

FY 1996 SPENDING STILL UNRESOLVED; PRESIDENT SET TO RELEASE 1997 PLAN

Final appropriations for FY 1996 remain unresolved for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, Labor, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, and State, and many independent agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Science Foundation, NASA, and the United States Information Agency. On March 15, Congress passed the eleventh stopgap continuing resolution (CR) for FY 1996, avoiding another government shutdown. The latest CR runs through March 22.

At the same time, Congress and the White House continue to push for an accord that will solve the deadlock that has now persisted almost six months into the fiscal year. On March 7, the House of Representatives passed a bill (H.R. 3019) that would fund all those departments and agencies mentioned above for the rest of the fiscal year. For the most part, funding levels remained at the numbers agreed to in the conference committees. Those bills were vetoed by the President last Fall. The House did add dollars back for some education programs, including \$5.9 million to save the Javits Fellowship program. It also provided contingency funding for others, such as the National Science Foundation's research account, which would receive an additional \$40 million above the \$2.274 conference level. These funds would be released only if a long-term budget deal provides savings in entitlement programs.

The Senate, still working on its version of a final FY 1996 bill as this is written, has been more generous with its funding levels. Trying to accommodate more of President Clinton's budget priorities than the House, the Senate has added back large amounts of funds for environmental protection, employment and training programs, education for the disadvantaged, student financial assistance, and school improvement programs. Once the Senate completes its version a conference committee must reconcile the differences. If the bill contains the riders on abortion,

nonprofit lobbying, and other riders currently in the House bill, the White House is threatening another presidential veto.

The long-term (formerly seven, now six-year) glide path to a balanced budget agreement remains elusive. The White House and Congress did reach an agreement to extend the debt ceiling until March 29 without any additional provisions. However, the Republicans continue to threaten to load up a long term debt extension bill with other legislative language.

Clinton FY 1997 Budget Details Due

In the meantime, the President will provide the details of his proposed Fiscal Year 1997 budget on March 19. This will fill in the specific agency funding proposals omitted from the bare-bones version released in early February (see *Update*, February 5). With the Republican controlled Congress already starting the hearing process for FY 1997, the President's proposals will be scoffed at and derided. The phrase "dead on arrival" will be resurrected for its annual appearance concerning Presidential budget submissions. However, it is clear that this budget proposal will be important for framing the debate between Clinton and his Republican rivals as we move

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through the election year of 1996.

With Senator Robert Dole (R-KS) now the certain GOP Presidential nominee, the politics of the budget process get even more problematic. Does Dole cooperate with Clinton to demonstrate his ability to get things done? How does Dole operate with the Republican majority in the House, particularly Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA) and the newer, more conservative members of the chamber? What is President Clinton's strategy? Does he want to deal, or is he content to run against a do-nothing Republican Congress?

NSF MAKES PRE-BUDGET APPEARANCE BEFORE APPROPRIATIONS PANEL

Despite the lack of both a final FY 1996 budget and the President's proposed FY 1997 budget, the House VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee held an oversight hearing on the National Science Foundation on March 6. NSF Director Neal Lane and National Science Board member John Hopcroft had a general discussion with Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Jerry Lewis (R-CA) and the other panel members on the Foundation's plans and programs. The Subcommittee has scheduled a full hearing on the FY 1997 budget proposal for May 2.

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Lane reiterated his call for increasing public understanding and support for science. Echoing his speech to the AAAS (see *Update*, February 19), Lane urged: "All members of the science and engineering research and education enterprise must make clearer to the public . . . how the outcomes of research and education help all Americans to lead better lives." He also suggested NSF needs to do a better job of "describing the benefits of past investments so the public enthusiastically supports today's investments."

The Director also pointed out that the federal government cannot move away from supporting "the long-term and risky investments required to pursue [fundamental] research." He cited a number of examples of the results of federal research support, most importantly the computer and the Internet. We cannot expect private industry, Lane declared, to make large investments in research whose outcomes may occur in unexpected areas.

Gingrich Support for Science Cited

Chairman Lewis noted that science enjoyed considerable support during the first session of the 104th Congress. Lewis cited Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA) as a staunch proponent, quoting him as saying: "I have a penchant for science. I believe strongly in research."

Since this was the appropriations committee, Lane did note the contrasts between the extraordinary movement across all fields of science -- a "Golden Age of Discovery" -- and the squeeze in budgets. In response to Rep. James Walsh's (R-NY) inquiry about alternatives to federal funding of basic science given the squeeze on funding, Lane again noted the character of basic science. Focusing on the unpredictability of scientific breakthroughs and impacts, he argued for an approach that stresses maximum flexibility.

Asked about the impact on NSF of the government shutdowns, Deputy Director Anne Petersen, noted that the backlog of 40,000 pieces of mail had been disposed of and that review panels were catching up with their work. However, there would be long-term effects on agency morale, she said, and cited a recent increase in retirements and retirement requests at the Foundation.

SBE Partnership with Industry Noted

Rep. Alan Mollohan (D-WV), ranking member on the Commerce Appropriations Subcommittee, asked about the Advanced Technology Program (ATP), a Commerce Department program to help industry that is the target of GOP budget-cutters. Lane tried to avoid getting enmeshed in a discussion of government "picking winners and losers," which the Republicans claim ATP condones. He did, however, discuss NSF's partnerships with industry including the Transformations to Quality Organizations program in the social, behavioral and economic science directorate. He also mentioned NSF's Agile Manufacturing Program, supported mainly by the Engineering Directorate, which includes a social and economic component.

The Foundation's education programs also came under review. The State Systemic Initiatives to change how mathematics and science are taught in elementary and secondary schools have received positive evaluations, according to Luther Williams, Assistant Director for Education and Human Resources. He predicted that some of the initiatives will become national models for improving science education, another indication of NSF's catalytic role in this area. Lane also mentioned NSF's Undergraduate Review (see *Update*, March 4).

Finally, Lewis inquired about the impact of reinventing government on NSF's priority setting agenda and its FY 1997 budget proposal. Without getting specific about numbers, Petersen noted that the budget submission will reflect the second round of the National Performance Review. However, since NSF only spends 4 percent of its budget on administration and management, it was difficult to find further savings in that area. The priorities for the agency would remain research project support, education and training, and then research facilities and instrumentation. Tradeoffs will be necessary within those categories, she said. Petersen did point out that in order to maintain the proper balance, facilities support should be kept at about 20 percent of NSF's portfolio.

SBE SEARCH CONTINUES

The National Science Foundation continues to seek candidates to replace Cora Marrett as Assistant Director for the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Directorate. Nominations and applications should be sent to AD/SBE Screening Committee, National Science Foundation, Office of the Director, Suite 1205, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22330. [FAX 703/306-0109] The new closing date is March 29, 1996.

VARMUS DISCUSSES NIH BEFORE SENATE PANEL

National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Harold Varmus and fifteen of the institute directors recently testified at a two-day hearing on NIH reauthorization held by the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. The Committee hopes to approve a reauthorization bill later this year.

Committee chair Senator Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS), in her opening statement, said the hearings "are in preparation for the agency's reauthorization this year. She emphasized that the reauthorization "is a priority of the committee...In my opinion, the NIH is a dramatic success story," said Kassebaum. She underscored that grants made by the NIH to researchers constitute the bulk of support for biomedical research throughout the country. "The underlying goal of this important investment of talent and dollars," continued Kassebaum, "is the improvement of the health of Americans."

Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) noting that she attended graduate school on a grant from the National Institute on Mental Health, expressed her concern not only with NIH's funding, but also "how to bring in the young investigators" and how to build institutional knowledge. "The nation's health is not a partisan battle," said Mikulski.

Varmus noted that "NIH is a confederacy of 24 organization units that seeks to expand fundamental knowledge about nature and behavior of living systems and to apply that knowledge to improve the health of human beings." He stressed that research undertaken by the NIH assumes many forms, occurs in

many places and employs many techniques. "Although each of the institutes and centers has a specific research orientation, there are many commonalities," said Varmus.

Using obesity to illustrate the wide variety of technical approaches required, Varmus noted that the program offices within the Office of the Director -- the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research, the Office of Research on Minority Health, the Office of Research on Women's Health, and the Office of Disease Prevention -- "help guide obesity research in the areas of their expertise."

Varmus explained that it is "largely through the work of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey" conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we know that obesity, a condition that disproportionately affects women, minorities, and the poor -- afflicts roughly one-third of the population over thirty. While emphasizing that in the long run, "the best prospects for control of obesity reside in a better understanding of its origins," Varmus noted that behavioral research shows long-term benefits to obese children receiving family-based therapies.

Challenges to the Continued Productivity of Research

Varmus emphasized that in order to remain in the "uncontested role as the world leader in medical research... the NIH --- and the American research enterprise generally -- must be capable of adapting to very substantial demographic, economic, and other changes in our society." Current demographic changes, said Varmus are creating new health problems. "These changes, he continued, "and many other that affect the distribution of illness must inevitably affect the emphasis we place on the study of various diseases. They also demand that we have the flexibility to respond as an institution to new health threats and to recurrences of old ones.

Varmus also noted that "the number of scientists working in fields supported by the NIH has increased in the past decade... The need for research in the health sciences," he said, "is unlikely to diminish in the decades ahead." NIH will not reduce its efforts to recruit new investigators, "especially from under-represented sectors of the population." Varmus also

assured the committee that training programs for graduate and post-graduate students will be maintained. However, he said, he agrees with a recent report from the National Research Council that contends that "trainees should be better acquainted with the wide variety of new career opportunities that have been created by the remarkable success of medical science."

In concluding, Varmus reported that the NIH has been working with Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala "to develop authorization proposals that will help advance scientific excellence in basic and clinical research." Among the proposals are extending the authorization of the Office of AIDS Research (OAR). Keeping OAR "will guarantee that NIH has the flexibility to respond immediately to the many promising new avenues of research that will help us fight AIDS," said Varmus. "Central to this flexibility is retention of the Office of AIDS Research's budgetary authority," he asserted.

PORTER RALLIES NIH SUPPORTERS

We are "in a position to shape the future of biomedical research," declared Rep. John Porter (R-IL) at the annual meeting of Research!America on March 13. The chairman of the House Labor, Health and Human Services and Education (Labor-HHS) Appropriations Subcommittee, told the group "We need a new way to make research a priority and shape research for a time to come." "There is no more vital endeavor" for government, Porter stated, than to generously support the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Discussing the successful 5.7 percent increase for NIH for FY 1996, Porter noted this "did not happen by chance." He reminded his listeners that the House Budget Resolution included a 5 percent cut that would have translated to a 25 percent cut over 5 years. The Senate Budget Resolution had included a 10 percent reduction. This was turned around through the efforts of Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-OR), to whom Porter gave generous praise. Porter also discussed how he educated 5 new members of his subcommittee on NIH's value, including visits from 7 Nobel laureates. He also took

these distinguished scientists to visit with Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA).

Emphasizing what worked in FY 1996 will not work in FY 1997, Porter insisted that more efforts on a broader base are necessary this year. A 6.5 percent increase is possible, he said, if everyone works aggressively. He called NIH advocates to target the House Budget Committee and its Chairman, Rep. John Kasich (R-OH), the House Appropriations Committee and its Chairman, Rep. Robert Livingston (R-LA), and every Member of the House and Senate. "Advocates for science must infect the public and members of Congress," with the importance of NIH, Porter declared. Working in Members' districts will be the key to success, according to Porter. And don't neglect the President, Porter warned, he has to be lobbied just as hard.

In closing, Porter emphasized that we need technology to grow the economy, to provide jobs that make for a high standard of living. If we lose our technological lead, we lose the future, insisted Porter.

HYMAN NAMED TO LEAD NIMH

National Institutes of Health Director Harold Varmus has named Steven E. Hyman as the new director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).

Hyman is currently associate professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School and director of the Harvard University Interfaculty Initiative in Mind/Brain/Behavior. He is also director of research in the department of psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital. When he takes office on April 15, he will replace Acting Director Rex Cowdry.

COSSA TESTIFIES BEFORE HOUSE AGRICULTURE SUBCOMMITTEE

David Brown, Professor of Rural Sociology at Cornell University, represented COSSA before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture and Rural Development on March 5. Peter Barry, Professor of Agricultural Finance at the University of Illinois co-authored the Brown's testimony.

Brown urged the Subcommittee to: increase funding from \$4 to \$8 million for the Markets, Trade and Rural Development component of the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants program; change the name of the component to Economic and Social Systems to broaden the range of problems to research; fund the Managing Change in Agriculture initiative; fund at \$1 million the research programs administered by the four Regional Centers for Rural Development; and continue support for the Economic Research Service as an integral part of the nation's knowledge base on agriculture and rural America.

In his written testimony, Brown presented numerous examples of social science research's impact on agriculture and rural areas. These include research on the revival of widespread population growth, changes in global economic institutions that affect U.S. agricultural trade, and the restructuring of agriculture and rural society. Brown also noted the studies on the economic returns from agricultural research. The testimony also cited research on the relationship between farm policy and land values including the linkages between agricultural economic and environmental objectives.

Brown also told the Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Joe Skeen (R-NM), that many of the agricultural problems cited by earlier witnesses before the panel, while appearing to be biological and physical science related also had social and behavioral components to them. This, he said, underscores the importance of the social and behavioral sciences to rural America.

FOSTERING SUCCESSFUL FAMILIES: A COSSA SEMINAR

A March 1 breakfast seminar, *Fostering Successful Families*, brought three leading social scientists to Capitol Hill to discuss their research findings before an audience of 55 congressional and federal agency staff and representatives of public interest groups.

Effects of Divorce on Children

Andrew Cherlin, Professor of Public Policy at Johns Hopkins University, discussed the effects of divorce of children. He began by noting the recent movement to repeal no-fault divorce laws,

commenting that previous attempts to strengthen families through restrictive divorce laws were unsuccessful. "Family law . . . follows rather than precedes social change," he said. Under previous fault-based laws, people often fabricated incidents to obtain a divorce, Cherlin said. He cited statistical trends in divorce that showed it rising in the 1970s, peaking in 1981, and declining slightly since then.

Cherlin said that discussions of the effects of divorce on children are frequently pulled in two extremes, with one camp seeing dire consequences, the other lauding the resiliency of children. The truth, Cherlin told the audience, is somewhere in the middle: "divorce is not harmless to children, but most kids are not seriously harmed by divorce in the long-term." He said that the first few years are the most difficult, and that this is exacerbated if children are involved in continuing conflicts between the parents. He said that research on joint custody has shown that, "when kids feel caught in the middle, they do worse." He urged laws and policies to try to insulate children. After citing several studies that show increased likelihood of alcohol and mental health problems and dropping out of school for children of divorce, Cherlin said that his research found that many of these problems existed before the divorce occurred. Many of these effects, he stated, are products of families not working well. Cherlin concluded by saying that divorce increases the risk factors for kids. He urged policies that balance cultural messages of what we think families ought to be with both compassion for children and consideration of economic realities faced by many families, particularly single-parent, in this country.

Trends in Fatherhood

Frank Furstenberg, Professor of Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, discussed research on the role of fathers. The director of a thirty-year research study of a group of teenage mothers in Baltimore, Furstenberg stated that marriage is becoming a "luxury item" in a time of fewer and later marriages. The reasons for this, he said, are skepticism about the success of such unions, economic insecurities, and increasing gender mistrust "that is pulling apart men and women."

Furstenberg noted two simultaneous trends in fatherhood: disengagement and the rise of the nurturing father. The former, based on surveys he has

conducted, showed nearly half of men who were not living with their children had not seen them in the past year. The other trend is found in men, not exclusively upper-middle class, but those who have the time and resources to invest in their children. Many of these men are married to women who have demanding careers. Furstenberg said that this engagement in child-rearing is "not just fashion," but a lasting change in the emotional and cultural investment in children. He noted that this bifurcation leads "to a division of haves and have nots" that does not follow, but rather is intertwined, with larger economic stratification. Echoing Cherlin, Furstenberg said he was supportive of "the new rhetoric of responsibility," but said that it must be combined with real economic opportunity for all Americans.

Gender and Labor Markets

Susan Hanson, Director of the Clark University School of Geography, discussed the role of gender in shaping labor markets and division of household work. She began by arguing that "traversing distance involves real time and real effort and has implications for fostering successful families." Hanson conducted a survey of households and employers in Worcester, MA regarding women's labor market decisions and household work responsibilities. She found that men whose wives are in high status occupations do more household work than men whose wives are in lower status occupations. Not coincidentally, she argued, the survey showed that those who take on responsibility tend to have shorter work trips. Hanson said that women generally work closer to home in lower-paying jobs, particularly those jobs that are part-time. She argued that distance is part of a strategy families use to combine paid work and household work.

Hanson said that employers play a role in people's attempts to combine family and wage work through several ways: they are "very savvy geographers" who locate their enterprises to tap into a particular labor market; they hold stereotypical assumptions about women as workers particularly as it relates to household roles; they incorporate travel time into their hiring decisions; they pay different wages for the same work in different parts of a metropolitan area; and they vary in their flexibility to accommodating workers' family needs. The community, Hanson said, also plays a key role, as communities differ substantially in the resources they

offer to residents, such as housing, child care, public transportation, and health and social service agencies. Long-term Worcester residents, she found in her research, were better able to tap into available resources to help balance work and family needs.

A lively question and answer period followed, discussing issues such as the role of grandparents, remarriage, gender mistrust, and welfare reform. COSSA will publish a full transcript of the event later this Spring. To obtain a copy, call 7 (202) 842-3525.

COATES TOUTS BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE IN AIDS PREVENTION

Speaking recently as part of the NIH Behavioral and Social Sciences Lecture Series, Thomas Coates, Director, Center for AIDS Prevention Studies, University of California, San Francisco, promoted the contributions of behavioral and social science in the fight against AIDS.

Stating that a successful AIDS vaccine remains out of reach, a combination of behavior change as well as coverage of the population is going to be necessary, he said. Presenting data that demonstrates the power of intervention, Coates maintained that if risk-behavior is cut in half, the AIDS epidemic can be eradicated. Behavioral changes will still be necessary, even if an effective vaccine is developed, to ensure full protection.

Coates commended the efforts of Ellen Stover, Director of the Office on AIDS at the National Institute of Mental Health, in spurring social and behavioral research on the disease at NIH. However, in discussing the history of AIDS research at NIH, he noted the difficulty of gaining support for this research. Despite this, "there is a large and impressive program of AIDS behavior research" that has paid off, said Coates. Coates' point has been echoed by a number of recent reports.

A complete scientific response to HIV prevention, Coates contended, includes: a strong commitment to fundamental basic social and behavioral science; innovative, theory-based interventions to define risk behavior in at-risk populations; scientific data to inform policies; scientific data to inform ethical standards and ethics; and rapid transfer of knowledge to those who need it most.

Future speakers in this series include Frank Furstenberg on teenage pregnancy (March 25), and Robert Ader and Arthur Stone on psycho-neuroimmunology (April 30). For more information contact Dr. Norman Krasnegor, 301/496-6591.

SOCIOLOGY, PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATIONS RELEASE VIOLENCE REPORTS

Recent reports by released by the American Sociological Association (ASA) and the American Psychological Association (APA) highlight the important contributions social and behavioral science research can bring to efforts to control violence, and offer suggestions for future study.

The ASA report, *Social Causes of Violence: Crafting a Science Agenda*, highlights recent social science research on violence, identifies priority areas for further study, and recommends a national research initiative on violence. "The pervasiveness of violence and the complexity of studying this human social behavior commend it as a priority for science investments," state the authors of the report, ASA Executive Officer Felice J. Levine and researcher Katherine J. Rosich. Copies of the report can be obtained by contacting ASA at (202) 833-3410.

In looking at the issue of family violence, APA's *Presidential Task Force on Violence and the Family*, found that family violence and abuse are "significantly under-reported at all levels of society" and noted difficulties in collecting data.

The report, which studies the issue of family violence, makes several recommendations, including the initiation of a long-term, comprehensive, prospective program of epidemiologic research on violence in research; research on the social contexts in which family violence occurs, and improved data classification and collection. To obtain a copy of the report, contact APA at (202) 336-5500.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The next issue of Update will present our summary and analysis of President Clinton's proposed Fiscal Year 1997 budgets for over 40 agencies that support social and behavioral science research.

It will be published April 15.

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