

CONGRESS RETURNS AMID SEA OF UNCERTAINTY

The 107th Congress returned September 4 from its summer recess to cope with its unfinished business before heading off in October to campaign in the elections to choose the next Congress. The uncertainty about what that 108th Congress will look like in terms of partisan control will also be reflected in what the current Congress will do before it adjourns. At the moment, the expectation is that there will be a post-election session of the current House and Senate.

FY 2003 Appropriations

As has become common in recent years, Congress will not finish the appropriations process before the commencement of Fiscal Year 2003 on October 1, 2002. None of the 13 bills have been signed into law by President Bush. Only three have passed both the House and Senate and are ready for a conference committee. One of the causes of the delay is that the Senate has still not worked out its budget rules, since the budget resolution never passed. Another problem is that the Administration and conservatives in the House are insisting on sticking to an overall spending figure that many consider unrealistic. Adding to all of this, estimates for the Federal deficit increased significantly in reports produced over the summer by the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget.

The Senate has passed three spending bills and all 13 have made it out of the Appropriations Committee. However, since the Senate is operating with an overall spending number \$9 billion above the Administration's, the President has been threatening vetoes if the Senate bills prevail.

The House has passed five bills, but seven have not even made it out of the Appropriations Committee. These include three bills important to social and behavioral scientists. The Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill is scheduled for Committee action on September 18. However,

House Appropriations Committee Chairman Rep. C.W. Bill Young (R-FL) has made it quite clear that the constraints placed on this legislation by the low overall spending figure could make it impossible to get the bill through the House. Tradeoffs between health and education spending, in particular, could cause problems for many members.

The two other bills, the VA, HUD, Independent Agencies bill, which funds the National Science Foundation, and the Commerce, Justice, State bill, remain at the end of the line for Committee markups. Without a relaxation of the overall spending constraints, the House could be forced to provide few increases and maybe some decreases for agencies in these two bills.

With a better overall spending number, the Senate Appropriations Committee was able to provide the National Science Foundation with a 12 percent increase for next year, including a 14 percent increase for research, and a major boost for graduate student stipends. This could be a high water mark. The Committee was also able to complete the five-year doubling of the NIH budget and provide increases for education programs including

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international education and graduate fellowships in the social sciences. The Panel was less generous to the Census Bureau, the National Institute of Justice, and the Bureau of Justice Statistics. The Agriculture funding bill emerged from both the House and Senate Committees with increases for the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants program, but with the future of the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS) uncertain. (For details on these bills see *Update*, August 5, 2002).

Other Legislation

With the impending war with Iraq focusing Washington's attention, a lot of other items on the congressional agenda are getting reduced consideration. One exception is the creation of the Department of Homeland Security. The Senate has begun its debate on the measure, with strong disagreements between the White House and Senate Democrats over personnel provisions and other items in the legislation. It is also interesting that conservative interest groups have begun raising objections to the Department as creating another huge bureaucracy. The House passed its version of the new Department on July 26. (See *Update*, August 5, 2002).

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

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The reauthorization of the National Science Foundation is moving along. (See following story). The reauthorization of the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) remains stalled. The House passed its proposal to restructure OERI on April 30. (See *Update*, May 13, 2002). The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee had a full plate this year and OERI, so far, has not been on it. With the limited time left in the session, it will be difficult to get this bill through unless some agreement can be reached with the House and the legislation can get enacted quickly. This is not a promising scenario.

Reauthorization of the welfare reform bill is also stalled and is unlikely to pass this session.

The target adjournment date for the 107th Congress is October 4. With the closeness of the partisan divide and with both Houses up-for-grabs in the election, it appears that the regular session should end sometime in early October. Unless there is a lengthy Continuing Resolution providing spending for the federal government into next year, it appears that there will be a post-election lame-duck session to finish appropriations and perhaps, other matters.

One wrinkle of that lame-duck session bandying about Washington this week is the possibility of the Republicans retaking the Senate for the immediate post-election period. It would work like this: If former Rep. James Talent (R) beats Sen. Jean Carnahan (D) in the Missouri Senate race, a special election to fill out the remainder of the term, the GOP in the Senate will push to seat Talent immediately after the election. This would re-create the 50-50 partisan tie that existed before Sen. Jeffords' (I-VT) defection from the Republican party. With Vice President Cheney casting the tie-breaking vote, the Republicans would then control the Senate again. This scenario may be GOP wishful thinking, but it has the making of a chaos-creating, partisan-battle that could also lead to more Administration successes in the closing days of the current Congress.

SENATE PANEL REPORTS NSF BILL; GOAL IS TO DOUBLE FUNDING IN FIVE YEARS

The Senate Health, Labor, Education and Pensions (HELP) Committee, chaired by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA), gave approval on September 5th to legislation that would reauthorize the National Science Foundation (NSF). Under the dual committee jurisdiction in the Senate, the bill now moves to the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, chaired by Sen. Ernest Hollings (D-SC). This panel has thirty days to add its provisions and then the bill can proceed to the Senate floor. The House passed its version of the legislation on June 5th.

Following the model provided by congressional action on the National Institutes of Health, the HELP Committee provided increases for the next five years to achieve the goal of doubling NSF by Fiscal Year 2007. This would require annual increases of 16 percent for Research and Related Activities, which includes the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate; 15 percent annual increases for the Education and Human Resources Directorate; and 10 percent increases for the Major Equipment and Facilities, Salary and Expenses, and Inspector General accounts. Under this plan, NSF would become an almost \$10 billion agency at the conclusion of the authorization.

As noted in *Update* many times, authorizations set funding goals and guidelines for the operation of an agency; it is the appropriators who determine the actual funding dollars for the agency. Although NSF's appropriators have supported the goal of doubling the Agency's funding, overall budget constraints have so far prevented taking the steps necessary to move in that direction. This year's Senate VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), did provide the funds to start down the doubling road, at least in the Research and Related Activities account. (See *Update*, August 5, 2002). Whether the House can match that is questionable.

The HELP reauthorization bill also includes a provision to move the authorization language for the President's Math and Science Partnership (MSP) program from the Department of Education (ED) to the NSF. Although NSF has appropriations to run an MSP competition, the actual language authorizing

the program in the "No Child Left Behind" education reform legislation passed last year, gives the program to ED. In transferring the program, the Committee allows NSF to keep running the MSP on a competitive basis for the next three years. Starting in FY 2006, however, the program will award grants to State Educational agencies on a formula basis. This would change the way NSF has heretofore operated its programs.

The bill also directs NSF to "conduct and evaluate research in cognitive science, education and related fields associated with the 'science of teaching and learning mathematics and science.'" This includes a grant to comprehensively evaluate the effectiveness of current mathematics and science teaching practices. In establishing this new grant program the NSF Director is told to "terminate any existing duplicative program being carried out by the Foundation..."

Also included in the bill are provisions to "assure the confidentiality of human research information." These include: non-disclosure of human research information, except in statistical or abstract forms that guard against individual research subject identification and limits to NSF authorized personnel only access to research information that identifies individual human research participants.

ACADEMY REPORT PROBES 'WHAT DO TERRORISTS VALUE?'

Following the tragedy of September 11 many questions were asked concerning what happened that day. Over the ensuing year a number of studies and government activities have focused on *Making the Nation Safer* (see *Update*, July 8, 2002) and creating a homeland security operation. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) asked the National Academy of Sciences to explore the question of "what terrorists value?" DARPA was interested in trying "to identify the ingredients of the terrorists' mentality and situation that are positively meaningful to them and that might be deterred by threat or inducement."

Under the chairmanship of Neal Smelser, sociologist at the University of California, Berkeley, the Panel on Understanding Terrorists in Order to Deter Terrorism has produced a report entitled *Discouraging Terrorism: Some Implications of*

9/11. Smelser and the Panel's study director Faith Mitchell co-edited the report. It is available at www.nap.org.

According to the report, deterrence as a strategy against terrorism has some value, but it is limited by: a) difficulties in getting unambiguous and credible threats across to terrorists; b) the unwillingness of terrorists to communicate except indirectly and on their own terms; c) exceptionally high levels of mutual distrust; d) uncertainty about how to affect what terrorists value; and e) uncertainty about the targets to which threats should be directed. Faced with these difficulties, "the best policy may be one of deterrent threats combined with policies of working with and through third parties who may have the capacity to influence terrorists." These third parties would include state regimes that harbor terrorists, moderate political and social groups in such states, neighboring regimes, and U.S. allies.

Terrorists, the report concludes, carry out their activities before a number of different audiences – potential recruits, their own memberships, states and politically interested groupings in societies in which they operate, the media and its imagined readerships, people in enemy societies, and "world public opinion."

The characteristics of terrorist organizations, the report notes, are that they must be simultaneously invisible and at the same time coordinated for preparing and executing terrorist activities. Thus, these organizations are typically far-flung networks that rely on secrecy, invisibility, flexibility, extreme commitment by their members, and coordination of military-like activities.

The report identifies three factors that help explain the rise of terrorism as a form of activity: the great asymmetry of economic, political, and military power in the world; the availability of weapons of mass destruction; and the permeability of world society occasioned by processes of globalization.

Although the use of direct threats, punishments, and inducements to prevent action can be tried with terrorists, reliance on direct deterrence "can be only somewhat effective," the panel contended. The goal of working with third parties should be to distance and alienate relevant audiences from terrorist organizations and activities. In addition,

intelligence, infiltration, and related activities should be directed at their points of vulnerability – their reliance on audience, their ideological inflexibility, their problems of maintaining commitments, and their potential for organizational failure. Finally, in the long run, prevention strategies should include improving the social conditions in countries vulnerable to terrorist organizations.

The panel concludes "that there are no silver bullets or quick fixes available... The general policy approach has to be adaptive, opportunistic, and multisided."

NIJ PANEL DISCUSSES RACIAL PROFILING IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

The National Institute of Justice convened a plenary panel entitled *Racial Profiling: Detecting and Addressing It* at their annual research conference in Washington on July 22. The event opened with remarks from Charles Moose, Chief of the Montgomery County, Maryland Police Department, who served as moderator. The panel allowed experts to discuss recent research findings on racial profiling and share their outlook for the most effective means to eradicate the problem.

Lorie Fridell, Director of Research at the Police Executive Research Forum, began her remarks by stating that racial profiling is not a recent phenomenon and has been occurring for the past 35 years. Fridell refers to racial profiling as racial bias policing, the inappropriate use of race or ethnicity, and believes it has manifested in various mediums of law enforcement. According to Fridell, "racist officers, officers not being cognizant about how biases affect decisions, higher level decision making, and bias based on powerlessness" are several ways in which racial profiling has affected society. To ensure that minorities are protected, Fridell stressed the importance of democratic policing, a system in which various government agencies, not just law enforcement, respond to problems within the community.

Asserting that racial profiling is based on behavior, not race, Heather MacDonald, a Senior John M. Olin fellow at the Manhattan Institute, stated that race is not a salient issue during police patrolling. MacDonald, also a contributing editor to New York's *City Journal*, argued that the "problem

is not with police stopping, but the behavior of the individual after initial contact with the police officer.” Acknowledging that there are racist police officers, both black and white, MacDonald argued that these individuals do not represent the majority of law enforcement.

Rounding out the panel, David A. Harris, Balk Professor of Law and Values at the University of Toledo College of Law and Soros Senior Justice Fellow at the Open Society Institute of New York, emphasized that racial profiling is not only attributed to individuals, but also institutions of American society. Concurring with MacDonald, Harris said “racial profiling is not a conscious part of decision making.” Harris arrived at this conclusion after extensive research in which he found that there were no disparities between the numbers of African Americans stopped by Caucasian and African-American police officers.

As the discussion came to a close, Harris indicated that prior to September 11, almost 60 percent of Americans wanted to eliminate racial profiling. Post-September 11, however, more than 60 percent of Americans wanted to implement racial profiling into law enforcement as a means of monitoring the activities of various groups. As the nation marks the first anniversary of the terrorist attacks, it’s unclear how this issue will continue to be viewed by society.

CENSUS 2000: LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD

At the recent American Statistical Association annual meeting in New York City a panel examined Census 2000 and looked ahead to Census 2010. The participants included: Ken Prewitt, who served as Director of the Census Bureau during the 2000 count; Janet Norwood, who chaired a National Academy of Sciences (NAS) panel that reviewed the 2000 Census and who is COSSA’s President; Benjamin King, chair of a NAS panel on future Census methodology; and Steve Fienberg, Carnegie Mellon Professor of Statistics and co-author with Margo Anderson of *Who Counts: The Politics of Census Taking in Contemporary America*.

Prewitt, reviewing his experiences, suggested it was “silly” to call 2000 “the best Census ever” and it was time to “get past the political spin.” He did note

that he was concerned that like 2000, when the Bureau had to plan for a census with sampling and without sampling, the 2010 Census may be starting on a two-track planning process. Because of the uncertainty regarding the future of the American Community Survey (ACS), which was designed to replace the long form, the Bureau may need to plan for a census both with and without a long form. This is difficult and drains resources, Prewitt said.

King’s panel has created a sub-group to look at the ACS. Fienberg raised some questions about it suggesting that there was a lack of bench-marking of the ACS against the long form and evidence of data quality in the pilots done to date. He also noted his concern about the lack of fundamental research on the ACS’s impact. He did indicate that it had virtues including providing data across the decade. At the moment, the problem for the ACS is that the Senate Appropriations Committee did not provide enough funds in the Bureau’s FY 2003 budget to keep it moving forward. The hope is that the House will correct this, but given the current spending constraints facing House appropriators (see earlier story), this may be difficult.

Prewitt also reiterated his earlier comments on the burdens of oversight during the 2000 count. Having to respond to the aggressive scrutiny of Congressional committees and the Census Monitoring Oversight Board was “disturbing and distracting.” Unfortunately, Prewitt suggested, they will be part of “the fabric” for all future Censuses.

In reviewing 2000, Norwood noted that there were successes: a higher than expected mail return rate; the redesigned questionnaire; the contracting out of the questionnaire processing; the expanded outreach and paid advertising; and enumerator recruitment. The problem of the net undercount persisted, although she suggested that the increased use of imputation led to more minorities getting counted in 2000. The Supreme Court blessed imputation and said it was not sampling in an unsuccessful case brought by Utah to gain the last congressional seat that was awarded to North Carolina. Fienberg, however, warned that the use of imputations in the long form remained problematic. He also pointed out the different population numbers that have been promulgated since the first release of the U.S. count based on the Census.

The other major problem, Norwood noted, still remains the difficulties of building and maintaining a master address file. King suggested that increased use of technologies such as Global Positioning Systems may help here. New ways must be found to avoid duplication, Norwood argued.

Looking to the future, Prewitt proposed two significant changes. He argued that the Census Bureau should stop releasing block level data. He suggested that these are not very good numbers to begin with, but more importantly over the long term the problem with keeping individuals non-identifiable will become more challenging. He noted that Americans' confidence that the data they are providing the Census Bureau will remain confidential is paramount and that instilling and maintaining that confidence has become more difficult in recent years. Secondly, Prewitt contended that it was time to eliminate the household as the unit of analysis. The Census should be focused on the individual, not the household. We are still using a 1790 model; households, he declared "are not where it's at" in 2002.

Looking toward 2010, King noted that his committee will also consider alternative response models, such as using the Internet to fill out the form. He also suggested that the Bureau, as a cost-control measure, should consider increased use of commercial off-the-shelf products. All of the speakers called for further research on enumeration methods, address list development, technical infrastructure, and other issues relating to the Census.

IOM SAYS RESEARCH NEEDED ON 'WHEN CHILDREN DIE'

Care for children "necessarily differs from care for adults, reflecting children's developing physiological, psychological, and cognitive characteristics and their legal, ethical, and social status," according to a recently released Institute of Medicine (IOM) report, *When Children Die: Improving Palliative and End-of-Life Care for Children and Their Families*. But when it comes to palliative and end-of-life care for children, the report finds that "research is limited" and "systematic data are not available."

Similarly, the report finds that the "knowledge base for organizational and policy decisions is likewise limited." *When Children Die* also discovered that "available research leaves much that is unclear about the number and kinds of children and families who could benefit from palliative and end-of-life care, the extent and causes of shortfalls in care, and the effectiveness of strategies to improve delivery and financing" of such care.

The IOM's Committee on Palliative and End-Of-Life Care for Children and their Families explained that there have been initiatives to encourage pediatric research in general and in palliative and end-of-life care specifically. Nevertheless, "research to support improvements in palliative, end-of-life, and bereavement care for children and their families constitutes only a tiny fraction of research involving children," observes the report.

Institutes within the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are acknowledged for their "potential willingness" to support relevant studies. The National Institute on Nursing Research and the National Institute of Mental Health recently released a request for applications for "Research to Improve Care for Dying Children and Their Families." (See page 7).

The Committee states that it was "hampered by the lack of basic descriptive information about death in childhood as well as research testing the effectiveness of clinical interventions and organizational processes and structures." It recommended that the NIH and the National Center for Health Statistics, among others, "should collaborate to improve the collection of descriptive data – epidemiological, clinical, organizational, and financial – to guide the provision, funding, and evaluation of palliative, end-of-life, and bereavement care for children and their families." According to the report, a comprehensive research agenda should consider:

- Infants, children, and adolescents and care strategies appropriate to their developmental differences;
- The needs of parents, siblings, and other family members;
- A range of causes and trajectories of death including sudden, unexpected deaths, deaths

from progressive chronic conditions, and deaths from conditions diagnosed parentally;

- Uncertainty in diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment as it affects communication with children and families;
- Roles and relationships of different health care professionals and other personnel involved with children who may die or who have died and their families;
- Child and family experiences outside the health care system, including schools; and
- Psychological effects on professionals caring for children who die and consequences for their ability to care for children and parents.

Ethical and Legal Issues?

Observing that “policymakers, researchers, and ethicists have been working for decades to develop protections for people participating in research,” the Committee emphasized that if conducting research presents ethical questions, “so does the failure to conduct research.” The Committee cautioned, however, that “many IRBs [institutional review board], as presently constituted, may lack the expertise and background to evaluate proposals for research on pediatric palliative and end-of-life care.”

A copy of the IOM report is available from the National Academies web site: http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10390.html?onpi_topnews_072502b

COSSA WELCOMES BACK AFFILIATE

COSSA is pleased to announce that the International Communications Association (ICA) has rejoined the Consortium as an Affiliate. ICA originally belonged to COSSA in 1983. We look forward to working with the Association on issues of interest to its members.

SOURCE OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the sponsoring agency for further information. Additional application guidelines and restrictions may apply.

End Of Life Care For Dying Children

The National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) are seeking research applications designed to improve the quality of life for children who are approaching the end of life and the quality of the dying process and bereavement following the death for the children’s family, friends, and care providers.

The NIH Institutes are responding to the Institute of Medicine’s (IOM) report, *When Children Die: Improving Palliative and End of Life Care for Children and Their Families*. (See related story). Potential research topics include, but are not limited to:

- Identify age specific end-of-life issues from preterm babies through adolescents and determine how the age of the parents influences the dying process.
- Identify the dying trajectories of children (e.g., sudden death versus life threatening condition) and determine if interventions can and should be structured according to the trajectories.
- Evaluate the role of health care providers in the lives of chronically ill children and their families, especially when the emphasis changes from cure to end-of-life care, or when families have few supports outside of the health care system.
- Test culturally-sensitive communication modes, appropriate to the cognitive and emotional maturity of the child, that involve him/her in decision making throughout a life threatening illness and death.
- Evaluate the effect of a child’s death on the family unit, especially siblings, including the financial impact and long-term consequences.

For more information contact Ann Knebel (NINR) at (301) 594-5966 or ann_knebel@nih.gov; or Nicolette Borek (NIMH) at (301) 443-4526 or nborek@mail.nih.gov.