTURE

November 6, 2000, Number 20

A forum entitled, *The Decline in Crime: Why and What Next?*, brought some of the top criminal justice researchers to the National Press Club on October 26 to discuss the recent decline in crime and to identify successful policies for continuing the downward trend.

Al Blumstein¹, one of the editors of *The Crime Drop in America* and President of COSSA, offered an overview of recent crime trends. The mid- to late 1980s saw rising crime rates. Much of the increasing crime involved the factors of drugs, guns, and youth. Blumstein explained that the juvenile arrest rate of non-whites shot up in the mid-1980s partly because they filled the void left by adult drug dealers who were being locked up in increasing numbers. Guns accompanied the drug activity, he continued, and the availability of guns to resolve drug-related disputes led to homicides.

Crime rates began to decline in the early 1990s. Much of the decline in weapons arrests of young people, Blumstein said, can be attributed to the efforts of local police, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF), and community groups. But the extent to which these and other efforts contributed to the decline is not easy to determine. Many of the other panelists addressed this question of causality since the continuation of the decline of crime rates may depend on knowing what caused crime to drop in the first place.

Besides the availability of firearms, the effect of incarceration on crime is another hot topic in crime research. The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world after Russia, Blumstein said, and the 1980s and '90s saw large increases in the number of inmates in U.S. prisons. However, concluding that this increased incarceration caused the decline in crime is too simplistic, he explained. With each new inmate we are digging deeper into the pool of offenders, he said, and the benefits are decreasing.

Effects of Prisons and Policing

Looking at the impact of prisons, Richard Rosenfeld of the University of Missouri at St. Louis (and participant in COSSA's 1997 Congressional Seminar on juvenile crime) noted that while there is some benefit in expanding incarceration, prisons are expensive and their construction diverts resources from longer-term crime reduction strategies. William Spelman of the University of Texas at Austin determined that each new prison bed is one-third as effective as it was in the early 1970s. He concluded that there is no good reason to go further with prison expansion.

Among other initiatives in crime reduction, researchers have considered the effect of policing. Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine the effect of different policing policies on violent crime rates, according to John Eck of the University of Cincinnati. The effect of "community policing," for example, is difficult to assess because it is a vague concept and can refer to very different strategies.

Crime and the Strong Economy

¹Blumstein also spoke at a congressional briefing organized by COSSA in June of this year, entitled, *Controlling Violence in America*. Transcripts are available from COSSA.

Politicians may take credit for the booming economy, but can the economy take credit for the decline in crime rates? Although research suggests there is no relationship between the unemployment rate and the crime rate, Jeffrey Grogger of the University of California at Los Angeles noted a relationship between wages and economically-motivated crime. Wages for low-skilled 16 to 24 year-old males dropped between 1979 and 1993, and have risen since then as crime has dropped. Some at the forum expressed concern over what may happen when the economy recedes.

Other factors mentioned that may be related to crime levels include crime and anti-drug coalitions, immigration, the influx of gangs, the positive impact of faith-based community groups, and culture.

Crime Policy Into the Future

Blumstein expressed some concerns about the implications of present policies on future crime. He noted that if current incarceration trends continue, for example, more people will soon be coming out of prison than going in. Incarceration, he lamented, is seen as the dominant solution regardless of its effectiveness. Politicians and the press want simple solutions, he concluded, but the decline in crime came from the combination of many factors and initiatives. Blumstein expressed the hope that in the future, the wisdom and rationality of the forum's panelists will be a part of the public debate.

The event was sponsored by the Urban Institute's newly-formed Justice Policy Center and moderated by former NIJ Director Jeremy Travis. The Center "carries out nonpartisan research to inform the national dialogue on crime, justice, and community safety."