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SENATE ADOPTS FY 2007 BUDGET RESOLUTION: FUNDING ADDED FOR NIH

On March 16, by a vote of 51-49, the Senate fired the first congressional volley in the FY 2007 spending process by adopting its version of the Budget Resolution. Although these resolutions only offer guidance to the final spending decisions made by appropriators, they do however establish total spending limits and provide strong suggestions about Senate priorities.

In the President's proposed budget, Bush set a total discretionary spending cap of \$873 billion. The Senate, by adopting a series of amendments, added more than \$9 billion to that number and another \$7 billion using the gimmick of "advanced appropriations," funds spent in FY 2007, but counted as FY 2008 appropriations.

Senators Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Tom Harkin (D-IA), the Chair and Ranking Democrat on the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, sponsored an amendment to add funds for programs under the jurisdiction of their spending panel. The amendment, which passed 73-27, will provide money to help increase spending for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), a number of education programs that the Administration had proposed for elimination, social services and community development block grants, and student financial aid, which includes raising the Pell Grant award amount. Specter expressed that he was simply restoring

(Continued on Next Page)

NIH'S HEALTH DISPARITIES PLAN: INADEQUATE EMPHASIS ON SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

On March 6, the National Academies Institute of Medicine's (IOM) Committee on the Review and Assessment of the NIH's Strategic Research Plan and Budget to Reduce and Ultimately Eliminate Health Disparities released its assessment of the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Strategic Plan for Health Disparities Research.

In its report, *Examining the Health Disparities Research Plan of the National Institutes of Health: Unfinished Business*, the Committee found that the NIH's Strategic Plan for Health Disparities Research "placed inadequate emphasis on understanding social and behavioral determinants of health and their interaction with biological factors."

(Continued on Page 3)

Inside UPDATE...

- HOUSE SCIENCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN RETIRES
- CDC BUDGET HEARING
- NAS REPORT ON HISPANICS IN THE U.S
- OBSSR CELEBRATES A DECADE OF PROGRESS
- FORMER COSSA PRESIDENT DIES
- SPATIAL SOCIAL SCIENCE OPPORTUNITIES
- SUMMER WORKSHOPS AVAILABLE
- COSSA WELCOMES NEW PUBLIC AFFAIRS



SENATE 07 BUDGET

(Continued from Page 1)

funds to allow the Congress to fund his bill at the FY 2005 levels.

The resolution now provides enough funding to increase NIH by \$2 billion, to \$30.5 billion. The President's budget proposed funding NIH at the FY 2006 level. Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN) had agreed to an extra \$1 billion in the Senate Budget Committee version of the resolution, and the Specter-Harkin amendment added the rest. The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, of which COSSA is a member, praised Specter and Harkin for their leadership in championing health research and NIH.

With regard to Science budgets, the resolution assumes full funding of the President's request for the Department of Energy Office of Science and the National Science Foundation (NSF). According to the Budget Committee report: "This funding level will support scientific research tools for economically significant R&D, bolstering K-12 education including Math and Science Partnerships, high-end computing, advanced networking, nanotechnology, biotechnology, and science research. This funding is critical in supporting world-class federal research facilities and advancing innovation and discovery."

The resolution also rejected the President's request for \$65 billion in entitlement spending reductions, even rejecting an amendment by Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX) that would have cut programs by only \$10 billion. The resolution included a provision that would allow drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). The House appears more committed to restraints on spending, both discretionary and entitlements, while at the same time it has blocked ANWR drilling in the past few years. The decisions taken by the Senate will make it difficult to reconcile its version of the budget resolution with the House version expected in early April.

HOUSE SCIENCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY), chairman of the House Science Committee since 2001, announced on March 17 that he would not seek re-election this year.

Forced to relinquish the leadership of the Science panel under the term limits established by the House Republicans, Boehlert decided the time had come to, quoting Roger Clemens, "shut it down."

A moderate Republican, Boehlert has challenged the Administration and the GOP Congressional leadership particularly with regard to environmental issues. Since 1983, he has represented an upstate New York district with Utica at its core and which includes Cooperstown (Boehlert's House office has a wall decorated with autographs of baseball Hall of Famers.) In recent years his moderate brand of Republicanism has engendered primary challenges from the right, but he has not had any trouble winning in the general election.

A strong supporter of the National Science Foundation (NSF), particularly its education programs, he engineered the 2002 reauthorization act that was supposed to double the Foundation's budget from 2003-2007. However, as he has often reminded the science community "authorizations are not appropriations" and the doubling goal fell in the wake of tightening budgets and shifting priorities. Earlier this year, the President announced the American Competitiveness Initiative (*see UPDATE January 16, 2006*), which included promises to significantly increase the NSF's budget.

Boehlert supported NSF's Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) directorate offering strong praise for the importance of these sciences at the American Sociological Association's 100th Anniversary reception last year.

Unlike many members who are appointed to the Science Committee in their first-term and who leave for more prestigious committees as soon as they can, Boehlert became a "lifer" on the panel and served science and his institution well.

HEALTH DISPARITIES (Continued from page 1)

In 2000, Congress established the National Center on Minority and Health Disparities (NCMHD) to “conduct and support . . . research, training, dissemination of information and other programs with respect to minority health conditions and other populations with health disparities.” The Center’s director was given the responsibility for coordinating all minority health research and other health disparity research conducted or supported by NIH (see *UPDATE*, November 6, 2000).

The Committee’s findings included:

- The lack of consensus regarding conceptual and operational definitions of disparities and the complexity of measuring health and health determinants poses challenges for the identification, understanding, monitoring, and elimination of health disparities.
- There is a continuing need for NIH-funded research to develop, test, and refine measures and conceptual approaches for assessing and monitoring health disparities. Research is required to answer fundamental questions: *Which factors are most critical to monitor? How can they best be measured?*
- Currently available information does not provide a full and accurate description of disparities between, and within racial and ethnic groups and across the full spectrum of socioeconomic status. Such data will provide an important source of for research on disparities and for monitoring progress toward reducing and eliminating disparities across the nation.

In response to the inadequate emphasis on social and behavioral determinants of health, the following recommendations were made:

- The Strategic Plan should include measurable targets and time periods for research capacity objectives. NIH, through the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities (NCMHD) should develop methods of measuring, analyzing and monitoring the results of programs that address research capacity, including workforce, institutional, infrastructure, and community-based participatory health disparity research objectives.

- The Plan’s communication programs should be organized as a specific trans-NIH effort with centralized coordination paying particular attention to the strategic planning, design, prioritization, implementation, and evaluation of efforts across NIH. This initiative should: be informed by advisory expertise; develop a surveillance system to identify information needs and availability, sources, behaviors, and use patterns; and promote attention to the issue of inequalities in health communications.
- Within NIH, a clear and timely budget process should be linked to the Strategic Plan, and it should be updated in a timely manner. Annual budgets should include information for NIH as a whole, and for each involved IC and office, and should detail allocations for the Strategic Plan goal areas and each objective. Trans-NIH budget information on efforts made in the major categories of research, research capacity, and communication also should be made available.

The Committee also addressed the strategic plans of the ICs and emphasized that the overall Strategic Plan’s goals and objectives “cannot be achieved unless they are adopted by ICs and reflected in their objectives and activities.” Noting the “impressive array of planned activities related to the overall Strategic Plan objectives, the Committee recommended that the “development of updated Strategic Plans should include assessments of the appropriateness of the individual strategic plans of the ICs, including whether they adequately reflect the overall goals and objectives of the NIH Strategic Plan.” In addition, the committee recommended that objectives should be time-based and targeted with measurable outcomes.

The Committee recommended that the NIH director review and assess the administrative staffing of the Center to ensure that it is sufficient to attend to its responsibilities, and that the increase of the science leadership and presence within NCMHD should be pursued by the leadership. This entails the appointment of additional eminent scientists, recognized in the areas of minority health and health disparities, and the establishment by NCMHD of committees and panels with relevant expertise from within and outside of the NIH.

More information on this report can be found at <http://www.iom.edu/CMS/3740/22356/33275.aspx>.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL PREVENTION BUDGET HEARING: OBESITY AMONG URGENT REALITIES

On March 15, Julie Gerberding, Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) appeared before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (LHHS) regarding appropriations for fiscal year 2007.

The CDC, which is the lead Federal agency for promoting health and safety, operates in 46 countries to prepare for new and emerging diseases and health crises. The President's request of \$8.2 billion for CDC in fiscal year '07, will help to support the overall preparedness efforts of the Centers' role to combat the "urgent risk threats" and the "urgent realities" facing our nation today.

The "urgent realities" Gerberding referenced, affect people across the life stages, such as obesity, hypertension, cardiovascular disease and stroke. Many of these are developing more frequently in the teenage years of life. Today 176,000 teenagers have risk factors for cardiovascular disease and will be at risk for heart attacks by the time they reach age 30, she emphasized.

The director pointed out that, in this country today, 4,000 people will be diagnosed with diabetes; 230 people today will have an amputation and 55 people will go blind from diabetes. As a result, the life expectancy for Americans will change. Type 2 diabetes, the kind of diabetes associated with obesity, is no longer occurring in mature adults, it's occurring in our children.

Gerberding expressed the critical importance of this problem today, but because they do not trickle throughout our society every day, they are under appreciated, and are not viewed as urgent. She further expressed, that there are no national trends of a turnaround in the obesity profile, and each year there is a higher proportion of obese people, and the degree of obesity is getting worse.

"You're saying obesity is a growing problem, so obviously, we have not totally addressed the situation," said Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH), Chairman of the Subcommittee. "It's so obvious that that's [obesity], the

greatest health problem we face and we've got to get more of a national focus on it," Rep. Don Sherwood (R-PA) added.

Gerberding responded that the CDC is refocusing its efforts by taking a closer look at each life stage, balancing preparedness and prevention.

Representative Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), raised concerns about CDC's lack of attention mental health Gerberding agreed that to mental health has been overlooked by the agency, but reassured the committee that the CDC is committed to improving mental health and working closely with Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in the future. "The function of protecting and developing health must rank even above that of restoring it when it is impaired," stressed Representative Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD).

"You're getting a good return on your investment with us." Gerberding stated, "If you spend a dollar on childhood vaccines, you save \$16; if you spend a dollar on keeping teenagers from smoking that first cigarette, you save \$20; if you spend a dollar on diabetes prevention, you save \$8.76."

Emphasizing the she agreed with Gerberding's assessment of "where we invest, we can make a difference," Representative Nita Lowey (D-NY) stressed that the programs designated for cuts in CDC's budget "will have a real negative impact."

The CDC remains committed to mobilizing programs and science to ultimately achieve the greatest health impact among the highest priority population, Gerberding concluded.

THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES RELEASES REPORT ON HISPANICS IN THE U.S.

The Census tells us that Hispanics are now the largest minority group in the United States and projects that by 2030 they will make up close to one-quarter of the country's population.

With this in mind the National Academies' National Research Council (NRC) appointed a distinguished committee to examine the situation for Hispanics in the United States.

Led by Princeton sociologist Marta Tienda, the NRC panel has produced two documents. *Multiple Origins, Uncertain Destinies: Hispanics and the American Future* summarizes the committees' findings. *Hispanics and the American Future* contains a series of papers examining specific topics related to the study. Faith Mitchell served as the co-editor of both volumes and the study director for the project.

At a briefing on March 1, Tienda noted that the U.S. is in the "midst of the Hispanic moment," as the nation faces the challenges presented and the issues raised by this growing part of the population. Hispanics, Tienda noted, are often lumped together, but in actuality represent 20 different nationalities. The report notes that the great immigrant influx of the past decade, will lead to a swelling second generation that scatters across the nation. This is a pattern already emerging in the growth of Hispanic populations in small-towns in North Carolina and in rural Iowa.

Although immigration was key to the growth of the U.S. Hispanic population in the 1990s, high birth rates among those currently in the U.S are and should continue to outstrip immigration for the foreseeable future. Those children will make up a considerable portion of the workforce in 2030 with growing opportunities as the majority white population ages and retires.

The report suggests that Hispanics need better education and training to take advantage of these demographic conditions. Tienda made a strong case for English proficiency as the key for success in the job market, higher learning, and everyday activities such as navigating health care systems and participating in the nation's political system.

The problem at the moment, the report indicates, is that too many Hispanics are failing to graduate from high school, leaving them ill-equipped to compete in an economy driven by technology and information. However, native-born Hispanics have almost caught up to blacks and non-Hispanic whites in mean years of education, according to the report, suggesting possible social mobility for the second and third generations of Hispanic immigrants.

The report also demonstrates that Hispanics are experiencing the nation's social and health problems. As with the rest of the country, too many Hispanic children are becoming overweight. In addition, the percentage of births to unmarried Hispanic mothers has climbed significantly in the last twenty years, almost tripling among Cuban immigrants.

Tienda concluded that the report recommended that "significant educational investments will not only foster improvements in [Hispanics'] health status, civic engagement, and economic productivity, but also contribute to U.S. prosperity." Both reports are available at <http://www.nap.edu>

OBSSR CELEBRATES A DECADE OF PROGRESS AND PROMISE

On June 21 – 22, 2006, the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) will hold a conference on the NIH campus to kick off a year long celebration of its 10th anniversary.

The event will highlight the Office's accomplishments, with a look to the future. The program will also showcase the social and behavioral science disciplines' contributions to health promotion and disease prevention in the context of three cross-cutting themes: 1) Cells to societal levels of inquiry; 2) Fundamental to clinical to population sciences; 3) Life-span/developmental phases.

Nobel laureates Daniel Kahneman and Eric Kandel are scheduled to present, with welcoming remarks from NIH Director, Elias Zerhouni. Investigators supported by the 27 NIH institutes and centers will present examples of cutting-edge, fundamental, translational, interdisciplinary, dissemination, and policy research. For more information and/or to register see: <http://obssr.od.nih.gov/OBSSR10th/intro.htm>.

VICTOR ROSENBLUM, FORMER COSSA PRESIDENT AND LONG TIME BOARD MEMBER, DIES AT 80

Victor Rosenblum, Nathaniel L. Nathanson Professor of Law Emeritus at the Northwestern School of Law, passed away on March 13 at the age of 80. Rosenblum was COSSA's President in 1987-88. He also served as the Association of American Law Schools' representative to the COSSA Board of Directors from 1984 to 1998; a tenure longer than any other member. His service was marked by a strong dedication to COSSA and its important work on behalf of the social and behavioral sciences.

Rosenblum joined the Northwestern Law Faculty in 1958 and except for two years as President of Reed College in Oregon from 1968-70, and various domestic and overseas visiting professorships, he remained at Northwestern until his death.

Prior to joining the Law Faculty, he served as Associate Counsel to the Subcommittee on Executive and Legislative Reorganization of the Committee on Government Operations in the U.S. House of Representatives. After earning a Ph.D. in political science from the University of California, Berkeley, he taught there for three years before going to Washington.

In addition to his presidency of COSSA, Rosenblum also achieved leadership positions in three COSSA Governing Member Associations, serving as president of the Association of American Law Schools in 1987 and the Law and Society Association from 1970-72, and as a member of the Council of the American Political Science Association. He also chaired the Board of Directors of the American Judicature Society and the Administrative Law Section of the American Bar Association. He served on the Board of Directors of the Law School Admissions Council, and as a Member, Consultant, and Senior Scholar of the Administrative Conference of the United States.

He was the author of The Making of a Public Profession, Constitutional Law: Political Roles of the Supreme Court, The Power to Govern, and Law as a Political Instrument as well as many law review articles. A number of these articles reflected his deeply held commitment to the right to life movement and his opposition to Roe v. Wade.

After earning Northwestern teaching awards in 2000 and 2001 Rosenblum took emeritus status in 2002, but continued to teach.

Rosenblum's A.B. and LL.B. degrees were from Columbia University, with his Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of California Berkeley.

A dear, jovial, sweet man who will be missed greatly, Rosenblum took ironic delight that because of his anti-abortion views, he was able to gain entrée to President Reagan and key members of his Administration. A President and Administration most of whose other positions, including severe cuts to federal funding of social and behavioral science research, Rosenblum abhorred.

OPPORTUNITIES IN SPATIAL SOCIAL SCIENCE

The Center for Spatially Integrated Social Sciences is sponsoring a number of summer workshops for those interested in learning more about Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

The Spatial Perspectives on Analysis for Curricular Enhancement (SPACE) program, intended for instructors of undergraduate students in the social sciences, will offer content knowledge in methods of spatial analysis, instructional resources, and professional development for curriculum planning and learning assessment.

The deadline for applications is **April 18, 2006**. There are no fees associated to participate. The workshops topics, places, dates, and topics are as follows:

- GIS and Spatial Modeling for the Undergraduate Social Science Curriculum, June 18-23, Columbus, Ohio.
- Remote Sensing and GIS Technologies for Undergraduate Curricula in the Social Sciences, July 23-28, Norman, Oklahoma.
- Spatial Analysis in the Social Science Curriculum: Enhancing Undergraduate Learning, July 31 – August 5, Santa Barbara, California.

For more information:
www.csiss.org/SPACE/workshops.

In addition, the Population Research Institute at Penn State University joins the CSISS to offer workshops in GIS science specifically tailored to population science.

The deadline for applications is **April 10, 2006**. There are no fees associated with the workshops. Dates and places are as follows:

- June 4-16 in State College, Pennsylvania
- July 10-22 in Santa Barbara, California

For more information:
www.csiss.org/GISPopSci/workshops

SUMMER TRAINING WORKSHOP ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AGING RESEARCH

Summer training workshops on African American Aging Research will be held **June 7-9**, at the University of Michigan.

Workshop objectives include:

- Identifying and mentoring investigators of multi-cultural backgrounds who are committed to conducting African- American aging research
- Contributing to the improvement of the quality and quantity of research conducted with the African -American aging population

To be eligible you must have a Ph.D., M.D., or equivalent degree, or be a Ph.D. candidate, and a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.

Six stipends of \$1,250 each will be awarded to those chosen to attend the 2006 training workshop to defray travel and hotel expenses.

For more information email Susan Fraizer-Kouassi at skouassi@umich.edu.

COSSA WELCOMES NEW ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

COSSA would like to welcome Ms. Pamela L. Pressley as the new Associate Director of Public Affairs. As the Associate Director for Public Affairs, Pamela is responsible for writing and editing COSSA's publications-the newsletter and the Annual Report as well as press releases.

Pamela will also assist COSSA's lobbying efforts. Pamela has worked with several grassroots and community based non-profit organizations and groups.

She received her bachelor's degree from Winthrop University in Rock Hill South Carolina and earned a Masters of Social Work from Howard University, with a concentration in community organization, advocacy, and social policy. Pamela is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Incorporated, a public service sorority. She enjoys outdoor activities and traveling.

CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS (COSSA)

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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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