

Testimony of Howard Silver, Executive Director, Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) to the House Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee, House Appropriations Committee. Honorable Alan Mollohan, Chairman. April 24, 2007.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

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

I thank you for the Subcommittee's efforts regarding the successful conclusion to the FY 2007 appropriations process. The Federal government supports social and behavioral science research across a wide variety of agencies. Today, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed FY 2008 budgets for five of them: **the National Science Foundation (NSF), for which we recommend \$6.43 billion; the U.S. Census Bureau, for which we request \$1.23 billion; the Bureau of Economic Analysis, for which we support the proposed budget of \$81.4 million; the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), for which we seek \$55 million in program funds, and Bureau of Justice Statistics (NIJ), for which we urge \$55 million in program funds.** COSSA is well aware that each year you confront difficult choices among competing agencies under the Subcommittee's jurisdiction. We hope that you will give these agencies' needs generous consideration.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)

COSSA strongly recommends that NSF receive the President's request of \$6.43 billion in FY 2008. We also strongly support the Research and Related Activities request of \$5.132 billion.

Science remains a powerful engine that has helped the nation achieve economic success and an improved quality of life. As competition from around the globe increases, investment in science remains a key to responding to these challenges. However, we are disturbed by assertions that suggest only certain sciences and engineering disciplines are important in meeting these challenges. As AAAS CEO Alan Leshner told the Subcommittee in March, "The need for strong support across ALL scientific fields comes from both the increasing interdependence of engineering, physical, biological, behavioral and social sciences, and from the innovation of ALL these fields to innovation and growth of the economy, as well as to the improvement of the health and quality of all Americans" (my emphasis). Former NSF director Neal Lane, a physicist, testified similarly to the House Science Committee in March noting the importance of providing NSF the flexibility to support all the disciplines and pointing out the important contributions of the social, behavioral and economic sciences (SBE) to competitiveness.

In the last few years, NSF has had an enormous increase in proposals. The chances of a scientist's proposal gaining an award have decreased significantly as NSF's budget has not kept up with this increased demand. A lot of excellent science has been unfunded. As we all now understand, without new innovations and scientific findings, economic growth stalls. NSF, one of the government's best run agencies, deserves a significant influx of new funds.

The Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE)

If as Tom Friedman asserts "The World is Flat," and individuals' choices are expanding about where to work and where to study, then let me suggest that understanding individual behavior should be a major scientific endeavor. This is why the SBE sciences are increasingly important.

Advances in methodologies, computing power, and interdisciplinary cooperation are helping SBE scientists in ways similar to physical and natural scientists. Sustained support for the new modes of research, such as collaborations, economic and political laboratories, merged databases, functional MRIs, and virtual centers is transforming SBE research.

For the SBE Directorate, the Administration's budget proposes \$222 million for FY 2008. This is a small increase of a little over eight million dollars over FY 2007. NSF is extremely important for federal support for basic research in the SBE sciences. For some fields in these sciences, NSF is the only source of federal support for basic research and infrastructure development.

In the coming months, the National Science and Technology Council of OSTP will release a report on Grand Challenges for the SBE disciplines. NSF plays a key role in supporting research that investigates how behavior is influenced by the brain, how the world really works by using enhanced cyberinfrastructure to get a handle on the complexity of human and societal interactions, and how to take charge of the future by examining policy questions. These studies focus on managing conflict and cooperation, responding to disasters and fostering resiliency, encouraging a learning society, promoting a healthy society, and sustaining an innovative society.

For FY 2008, SBE maintains its focus on the initiative on the Science of Science and Innovation Policy, which provides opportunities to investigate how national research and development systems work, how to measure and nurture innovation, and how to direct the nation's investments. The first major competition has been announced and more will follow.

The Foundation-wide, SBE-managed, priority called Human and Social Dynamics (HSD) also continues. This priority area emerged from discussions and workshops within the SBE community, but includes participation from most of the other NSF directorates. HSD has focused on supporting projects that foster breakthroughs in understanding the dynamics of human action and development, as well as knowledge about organizational, cultural, and societal adaptation and change. It requires multidisciplinary research teams and comprehensive, interdisciplinary approaches across the sciences.

SBE also maintains support for major long-term data bases such as the Panel Study on Income Dynamics, the General Social Survey, and the American National Election Studies. These three extraordinary sets of time-series data paint a portrait of American's economic, social, and political attitudes and behavior over five decades. All three are adding new modules and questions that enhance their ability to examine scientific hypotheses and utilize new experimental methodologies.

SBE science is intellectually exciting as it examines the ever more complex and important human dimensions of issues and generates new knowledge and insights to help us understand human and societal behavior. The research portfolio is enormously varied and focused on the major problems of our time from language learning to climate change with many things in between. The SBE directorate deserves continued and, if possible, enhanced support.

Education and Human Resources

COSSA is delighted that Cora Marrett, the first Assistant Director for SBE, has returned to NSF to take up the challenge of its Education and Human Resources Directorate (EHR). COSSA also believes that broadening participation in science, across ALL the sciences, is a worthy endeavor. We support NSF's programs to ensure that all students get a chance to become scientists, including social, behavioral, and economic scientists.

With regard to NSF STEM education programs, we strongly support the proposed budget increases for NSF's Graduate Education programs. These have been extremely important for budding scientists across all the disciplines. We also believe in programs that will enhance the quality of teaching in our K-12 system, not only for math and science, but for all subjects. The NAEP tests have demonstrated that American students need help across-the-board.

COSSA strongly advocates funding for EHR research that evaluates the effectiveness of its programs and enhances their ability to get the job done right. We also believe that in assessing the STEM education situation and promulgating new programs, it should not be done in isolation from social, economic, and cultural factors that influence our education system and its students. The SBE sciences are in the forefront of providing research and evidence for improving how our children learn and survive in the modern, complex societies in which we live. Fundamental research by developmental psychologists, cognitive scientists, linguists, sociologists, and economists, has revealed a wealth of data about how children think and learn and how these processes are mediated by family demographics, community politics, and the structure of the schools. NSF's Science of Learning Centers program is an important contributor to this knowledge and COSSA supports the continued funding of these Centers.

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

COSSA is a member of the 2010 Census Advisory Committee and as we move toward that redesigned short-form Census providing the large increase proposed for the Bureau's FY

2008 budget becomes imperative if we are to get the count right. The increased funding for 2010 must also be protected from raids on it for funding other programs as has happened recently.

The Bureau has sent Congress the areas of its questions, both for the 2010 count and the ever-more important American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS became fully operational in 2005 and must continue to receive its full funding so that data formerly collected on the now defunct long form will be available in a timely manner so that states and local communities can plan better. In addition, the Bureau is ensuring that its Master Address Files are correct and is introducing hand-held technology that will make capturing the count easier.

We also support the increases proposed for the other surveys within the Bureau such as the Economic Census and the Census of Governments. We look forward to the Bureau's re-engineering of its income and poverty data as it moves to replace the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) with what it calls the Dynamics of Well-Being. COSSA remains concerned with the leadership situation at the Bureau and hopes the Administration finds a well-qualified new director soon.

In addition, COSSA supports the increase proposed for the Bureau of Economic Analysis that includes an initiative to measure investment in R&D and other knowledge based activities and in order to incorporate these measurements into the nation's GDP.

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

The research and statistics bureaus of the Department of Justice are often neglected domains of the department. In recent years, NIJ and BJS have seen their budgets stagnate and in some years go down. With the current diverse pattern of crime – significant increases in some areas, continued declines in others – it seems imperative that enhanced support for research and data collection is necessary to determine what is going on. Congress and the Administration proclaim support for evidence-based solutions to problems. These require accurate, relevant, and timely information on which decisions can be made.

At a panel of the recent AAAS meeting, criminologists explored the crime drop and the crime rise. There are many possible explanations and the sorting out process continues. But it is clear that strategies that worked in some places, "hot spots," community policing, crime mapping, are not working in others. NIJ needs more resources to support further explorations of this differentiation that now marks criminal activity in different locations.

NIJ also supports a major R&D conference each year that examines major issues facing the criminal justice community. This year's agenda reflects those issues. Aside from the crime ups and downs, the conference will look at human trafficking, batterer intervention, safeguarding children, safeguarding correctional institutions, the age-old connections between drugs and crime, helping first responders, and forensic tools. We ask for increased

support for NIJ to enhance its support for research and technology efforts in all of these areas.

BJS maintains critical statistical programs that include data on correctional populations and facilities; courts and sentencing, including Federal and state case processing; prosecutions; civil justice; criminal history records, including background checks under the Brady Act; and sex offender registries. BJS also collects data on emerging topics such as cybercrime and deaths in custody, and is responsible for implementing the Prison Rape Elimination Act, which mandates collecting data on rape and sexual assault on a facility level nationwide.

The cost of crime to victims and to society is far out of proportion to the budget for the collection and analysis of data that are essential to understanding how to effect change. Increases for inflation in BJS' base budget have not compensated for the increased costs of collecting data and responding to the demands of policy makers and the criminal justice community. Inadequate funding for the Criminal Justice Statistics program has led to smaller sample sizes, resulting in reduced precision of estimates; less frequent reporting of findings; termination of some statistical programs; and dropping or delaying new initiatives on topics of national interest such as white collar crime, immigration-related crime, environmental crime, and international crime.

Almost 60 percent of BJS' core budget funds the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which measures both reported and unreported crimes, and is viewed as the most accurate national estimate of crime victimization. Further, it is the only national data collection mechanism that is flexible enough to collect information about new crimes and crimes for which no other national data are available, e.g., crimes against people with disabilities, identify theft, stalking, and school crime. A National Academy of Sciences panel is currently reviewing the NCVS and will make recommendations by the end of the year regarding improvements, such as making the data more useful at the state level. However, it is abundantly clear that the quality of the NCVS cannot be maintained at the current funding level, and sufficient funds to insure accurate data on crime victimization are a critical need.

Through the State Justice Statistics program, BJS provides support to Statistical Analysis Centers in 53 states and territories. This program, which fulfills part of BJS' mandate to provide assistance to state statistical efforts, has been level funded for approximately 15 years. In 2006, a little over \$2.2 million funded programs in 42 states.

Data collected by BJS are critical to decision-making at all levels of government. They should undergird Federal legislative initiatives pertaining to crime control and prevention, corrections policy, and victims' needs; play a role in programmatic decisions in every component of the justice system; and serve as models for, and be useful to, state statistical agencies. BJS does an outstanding job disseminating research results to government officials and policy makers as well as the law enforcement communities at the Federal, state, and local levels. COSSA strongly supports an increase in funding to BJS.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our views.

Consortium of Social Science Associations

GOVERNING MEMBERS

American Association for Public Opinion Research
American Economic Association
American Educational Research Association
American Historical Association
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association
American Society of Criminology
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association

Association of American Geographers
Association of American Law Schools
Law and Society Association
Linguistic Society of America
Midwest Political Science Association
National Communication Association
Rural Sociological Society
Society for Research in Child Development

MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS

American Agricultural Economics Association
American Association for Agricultural Education
Association for Asian Studies
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management
Association of Research Libraries
Council on Social Work Education
Eastern Sociological Society
International Communication Association
Justice Research and Statistics Association
Midwest Sociological Society
National Association of Social Workers
National Council on Family Relations

North American Regional Science Council
North Central Sociological Association
Population Association of America
Social Science History Association
Society for Research on Adolescence
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues
Society for the Scientific Study of Religion
Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality
Sociologists for Women in Society
Southern Political Science Association
Southern Sociological Society
Southwestern Social Science Association

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Arizona State University
Brown University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, San Diego
University of California, Santa Barbara
Carnegie-Mellon University
University of Chicago
Clark University
Columbia University
Cornell University
Duke University
George Mason University
George Washington University
University of Georgia
Harvard University
Howard University
University of Illinois
Indiana University
University of Iowa
Iowa State University
Johns Hopkins University
John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY
Kansas State University
University of Kentucky
University of Maryland
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse

University of Michigan
Michigan State University
University of Minnesota
New York University
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
North Carolina State University
Northwestern University
Ohio State University
University of Oklahoma
University of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania State University
Princeton University
Purdue University
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
University of South Carolina
Stanford University
University of Tennessee
State University of New York, Stony Brook
University of Texas, Austin
Texas A & M University
Tulane University
Vanderbilt University
University of Virginia
University of Washington
Washington University in St. Louis
West Virginia University
University of Wisconsin, Madison
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
Yale University

CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

American Academy of Political and Social Sciences
American Council of Learned Societies
American Institutes for Research
Brookings Institution
Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences
Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research
Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan

Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research
Institute for Women's Policy Research
National Bureau of Economic Research
National Opinion Research Center
Population Reference Bureau
Social Science Research Council

BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT FOR DR. HOWARD J. SILVER

Dr. Silver serves as the Executive Director of the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) in Washington, DC, a position he has held since 1988. The Consortium, supported by over 110 professional associations, scientific societies, universities and research institutes, promotes attention to and federal funding for the social, behavioral, and economic sciences and serves as a bridge between the research community and the Washington policy making community. Dr. Silver previously served COSSA as its Associate Director for Government Relations from 1983-88.

Prior to joining COSSA, Dr. Silver was a consultant for legislative and political research, a political campaign manager, and a legislative analyst in the U.S. Department of Education. He has taught political science and public policy at a number of colleges and universities. Dr. Silver came to Washington in 1980 as an Institute for Educational Leadership Policy Fellow.

Dr. Silver has testified before Congress, spoken at many professional meetings on federal funding of science, and written extensively on executive-legislative relations, the federal budget process, and science policy as it affects the social and behavioral sciences. In 2001, to celebrate the Consortium's 20th Anniversary, he co-wrote and edited, *Fostering Human Progress: Social and Behavioral Research Contributions to Public Policy*. He recently published "Science and Politics: The Uneasy Relationship" in *Open Spaces* magazine (Vol. 8 Number 1).

Elected by his science policy colleagues, Dr. Silver served from 1994-2000 as the Chairman of the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF), an ad-hoc advocacy group with membership from scientific and engineering societies, higher education associations, and industrial groups. A tribute to his leadership of CNSF appeared in the November 1, 2000 issue of the *Congressional Record*. In 1998, he was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

He is a co-founder of the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Systems. In 2006 he became the President of the National Capital Area Political Science Association, after serving on its council. He was on the planning committee for the 2004 Gordon Research Conference on Science and Technology Policy. From 1998-2000 he served on the Council of the American Political Science Association (APSA). Dr. Silver received his Ph.D. in Political Science from The Ohio State University in 1975. A native of New York City, he obtained his B.A. from the City College of the City University of New York in 1969.