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# COSSA Washington Update

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## FY 2010 APPROPRIATIONS MOVING THROUGH CONGRESS

While congressional authorization committees take up the major legislative changes sought by the Obama Administration in health care, climate change and energy, the appropriators who make the annual spending decisions for the agencies and programs of the federal government have begun their yearly march. With the leaders of the process, Rep. David Obey (D-WI) and Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HA) vowing to do their best to finish all 12 bills before the 2010 fiscal year begins on October 1, 2009, the push is on. The House of Representatives, which hopes to have all 12 done by the end of July, has moved four through the floor and an additional three through the Appropriations Committee. The Senate, which usually trails the House and has become a significant impediment in recent years to completing the process on time, has completed action on four bills at the Appropriations Committee level.

### House Passes CJS, Senate Panel Makes Recommendations

For COSSA and the social and behavioral sciences, the most important, along with the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education bill, of the twelve spending bills is the one for Commerce, Justice, and Science (CJS). It includes five key agencies important to social and behavioral scientists - the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)

On June 18, after House Republicans did their best to delay passage (by forcing numerous roll call votes), the CJS bill emerged from the House by a vote of 259-157. On June 25, the Senate Appropriations Committee made its recommendations and sent the bill to the Senate floor, where it is expected to receive consideration after Congress returns from its Independence Day recess on July 7<sup>th</sup>.

The House provided \$6.937 billion for NSF in FY 2010. This was \$68.5 million below the President's request. In the report accompanying the CJS bill, the Appropriations Committee expressed concern that given NSF's receipt of slightly over \$3 billion in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the Administration's projected out-year requests would not allow sufficient funding to sustain the scientific workforce enhanced by these ARRA funds. The Senate Appropriations Committee recommended \$6.917 billion for NSF in FY 2010.

For the Research and Related Activities Account, which funds all the research directorates and certain other offices like Polar Programs and Integrated Activities, the House allocated \$5.642 billion, \$459 million above the enacted FY 2009 number (not including ARRA funds), but \$23.1 million below the President's request. The comparable number from the Senate Appropriations panel is \$5.618 billion. The House and the Senate do not, as they once did, provide funding for the individual directorates, like the one for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE), but leave those decisions to NSF with Appropriations Committee review. In its recommendations, the House report noted full funding for requested climate change initiatives and agreement with the Administration's goal of tripling graduate research fellows. However, it eliminated funding for the Major Research Instrumentation program in FY 2010, noting that there were two competitions for \$400 million in FY 2009, one with regular funding and one with ARRA funding.

For the Education and Human Resources (EHR) directorate, the House appropriated \$862.9 million, an increase of \$17.6 million over the FY 2009 enacted level and \$5.1 million above the President's request. The Senate Appropriations Committee allocated \$857.8 billion. The House appropriators designated specific funding in certain areas of EHR. These included a \$20 million increase above the request for discovery research to enhance advancement of inquiry-based instruction in K-12 Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics teaching, with at least half the funding focused on grades K-6. This may be done, the House suggested, through the development, implementation, and study of resources, models, and technologies for use by students, teachers, and policymakers. In addition, there is a \$5 million increase above the request for the Research and Evaluation on Education in Science and Engineering (REESE) program to enhance support for empirical research on inquiry-based instruction. The Senate Committee report noted the importance of continued support for Professional Master's of Science Degree programs, which received initial funding in the ARRA.

### Full Funding for Decennial, But Still No Director

The House appropriated \$7.735 billion for the U.S. Census Bureau in FY 2010. This is the requested amount to help fund the 2010 decennial census, the American Community Survey and all the other data collection, analyses, and dissemination conducted by the Bureau. At the moment, however, the Bureau continues to lack a confirmed director as Robert Groves' nomination remains in limbo (see story below).

The Senate Appropriations panel provided \$50 million less than the full requested funding. The reduction is due to the panel's concern with the Bureau's plan to reimburse its temporary workers' driving expenses at a rate higher than the federal allowance.

Both the House and the Senate panel fully fund the Salaries and Expenses account at \$259 million, a \$25.4 million increase over FY 2009 enacted. This funding includes \$50.3 million for the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). The Senate committee report specifically mentions the \$11.7 million "to improve measurement of the service sector," now "accounting for 55 percent of all economic activity."

For Periodic Censuses and Programs, the House provided \$7.4 billion, which is the same as the request and includes the massive increase that always accompanies the decennial year budget. As noted, the Senate committee's number is \$50 million less. During debate on the floor, the House accepted an amendment by Rep. Dan Burton (R-IN) that prohibits the move of the Census Bureau into any part of the White House. A number of other amendments which sought to raid the Bureau's huge increase for other programs in the bill were either defeated or did not make it to a floor vote.

In discussing the plans for the decennial count, the House committee report notes the importance of the paid media campaign, citing the criticism of a group who reviewed early versions of the proposed ads. The report also stresses the need for hiring paid staff that reflects the diversity of the population, which is also echoed by the Senate committee report, partnerships with groups and state and local governments, enhanced language assistance programs beyond Spanish, the availability of data on small population groups, and the importance of fully funding the Census in the Schools program.

The Economic and Statistics Administration budget includes funding for the BEA as well as a separate policy analysis activity. The Administration had asked for a significant increase, over \$14 million, to enhance BEA's capabilities. The House provided less than half the increase funding ESA at \$97.3 million. The Senate committee was a little more generous, appropriating \$100.6 million. The House increase would provide: \$1.5 million to develop new estimation models for financial services statistics in order to more accurately reflect the critical changes that are occurring in the financial sector of the U.S. economy; and \$2 million to improve, accelerate, and expand county-level economic statistics. The additional funds in the Senate bill would also allow BEA to rebuild its statistics on foreign direct investment.

## House More Generous to Justice Research and Statistics

After the release of the National Academies' report calling for a redesign and reinvigoration of BJS' National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), the Administration proposed a FY 2010 budget of \$60 million for the agency. The increase of \$15 million from FY 2009 enacted would go for NCVS improvements. The House accepted the Administration's full request for BJS and the committee report noted that "since the 1970s [NCVS] has been a critical tool for understanding the costs and context of crime victimization in the United States." The Senate committee provided the \$15 million for the NCVS redesign and \$20 million (rather than the requested \$26 million to conduct and analyze the NCVS). It then provided \$5 million for the rest of BJS' activities for a total FY 2010 appropriation of \$40 million.

For NIJ, the House and Senate committee both allocated the President's request of \$48 million. NIJ also received \$2 million from the Office of Violence Against Women funding, and \$5 million from the Byrne Justice Assistance Grants. The Senate, as it has in the past, broke down NIJ's \$48 million, including \$3 million for Counterterrorism Research and Development, and the rest for the technology side of NIJ. Both the House and the Senate accepted the Department's proposal to set-aside one percent of programs within the Office of Justice Programs for research and statistical purposes.

The CJS bill also includes funding for economic and social science research in the National Marine and Fisheries Service. There is \$10.7 million in the House bill, an increase of \$3.4 million to address significant economic and social science research data gaps in major Federal fisheries that are crucial to developing support tools to conduct mandated cost-benefit analyses of regulatory options. The Senate Committee bill has similar funding for this activity.

## FY 2010 Homeland Security Funding Passes House, Emerges from Senate Committee

On June 24<sup>th</sup>, after a less contentious floor debate than occurred on the CJS bill, the House passed the FY 2010 Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Appropriations bill by a vote of 389-37. On June 18, the Senate Appropriations Committee reported its bill to the Senate floor, where it should receive consideration early in July.

The House increased funding for the **Human Factors/Behavioral Science Division** of DHS' Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate to \$16.9 million, \$1.8 million above the request and \$4.4 million above the amount provided in FY 2009. The report notes that within this total, \$4 million is for the biometrics program in the Personal Identification Thrust Area of S&T, and \$1 million is for the credentialing program. The Senate Appropriations Committee recommended \$12.5 million for this division, same as FY 2009.

The **University Programs** account got \$50.4 million from the House, and \$48.3 million from the Senate panel, both above the President's request of \$46 million. The House Committee report included the following language: "The Committee is concerned that the office of university programs continues to request inadequate funding to support the research missions of its Centers of Excellence. The Committee notes that in each of the last three years, the budget either proposed reductions in funding for previously established Centers in order to establish new Centers and/or reductions to overall program funding. This seriously undermines the ability of the Centers to contribute to the research mission of the Department and the protection of the homeland."

## House Funding Panel Reports Out Recommendations for Agriculture Research and Extension

On June 18<sup>th</sup>, the House Appropriations Committee accepted the recommendations of its Agriculture and Rural Development Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), and sent the bill to the full House, which is expected to consider it in July. The Senate has not acted in any fashion on this bill yet.

The House bill provides the President's request of \$82.5 million for the **Economic Research Service**, close to a \$3 million boost over FY 2009. Of that increase, \$1.8 million is for economic research on carbon offset markets, a key provision of the House climate change legislation. The **National Agricultural Statistics Service** also received the President's request, \$161.8 million, a \$10.3 million increase over FY 2009. This increase will help fund the Agricultural Chemical Use program and help collect data on bio-energy production and utilization.

The Committee allocated \$708 million for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), formerly the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES). Within that amount, the panel appropriated \$210 million, an \$8.5 million increase over the request and FY 2009, for the **Agriculture and Food Research Initiative**, formerly the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program.

Hatch Act Formula funds received \$215 million, up almost \$8 million from the request and FY 2009. Congressionally-designated projects, also known as earmarks, came to slightly less than \$70 million. The **Regional Rural Development Centers**, now part of NIFA's Integrated Activities program, were level-funded at \$1.3 million.

## SENATE SPENDING COMMITTEE EXAMINES REBIRTH OF NIH FUNDING

On May 21, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services held its hearing on the Obama Administration's proposed FY 2010 budget for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the \$10.4 billion provided the agency via the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

"These are exciting times for NIH. After several years of stagnant funding, the Recovery Act has breathed new life into the field of biomedical research," exclaimed Subcommittee Chair Tom Harkin (D-IA) opening the hearing. Harkin noted that the NIH's newly created Challenge Grant program using ARRA funds had generated more than 20,000 applications from researchers across the country. He acknowledged, however, that the scientific advances that result from ARRA funding will "take some time to gauge, but in the meantime, [he] expects it to have a tremendous impact of the economy." Conversely, Harkin expressed concern regarding what happens to NIH funding capacity once ARRA runs out in 2011. "After two years of healthy budgets, will we...just kind of fall off a cliff again," the Chair asked.

Acting NIH Director Raynard Kington expressed the NIH's gratitude to Congress and the President for the support reflected in ARRA and the 3.2 percent increase in FY 2009 appropriations for the agency. The FY 2010 budget, explained Kington, "embodies the President's fundamental goal of increasing overall federal investment in biomedical research as well as the Administration's particular emphasis on accelerating research in the areas of cancer and autism in fiscal year 2010." The FY 2010 budget request of \$31 billion, \$443 million and 1.4 percent over the FY 2009 funding level, will help fill gaps in "our fundamental understanding of health and disease," he stated. The request supports approximately 9,849 new and competing research project grants, about the same level as in FY 2009, providing a projected success rate in FY 2010 of about 20 percent, according to Kington.

Pointing out that the biomedical community is not spared from the recent downturn in the economy, Kington stressed that the recession was "worrisome not only because it means fewer jobs, but also because innovation and a constant influx of young talent are crucial to the nation's economic success and a robust biomedical research enterprise." He explained that the NIH was moving quickly to identify the best science and support it with the funding provided by ARRA and obligated within the next two years. The agency, said the Acting Director, has already started selecting projects to receive funding. As of May 21, the NIH had begun obligating more than \$375 million in ARRA funds to a wide array of projects, he explained, with the expectation that the number of actions would "increase exponentially over the coming weeks and months." The ARRA funding will "expand our current understanding of diseases and conditions," Kington testified. Additionally, it will allow the NIH to expand its efforts in community-based research with special focus on minority and underserved populations, along with making further investments into the potential applications of nanotechnology.

According to Kington, current projections by the NIH are that ARRA funds will support more than 7,000 new awards, most of which will be for two years of scientific research. He referenced the newly created Grand Opportunity program (G.O. Grants), designed to support large scale research projects to accelerate critical breakthroughs early in applied research on cutting edge technologies and to find new approaches to improve interactions among multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research teams. Applications were due on May 29<sup>th</sup>, but as of May 21, Kington indicated that the NIH had received more than 2,400 letters of intent from potential applicants.

He also highlighted the ARRA-funded program to support newly trained faculty to conduct research, a program designed to address the need to support early career scientists, a top priority for the NIH. The funding allow grant recipients to hire, supply appropriate start-up packages and develop pilot research projects for newly independent investigators. Finally, he highlighted the agency's expanded summer program for teachers and students from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, noting that the NIH will use \$35 million of ARRA funds to support short-term jobs over two summers for more than 3,700 individuals. Most of these individuals, according to Kington, will be high school and undergraduate students and will also include several hundred elementary, middle, high school and community college science educators. The hope, stressed Kington, is that the experience will spark the desire of many of these students to become scientists.

### **'Extraordinary Untapped Supply of Great Ideas' in the Scientific Community**

Harkin shared that he is "really concerned" about what is going to happen in 2011. Announcing that he understands that the success rate for the Challenge Grants will be less than five percent, Harkin noted that the flip side of the increase in applications for NIH funding is that "most of them won't be funded. So how do you keep up a high level

of interest when so few researchers will actually get these grants” he asked Kington? The Acting Director responded that was “definitely a concern” for NIH, noting that the agency has been clear in communicating to the scientific community that there is a “floor for dollars.” In spite of that, scientists saw this as extraordinary opportunity to actually get on paper interesting ideas in important areas. Predicting that the NIH would more than double the floor of \$200 million designated for the Challenge Grants, Kington noted that agency still wants to have a high success rate and acknowledged that many good proposals will not receive awards. However, Kington anticipates that many of the scientists will resubmit those applications within the NIH’s usual funding sequence. NIH suspects that it will provide support to some of them, but the agency’s ability to fund “even the very best of those applications will depend on what [NIH’s] budget is in future years. . . At the very least, it shows this extraordinary untapped supply of great ideas out there in the scientific community. And I see that as a good thing,” said Kington.

Noting that it was Congress that decided ARRA funding for NIH had to go out over two years, Harkin asked Kington how NIH would feel if Congress were to change its mind and extend the time the money had to go out? Kington replied that all of the agency’s decisions have been based on a two-year time horizon, but conceded that having more flexibility would probably help. He added that the agency also recognizes the unique intent of the ARRA funds to stimulate the economy in the short run. “We believe we can responsibly spend the money in two years,” he concluded. Harkin indicated that he might return to the NIH on the issue of flexibility, if it is deemed that it might be the best course of action for the Congress to take.

Harkin questioned the rationale behind the President’s FY 2010 budget request which proposes a \$442 million increase for NIH, of which \$268 million would go for cancer research; \$19 million would go for autism research, leaving \$155 million for everything else. Kington responded that both cancer and autism are important public health challenges and these are priorities of the Administration and the president. Science in cancer is funded by every single institute and center. Additionally, the NIH has instituted a strategic planning process to bring together all of the agencies to think about how to develop a plan for this investment in cancer. Kington explained that the discoveries in cancer research can help us learn more about basic biology in ways that would be useful for other diseases as well. The process is led by National Cancer Institute director John Niederhuber and National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Diseases director Stephen Katz.

Wrapping up the hearing, Harkin indicated that the press of health care reform legislation before the Congress precluded him from bringing the directors of the NIH’s 27 Institutes and Centers before the Subcommittee. He hopes that might be possible in the fall.

## NIJ RESEARCH CONFERENCE HEARS HOLDER, KERLIKOWSKE

The annual National Institute of Justice (NIJ) conference brings together researchers and practitioners, to discuss various aspects of law enforcement and corrections. This year’s event took place on June 15-17 in Arlington, VA. With the advent of the Obama Administration the two keynote speakers were Eric Holder, the new Attorney General, and Gil Kerlikowske, the new director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP).

Holder, in brief remarks at lunch on June 15, stressed the Administration’s strong belief in the importance of research and technology to the mission of the Department of Justice (DOJ). Echoing President Obama, the Attorney General reiterated a commitment to science and evidence in public policy making. He indicated that prosecutors and other law enforcement officials are interested in scientific research. “Sound judgments must come from solid evidence,” he declared. He committed DOJ to seeking increased resources for science and technology.

Holder cited the results from an evaluation of Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) that indicated that this research-based Bush Administration program has had significant effects on reducing violent crime in many places (for more about PSN see Update, [February 9, 2009](#)). He also mentioned research conducted by Carnegie Mellon Professor and former COSSA President Al Blumstein on the difficulties in obtaining employment by those released from prison (see below).

In earlier remarks, Laurie Robinson, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs (home to NIJ), noted her commitment to the “integrity of research” at DOJ. She noted the steps she has taken to ensure the “independence” of NIJ and the Bureau of Justice Statistics to have final say over its own grants and publications and the dissemination of those publications. Acting NIJ Director Kristin Rose also spoke about the “renewed emphasis on research” at DOJ and the administration’s “belief in science.”

## A National Drug Control Policy Focused on Prevention and Treatment



Speaking on the final day of the conference on June 17, Kerlikowske, the former Police Chief of Seattle, also noted the importance and his appreciation of rigorous, scientific methods to study crime and especially the relationship of drugs to crime.

Kerlikowske suggested “it is time to change the conversation” and that the nation’s drug control policy should turn its attention to prevention and treatment and focus on the demand side of the drug culture. Citing a report from the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, run by former Health and Human Services Secretary Joseph Califano, which indicated that only two percent of spending on drug abuse in this country is on prevention and treatment, Kerlikowske said we must “rethink” our strategies.

It is time to treat addiction as a disease, Kerlikowske asserted, and start to leverage resources, use the states as incubators of programs, such as drug courts, and discover and fund effective treatments through comparative effectiveness research, which has major funding from the Obama Administration. We need to help people change their habits, he declared. In doing so, we must attend to the biological and psychological aspects of this disease. Similar to efforts at reducing domestic violence, law enforcement cannot be the only “official” actors, Kerlikowske indicated, doctors also need to learn to screen for this disease. He also called for the upgrading of data sets related to drugs, especially drug-related deaths.

In the next nine months, his office hopes to produce a new National Drug Control strategy that will make these changes. He is gathering input from all sources and he called NIJ “a valuable partner” in these efforts. In his talk, the nation’s new drug czar did not say much about the supply side of the drug problem, focusing his remarks to this audience on the demand problem.

### Redemption for Released Prisoners

Since he was mentioned by the Attorney General, Al Blumstein also got a chance to present his research at another session during the conference. Working with Kiminora Nakamura, a graduate student at Carnegie Mellon, he has investigated the impact of criminal background checks as a roadblock for many ex-offenders to obtain employment during their re-entry into society. With advances in information technology that have led to easily accessible computerized data of individual criminal records, employers increasingly worried about liability, have relied on these checks more than ever. Blumstein and Nakamura argue that ex-prisoners should reach a “redemption point” at which their criminal background should no longer act as an impediment to employment. They argue that there is a time when the hazard of rearrest declines with time clean. They examined crime types and age as measures of redemption and found that violent offenders and younger offenders have a lengthier time to redemption. They hope their research leads to the establishment of guidelines so that former prisoners do not continue to suffer punishment after they have paid their debt to society.

At another session Jeremy Travis, former NIJ director and now President of John Jay College of Criminal Justice, appeared with a dozen or so colleagues to announce the formation of the National Network of Safe Communities. The network seeks to further implement the work of John Jay Professor David Kennedy in reducing violence and drug markets in communities. Kennedy’s strategy is to bring the criminals, usually identifiable gang-members, to meetings with their relatives, the police and community leaders, where the perpetrators are told to stop shooting each other and innocents and to stop selling drugs. At the same time the criminals are offered social services to help them change their lives. They are warned that if they do not cease their criminal activities, the consequences will be grave. Among those testifying to the success of Kennedy’s approach were Cincinnati Police Chief Tom Streicher, High Point, NC Police Chief Jim Fealy, Yale Law Professor Tracy Meares, and Nassau County, NY District Attorney Kathleen Rice. For a description of the program, especially with regard to Cincinnati, see the article “Don’t Shoot” by John Seabrook in *The New Yorker*, June 22, 2009. For more on the new network go to: [www.nnscommunities.org](http://www.nnscommunities.org).

Earlier in the meeting, Gary Slutkin, an epidemiologist and physician at the University of Illinois at Chicago and Executive Director of the Chicago Project for Violence Prevention, discussed Operation CeaseFire in that city. Focused on treating violence as an infectious disease whose transmission must be stopped, CeaseFire takes a neighborhood approach to reducing violence that has had significant impact on stopping, what Slutkin called, “undesirable events.” The program uses what are called “interruptors,” peers with street credibility hired by the police department. They use the powers of persuasion to prevent violence. The conference audience was treated to a demonstration of the technique with former NIJ director James ‘Chips’ Stewart enacting the role of a potential violent offender in a burst of acting bravado. So far, the program has had success in certain neighborhoods in reducing shooting incidents, although recent budget reductions brought on by the recession have significantly hindered its capacity

## CONGRESS ASKS FOR RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES STUDY

Four key members of Congress who oversee federal activity in science and education have written to the presidents of the National Academies requesting an assessment of “the competitive position of American research universities, both public and private.”

The letter to Ralph Cicerone (National Academy of Sciences), Charles Vest (National Academy of Engineering) and Harvey Feinberg (Institute of Medicine), was signed by Senators Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) and Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Representatives Bart Gordon (D-TN) and Ralph Hall (R-TX). Mikulski chairs the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee, which funds the National Science Foundation (NSF), NASA, and NOAA, all important sources of research funding for universities. Alexander is a former Secretary of Education. Gordon and Hall are the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Science and Technology Committees.

The Members want the study to answer the following question: “What are the top ten actions that Congress, state governments, research universities, and others could take to assure the ability of the American research university to maintain the excellence in research and doctoral education needed to help the United States compete, prosper, and achieve national goals for health, energy, the environment, and security in the global community of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?”

The letter suggests that “today research universities are under stress, even as other countries are measurably improving the quality of their research institutions.” The proposed report should “assess the organizational, intellectual and financial capability of public and private American research universities relative to research universities internationally.”

According to the signers, the model for the requested assessment is the 2006 National Academies’ report *Rising Above the Gathering Storm*. Alexander and Gordon were two of the organizers of that congressional request. That report identified the key steps needed to ensure a U.S. science and technology enterprise that would remain competitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The America COMPETES Act, enacted in 2007, incorporated many of its recommendations including doubling funding for NSF and other agencies, with an emphasis on the resurrection of the physical sciences and increasing support for science education.

According to the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#), part of the impetus for the study came from a letter from Robert Berdahl, President of the Association of American Universities, wrote to Alexander, suggesting that the country needs to examine whether it has too many research-oriented universities.

## MORE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION APPOINTMENTS

On June 19, the United States Senate confirmed Howard Koh as the new Assistant Secretary for Health, Department of Health and Human Services and Jane Oates as the new Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment and Training. In addition, the Senate Banking and Urban Affairs Committee, chaired by Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-CT), approved the nomination of Raphael Bostic to become the Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.



Koh is the Harvey V. Fineberg Professor of the Practice of Public Health, Associate Dean for Public Health Practice, and Director of the Division of Public Health Practice at the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH). At HSPH, he has served as the Principal Investigator of multiple research grants related to community-based participatory research, cancer prevention, health disparities, tobacco control, and emergency preparedness. He is also Director of the HSPH Center for Public Health Preparedness. Koh previously served as Commissioner of Public Health for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts where he emphasized the power of prevention. Koh graduated from Yale College, Yale University School of Medicine and completed his postgraduate training and chief residencies at Boston City Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital. He also has a Master of Public Health degree. He is an elected member of the Institute of Medicine and Chair of the Board of Scientific Counselors for the CDC’s Coordinating Office for Terrorism Preparedness and Emergency Response. The Assistant Secretary of Health oversees the Public Health Service, which includes the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Agency for Healthcare Quality and Research.

Oates served for many years on the staff of Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA) and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. She was the Senior Policy Advisor to the Committee on higher education, national service, adult literacy, education research, and workforce issues. In 2003, she spoke at the COSSA Annual Meeting on a panel

examining the prospects for the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. After leaving the Senate in 2006, she served as the Executive Director of the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education and Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Jon S. Corzine. In that position, she concentrated on linking higher education with K-12 education and the workforce. She has served on the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), the State Commission on Adult Literacy and Education (SCALES), New Jersey High School Redesign Task Force, the Public Sector Work Group and chairs the State Educators Health Benefits Commission and the Governor's Schools Board of Overseers.



Bostic is a Professor in USC's School of Policy, Planning, and Development. An expert on housing and homeownership, he studies the roles that credit markets, financing, and policy play in enhancing household access to economic and social amenities. He also investigated the effects of community development financial institutions on neighborhood well-being, how anti-predatory lending laws impact credit flows, and the role of the private label secondary market in facilitating the flow of capital to subprime and possibly predatory loans. At USC, Bostic teaches courses in affordable housing development, urban economics, real estate finance, policy and planning analysis, and public finance. He was formerly Director of the school's

Master of Real Estate Development degree program and was the founding director of the Casden Real Estate Economics Forecast. He previously worked at the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. Bostic has a Ph.D. in Economics from Stanford University and his B.A. from Harvard University.

### Groves Nomination Stalled

In the meantime, the nomination of Robert Groves to head the U.S. Census Bureau remains mired in Senate politics. After having cleared the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC) soon after his hearing, (see Update, [May 18, 2009](#)) the nomination has stalled and not reached the Senate floor. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, the [New York Times](#), Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), Ranking Member of the HSGAC, and many stakeholder groups, including COSSA, have called for his confirmation, but so far to no avail.

Although it is unclear exactly what the problem is, there are two possible explanations. The Republicans are holding up some nominations because of their displeasure over the scheduled July hearing on Sonia Sotomayor's Supreme Court nomination (they wanted to delay that too), or there is some unspecified unhappiness with Groves himself.

## START RELEASES UPDATED TERRORISM DATA BASE

The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), one of the Department of Homeland Security's Centers of Excellence, has released a new version of its Global Terrorism Database (GTD). START is based at the University of Maryland and directed by Gary LaFree, a member of the COSSA Board of Directors.

The GTD is an open-source database including information on terrorist events around the world. It includes systematic data on domestic as well as transnational and international terrorist incidents. The GTD includes records on the date and location of the incident, the weapons used and nature of the target, the number of casualties, and if identifiable, the perpetrators.

The previous versions of the GTD covered events that occurred from 1970 to 1994. The updated version synthesizes the earlier versions and expands them to include events from 1970 to 2007. The Center hopes to update the GTD annually.

The most comprehensive unclassified database on terrorism events in the world with data on 80,000 incidents since 1970, the GTD includes facts on more than 27,000 bombings, 12,000 assassinations, and 2,900 kidnappings. There are 45 variables for each case, with more recent events having information on more than 120 variables. The expanded version was assembled from examination of over 3.5 million news articles, and 25,000 news sources, just from 1998 to 2007.

The link to the dataset is <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd>. In addition, for those who are interested in using the GTD to conduct statistical analyses, there is a user-friendly interface available at <http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data>.

For more information on START go to [www.start.umd.edu](http://www.start.umd.edu).



## APS JOINS COSSA

COSSA is delighted to welcome the American Psychosomatic Society (APS) as its newest member. The Society, founded in 1942, is a worldwide community of scholars and clinicians dedicated to the scientific understanding of the interaction of mind, brain, body and social context in promoting health and contributing to the pathogenesis, course and treatment of disease. Its mission is to promote and advance the scientific understanding and multidisciplinary integration of biological, psychological, behavioral and social factors in human health and disease, and to foster the application of this understanding in education and improved health care.

### CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

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