

# Consortium of Social Science Associations

# COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

Volume XVI, Number 3

February 10, 1997

## RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FARE WELL IN CLINTON SPENDING PLAN

The Clinton administration released its FY 1998 budget on February 6. Promising to create a \$17 billion surplus by 2002, the plan calls for spending \$1.69 trillion in FY 1998, which begins October 1 of this year. This opening salvo in the annual budget game was not greeted with too much derision by the Republican-led Congress, which will get to fill in the details during the appropriations process that usually takes until the end of this fiscal year (and sometimes beyond) to complete.

In order to balance the budget by 2002 the President claims that \$252 billion in net deficit reduction will be necessary. Accusing the President of reviving "rosy scenario" in its economic forecasts, the GOP argued that the figure is closer to \$430 billion. In the President's budget plan, \$137 billion of the \$252 billion required reductions will come from discretionary spending. The administration proposes to eliminate 200 programs in the next five years. The rest of the savings would come from slowing spending on Medicare and Medicaid. The President has also proposed a package of \$98.4 billion in tax cuts that will be partially offset by \$76 billion in new taxes on corporations, investors and airline travelers.

### Science Budgets Slated for Increase

White House Science Adviser John Gibbons presented the budget overview for research and development. The President's FY 1998 budget increases total federal research and development funding by more than \$1.6 billion to \$75.5 billion, an increase of about 2 percent. The civilian-defense ratio improves slightly, as the civilian share increases by 1 percent to 46 percent. Basic research climbs 3 percent to \$15.3 billion. Applied research is up 4 percent; increasing 6 percent on the civilian side, but decreasing by 1 percent on the defense side. University-based research increases by \$289 million, to a total of \$13.3 billion. The budget proposal includes a one year extension of the Research and Experimentation tax credit. The administration

continues to seek increased funding for the Advanced Technology Program that most Republicans abhor.

Gibbons asserted that the budget plan proposes civilian R&D to grow by 2 percent (nominal) between 1998 and 2002. He stated that "this presents a solid investment, given the fact that the budget will eliminate the deficit . . . over the same time period." The Science adviser hedged his bets by noting that new initiatives would receive increases each year "at the time that year's budget request is prepared and submitted to Congress." Other analysts have calculated the R&D budget declining in real terms by close to 20 percent in the next five years.

The President is proposing a \$3.367 billion budget for the National Science Foundation, a \$97 million, or 3 percent increase, over FY 1997. For Research and Related Activities the proposed increase is \$80 million or 3.3 percent. The Social, Behavioral and Economic Science Directorate would receive a 6.5 percent or \$7.8 million increase, if the budget were enacted as submitted. Two new initiatives at SBE are Learning and Intelligent Systems and Urban Approaches.

The National Institutes of Health receive \$13.1 billion in the proposed budget, up from \$12.7 billion in FY 1997. This is only an increase of 2.6 percent. However, NIH will do better with the Congress, where

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Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA), who chairs the relevant appropriations subcommittee, has already promised a 7.5 percent increase. Among the individual institutes, Drug Abuse is a big winner.

### **Increases for Education Research and Statistics**

The President's big thrust in education carries along the Office of Educational Research and Improvement. There is an \$8.3 million or 15 percent increase for the research institutes that would fund significantly more Field Initiated Studies. The budget also proposes a \$16 million, or 33 percent increase for the National Center for Education Statistics. International education receives a slight increase. The Javits Graduate Fellowship program is totally absorbed into the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need program, although there is a small amount of money to finish out current fellowships.

At the Justice Department, the National Institute of Justice is slated to go from \$42 million to \$49 million, with NIJ seeking to dramatically expand its drug use forecasting programs. The Bureau of Justice Statistics is basically level funded. At Commerce, there is the big ramp up for the 2000 Census and the Bureau of Economic Analysis receives a \$6 million increase to \$47 million. At the Agriculture Department, the President once again will try to ratchet up the National Research Initiative Competitive Grants program to \$130 million from its current \$94 million. The Economics Research Service

has a slight increase to \$54.3 million. The National Agricultural Statistical Service receives another significant increase to \$119 million, up over 19 percent. Human Nutrition Research programs go up by \$12 million

At the Department of Health and Human Resources, the budget proposes a \$14 million, or less than 1 percent, increase for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with spending for AIDS/HIV up \$17 million, while prevention grants are decreased. The National Center for Health Statistics would receive a \$3 million increase, with most of its budget (\$70.1 out of \$89.4 million) coming from the 1 percent Public Health Service Evaluation set-aside. Policy research returns to the \$9 million level, after a one-time \$9.5 million appropriation for a GAO study of medical savings accounts. The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research would receive \$149 million, of which \$87 million would be direct appropriations, and \$62 million would be inter-agency transfers.

### **NEH Up; USIA Down**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics will continue revising the Consumer Price Index and receive an \$18 million increase. The United States Information Agency educational and cultural affairs bureau suffers a 14 percent decrease for its programs. The President proposes a \$25 million increase for the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Bureau of Transportation Statistics receives a proposed \$6.3 million increase to \$31.1 million.

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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 scientists. *Update* is published 22 times per year. Individual subscriptions are available from COSSA for \$65; institutional subscriptions, \$130, overseas mail, \$130. ISSN 0749-4394. Address all inquiries to COSSA, 1522 K Street, NW, Suite 836, Washington, D.C. 20005. Phone: (202) 842-3525, Fax: (202) 842-2788.

**In the next issue of *Update*, COSSA will present and extensive summary an analysis of the President's proposed budget. It will include details of proposed spending for over 40 agencies that support social and behavioral science, and will also offer funding trends in recent years. It will be published March 10.**

## NEW SCIENCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN OUTLINES AGENDA, PRIORITIES

"I am strongly opposed to Congress micro-managing federal agencies," declared Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI), the new Chairman of the House Science Committee at a February 6 press conference, his first public discussion of his agenda and priorities for the 105th Congress. He suggested that it is not the role of the Science Committee to tell agency heads how to structure their agencies. Presumably this includes Neal Lane and the question of how many scientific directorates NSF should have.

At the same time Sensenbrenner, who takes over the Committee from retired Rep. Robert Walker (R-PA), stressed that the Committee, "will be aggressive in its oversight of federally-funded programs." A strong, fiscal conservative, the new Chairman defined oversight as "showing the American taxpayer they are getting their money's worth." He hopes to work with the science community to explain the purpose of research "in plain town hall language."

The new Chairman also struck a conciliatory note toward the Democratic opposition, mentioning a number of times his hope that the Committee will "work in a bipartisan fashion." Ranking Democrat Rep. George Brown (D-CA) also noted that he expected "vastly improved relations with the new Chairman" in this Congress. He and Walker clashed repeatedly during Walker's two year tenure as head of the panel. Sensenbrenner noted that he had brought the Democrats into discussion of an "oversight" document the Committee was preparing and that he had accepted all of their recommendations.

In laying out his agenda, Sensenbrenner declared that is his intention to "look beyond the narrow issue of direct federal funding and management of science and address the full range of activities that are relevant to the Nation's science and technology enterprise, including corporate research and development." On the agenda for the 1997 legislative session, Sensenbrenner expressed his hope for early passage of a commercial space bill, two-year authorizations for the National Science Foundation, NASA, the Department of Energy's civilian research and development, EPA R&D, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Institute for

Science and Technology, the U.S. Fire Administration, and the Federal Aviation Administration's R&D.

### Subcommittee Chairs Named

Although the Committee postponed its February 5 organizational meeting because of continued discussions over the size of the panel and the number of seats each party would have, Sensenbrenner did announce the four subcommittee chairs. Two are holdovers: Rep. Steve Schiff (R-NM) at Basic Research and Rep. Connie Morella (R-MD) at Technology. Rep. Dana Rohrbacher (R-CA) moves from the Energy and Environment Subcommittee to replace Sensenbrenner as head of the Space Subcommittee. Rep. Ken Calvert (R-CA) replaces Rohrbacher at Energy and Environment. Rep. Vern Ehlers (R-MI) was introduced as the continuing Vice-Chair of the Committee, with, according to the Chairman, enhanced responsibilities to serve as a liaison between the panel and the scientific organizations.

A supporter of the Balanced Budget Amendment, Sensenbrenner noted that he expects flat or slowly declining S&T budgets in the next few years. He said that it was very important to invest in S&T "to keep America first," for economic and technology reasons. Noting the imminent implementation of the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA), Sensenbrenner invited the scientific community "to join me in examining how we define 'value' received from our R&D investment." He also expects to review the important role of government-university-industry relationships.

In response to questions, Sensenbrenner announced his opposition to a Department of Science. He did embrace the idea of a unified science and technology budget. He seemed to favor an appropriations situation where science agencies would compete against each other, rather than the current situation where they are dispersed through many appropriations subcommittees and compete against non-science government activities. He did acknowledge that the chances of altering appropriation subcommittees' jurisdictions was nil.

## GREENSPAN BACKS CPI REVISION, INDEPENDENT PANEL

Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan endorsed the recent call to revise downward the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and urged Congress to create an independent panel to determine future cost-of-living adjustments for federal beneficiaries.

In telling the Senate Finance Committee on January 30 that he believes the CPI is overstated by 0.5 and 1.5 percentage points a year, Greenspan echoed the findings of the Boskin Commission, a bipartisan panel created by the Senate that said the measure overstates inflation by 1.1 percentage points annually (see *Update*, December 16, 1996).

Moreover, Greenspan said that while the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) seeks to correct one of its most well-known measures, an independent commission should assess the accuracy of the CPI, including examining "the latest research on the sources and magnitude of the bias." Greenspan said that this panel should set annual cost-of-living adjustment rates for federal benefits such as Social Security.

BLS has kept an arm's length from the Boskin recommendations, saying that it recognizes the upward bias in the CPI -- but disagrees on some of the specifics -- and is taking action to improve the measure. BLS Commissioner Katharine Abraham told the Senate that she has "no basic disagreement" with the Boskin findings, but disputed its assessment of the extent to which BLS factors in quality changes. What Boskin did not explore enough, she said, were decreases in quality -- as an example, air travel where seats are smaller, more crowded together, and meals are less likely to be served.

Michael Boskin, chair of the Council of Economic Advisers in the Bush White House and currently a Stanford economics professor, appeared before two Senate hearings in late January to discuss his panel's findings. He said he was concerned about media reports that have implied a rift between his study panel and the Bureau. Boskin said that BLS "has not been static" in addressing the accuracy of the measure, and did not want anyone to think that his committee believes BLS is apathetic or inaccurate in its data

collection and analysis. Addressing those who believe there is no error in the CPI, Boskin called for "technical experts . . . not interest groups" to assist the transition to a more accurate index.

Speaking at the two hearings, Senators generally acknowledged the important role the CPI plays in our economy and in the policy making process, and supported some form of revision. Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) did, however, say that Congress needs to consider the impact of these "esoteric arguments" on individual Americans, for whom it is more than just a "debate about economic statistics."

## FUND FOR RURAL AMERICA SOLICITATION ANNOUNCED

The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 established an account in the U.S. Treasury to provide \$100 million for three years for rural development programs and a competitive grant program to support research, education, and extension activities. The Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CREES) has announced that it will spend \$33.5 million in FY 1997 on the new competitive grants program part of this Fund for Rural America (FRA). Applications for projects grants up to \$600,000 per project for four years may be submitted. The announcement appears in the *Federal Register*, January 29, 1997 pp. 4382-4393.

The FRA will provide a short-term opportunity to invest in innovative, high impact research, education and extension programs and projects to aid farmers, ranchers, and rural communities as they face transitions due to changes in federal natural resource, policy, increasing globalization, and demographic shifts. Farming no longer dominates economic activity in rural America. Most rural jobs are now found in manufacturing, service or government.

The FRA allows, for the first time, the integration of research, education and extension activities for joint funding. The Fund Core Initiative solicits project proposals focusing on: international competitiveness, profitability, and efficiency; environmental stewardship; and rural community enhancement. Although projects will be funded in each of these particular areas, it is at the intersections of the three that provide unique opportunities for the research to

have the greatest practical applications on rural America.

A second area eligible for funding focuses on the Secretary's Initiative to ensure a safe, competitive, nutritional, and accessible food system. Included here are economic analyses and impact research and market feasibility studies with regard to food production. The development and delivery of educational materials regarding regulations related to controlling hazardous pathogens is another area in this initiative. In addition, research on food choice behavior and food safety training come within the purview of this part of the FRA.

In assessing proposals to the FRA the following priorities will apply: a systems-based approach; inter- or multidisciplinary approaches; leveraging prior investments in research and development; and innovative collaborations and partnerships. Project grant applications are due by April 28, 1997.

A subsequent announcement will solicit applications for Fund for Rural America Centers that will spend \$7.6 million. In order to receive consideration under the later solicitation, those interested in establishing a Center must submit an application for a FRA Center Planning Grant by March 24, 1997. The CREES expects the solicitation for the full Center award to occur six months after the planning grants are awarded.

For more information contact: Patrick O'Brien, CREES, USDA, Stop 2240, Washington, D.C. 20250-2240. Phone: 202/401-1761. For application materials call: 202/401-5048.

#### **REPORT: MORE USE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE IN PUBLIC POLICY**

The National Academies of Science and Engineering and the Institute of Medicine have synthesized, summarized and highlighted the main conclusions from nearly 100 recent studies in a series of six reports collectively titled *Preparing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. The reports are viewed as a succinct way to help inform the administration and Congress, as well as the public, about the principal conclusions from key academy-complex studies.

In issuing the reports, the three Presidents — Bruce Alberts (NAS), William Wulf (NAE) and Ken Shine (IOM) -- specifically addressed four issues related to the scientific and engineering enterprise that require action. One focused on the use of research to guide policy decisions. The Presidents declared that "Valuable resources are wasted every time an important policy decision is made without regard to the science and technology research that could be tapped to inform that decision." Specifically, they note: "The behavioral and social sciences, for example, have made great strides in contributing to a better understanding of human behavior, but this research continues to be poorly appreciated and under used, both by the public and elected officials." The leaders called for greater use of these studies and government support for "well-constructed studies to evaluate the effect of prior policies . . ."

Alberts, Wulf, and Shine also called for action to alleviate the underachievement of America's students in science, mathematics, and technology. Calling on all major sectors of the economy — the federal and state governments, corporate America, as well as the educational enterprise — to take responsibility and to take explicit action for improving American education, the three Presidents proclaimed that "If the U.S. is unable to provide highly skilled workers within our borders, our corporations will relocate overseas to find workers with the skills needed."

Noting the recent squeeze on federal research budgets, the Presidents urged a reversal of the "disinvestment" in science and technology. "It is shortsighted and naive to believe that our national standing of scientific prowess and world leadership will remain the same with a substantially weakened federal investment," they declared. They also emphasized the use of "rigorous merit review, so that precious federal dollars go toward funding only the very best in science and engineering research."

The leaders also addressed the issue of health care delivery quality. They challenged public policy makers to approach the current and potential problems in this area with the same vigor and sophistication that issues of cost containment have been confronted.

The six reports cover the following areas: *Science and Engineering Research in a Changing World, The Education Imperative, The Environment and the*

*Human Future, Technology and the Nation's Future, Challenges Facing a Changing Society, and Focusing on Quality in a Changing Health Care System.*

The reports and the statement are available on the Internet at [www2.nas.edu/21st](http://www2.nas.edu/21st). Questions may be addressed to Susan Turner-Lowe at 202/334-2138.

### **NSF SUPPORTS TRANSFORMATIONS TO QUALITY ORGANIZATIONS**

John Pepper, CEO of Proctor and Gamble, has proclaimed: "... I believe that we need a much larger body of serious research in quality management -- methodical, quantitative, value-added, collaborative research that can be applied across thousands of enterprises to improve competitiveness, particularly on bottom-line results." To fulfill Pepper's vision, the National Science Foundation, the American Society for Quality Control, and a number of America's major corporations have committed \$9 million to NSF's Transformation to Quality Organizations (TQO) program for three years of research project funding.

NSF manages the program and selects the grant recipients according to established Foundation merit review processes. The goal is to conduct basic research on issues related to organizational management effectiveness. The research must be based on partnerships between investigators and firms or other organizations.

For the 1994-95 period 16 projects received funding. Among them were "Leadership of Technical Professional Teams." This three-year study, led by Michael Beyerlin at the University of North Texas, has researchers examining 25 teams involving more than 200 professional technical workers at six organizations. The multidisciplinary research group comes from five disciplines: anthropology, computer science and cognitive systems, engineering, management, and psychology. Preliminary findings show fairly widespread worker confusion over terminology and issues such as compensation, advancement, and evaluation, which undermines implementation of the team approach. There is also a common experience of difficulty in adding new members to teams. This work process creates stress, pain, and work overload, which most organizations do

not take actions to dissipate. Most workers in these situations suffer from a lack of training in coping with team challenges. In addition, researchers have encountered fear of company downsizing that creates further negative attitudes toward teams.

A second project looks at "Fast Product Innovation and Product Quality: Strategic Alliance or Tradeoff." This three-year project, led by Barbara Flynn of Iowa State University, examines a set of eight research cases to build theories related to various aspects of the relationship between quality and fast-cycle product innovation. The research cases are based on two actual product development projects. The most salient values of quality management for fast product innovation are customer focus, cooperation, prevention, and belief in the inherent goodness of people. There, also, did not seem to be a tradeoff between quality and innovation speed in the projects under investigation.

In the 1995-96 period, the original 16 projects received continuation funding and an additional nine grants received money. These include: "Technological and Organizational Determinants of Transformations to Quality Across U.S. Manufacturing Industries." This two-year study, conducted by Richard Florida of Carnegie Mellon University, focuses on technological and organizational factors to help explain the ways the transformation to quality practices differs across U.S. manufacturing industries and what accounts for these differences. Using survey data analysis and in-depth field research, the study involves two key partner organizations, each with considerable experience in disseminating quality practice across industries: the Chicago Manufacturing Center; and the Toyota Supplier Center.

Another new study examines "High Performance Workplaces in Services: Integration of Practices and Delivery Channels in Banking." This three-year investigation, led by Patrick Harker of the University of Pennsylvania, examines quality management in the heretofore overlooked, service sector of the economy. Specifically, the study seeks to ascertain how financial institutions are deploying the practices associated with high-performance workplaces and the measure the impact of these practices on the quality and efficiency of their service delivery processes. Emphasis is on customer-defined measures of quality and the role of the front-line service provider.

## SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

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

### Transformations to Quality Organizations Program

This announcement provides guidelines for the third year of a program to support interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary research (i.e., involving engineering and management and/or social science disciplines) on quality. Research supported by this program must be based on partnerships between researchers and firms or other organizations. The objectives are to support research to develop theories, concepts, and methodologies for improved transformations to quality organizations, and to encourage the development of new tools or processes leading to quality improvements in organizations. The results of this research should enable US organizations --in both the private and public sector-- to implement quality improvements more rapidly and successfully. The impact of these changes should include improved work processes and technologies, products and services, customer satisfaction and financial performance.

**Research Domain:** Proposals in response to this announcement should come from interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary teams that integrate or combine perspectives from engineering, statistics, marketing, operations management, accounting, organizational behavior, management science, economics, information systems, anthropology, sociology, psychology, technology studies, and/or other disciplines, as appropriate.

**Proposal Guidelines:** There are three goals in supporting this research: to improve the knowledge base and research methods; to improve practice; and to improve education related to quality principles and practices at the organizational level. The following criteria will serve as the basis for evaluation of research proposals:

- Proposals must reflect a real partnership between researchers and one or more firms or organizations;
- Proposals should reflect the integration of engineering and management and/or social science perspectives;
- Research that is proposed must include data from organizations;
- Proposals should demonstrate potential contributions to both theory in the field of quality and improvements in quality-related practices;
- Proposals must build on existing research, and must represent clear value-added over existing literature;
- Proposals must include a description of the intended methodology, and must be methodologically sound;
- Proposals must include plans for disseminating results to practitioners as well as to the research community; and
- In addition to the special evaluation criteria for TQO program set forth above, all proposals will be evaluated in accordance with standard NSF criteria outlined in the NSF Grant Proposal Guide.

**Evaluation:** Proposals will be evaluated by an external merit review panel that includes experts from academia and industry. NSF expects to make somewhere between eight and 12 new awards in the range of \$50,000 to \$100,000 per year for one, two or three years.

**Deadlines:** Twenty (20) copies of full proposals, including one copy bearing original signatures, must be submitted in conformance with the guidelines in NSF's Grant Proposal Guide (GPG). The twenty copies must be received at NSF no later than **March 17, 1997**.

**Contact:** For additional information: James W. Dean, Jr. (jdean@nsf.gov), Program Director, Transformations to Quality Organizations, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22230, (703) 306-1757 x7210.

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