

**APPROPRIATIONS OFF TO ROCKY START:
CAPS LEAD TO CUTS IN ALLOCATIONS** *HS*

The march toward passage of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2000 appropriations bills is stalled in the quagmire of the spending limitations imposed by the Balanced Budget Agreement of 1997. The "caps" on spending, viewed as unrealistic in this new era of budget surpluses, have led one appropriations staffer to suggest "playing golf until September," when serious negotiations between the Congress and the White House will begin. The words "government shutdown" have already appeared in the press.

Despite all this, both Houses have tried to move the process forward. The allocations to the thirteen Appropriations Subcommittees have been made. Many view the allocations as tentative and are already seeking ways to ameliorate some of the damage. The Defense Subcommittee received a significant increase over last year's appropriated level; \$19 billion in the House and \$14 billion in the Senate. To accommodate this boost, the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Subcommittee received \$10 billion less in the House and \$8 billion less in the Senate. To try and double NIH's budget under these numbers would create havoc with the other portions of the bill. The allocation to the VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Subcommittee, funder of the National Science Foundation, was \$5.7 million less in the House and \$9.6 billion less in the Senate. Under these allocations, NSF could not possibly expect an increase, since VA Medical Care and HUD Section 8 housing are higher priorities for the Subcommittee. The former because of traditional support, the latter because of legal requirements. The Commerce-Justice-State Subcommittee received \$3 billion less in the House and \$2.5 billion less in the Senate. If these numbers hold, which most expect they will not, it will be very difficult to enact the three bills.

House Speaker Dennis Hastert's (R-IL) hope to pass three of the thirteen appropriation bills before Memorial Day will not happen. Representative Tom Coburn (R-OK) has stalled the agriculture bill by

trying to "amend it to death." Coburn has threatened to offer 115 amendments to the bill, including attempts, so far unsuccessful, to reduce research spending. Coburn is upset that the bill spends too much. The Appropriations Committee has already reduced the National Research Initiative program by almost \$14 million from the FY 1999 level. It also continued to prohibit funding of the Fund for Rural America and the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems.

The Republican leadership pulled the Treasury, Postal Service, General Government bill from full committee markup, because of threats by Democrats to add gun control amendments. Thus, Representatives James Walsh (R-NY) and David Price (D-NC) never got a chance to offer their amendment prohibiting the implementation of the changes to OMB Circular A-110 regarding data release policy until a study is made (See *UPDATE* May 17, 1999). The Legislative Branch bill never made it to the House floor either.

Fix-It Solutions

Scenarios abound to fix this mess. Senate Appropriations Chairman Ted Stevens (R-AK) suggested using unspent FY 1999 funds, particularly in defense, to help non-defense discretionary spending in FY 2000. He also claimed the Senate allocations are somewhat flexible. Other Members of Congress are suggesting a freeze at last year's levels for everything except defense. A problem with this

Inside *UPDATE*...

- Census Funded for Rest of FY 1999; Monitoring Board Changes
- IOM/NAS Examine Research and Training Issues
- Conference Examines Impact of Information Revolution
- Education Research: Changes Needed
- Coalition Presents Exhibition of NSF Supported Research

solution is that it would exceed the caps as well. The White House points to the revenue raising offsets in its budget proposal that would allow spending increases and still remain within the caps. Nobody takes these seriously, since they included using tobacco settlement money the Federal government is unlikely to get.

Complicating these matters is the political game both parties are playing with Social Security. Both have vowed to use the surplus to "save Social Security." The Republicans are upset that the Social Security surplus (the budget without this surplus would still be in deficit) has been used for "emergency spending" in FY 1999 regular and supplemental appropriations bills. The House has passed a "lock-box" amendment that would prohibit using the Social Security surplus for anything other than spending on Social Security. The Democrats are enjoying the Republican dilemma between "locking away" the surplus and trying to pass FY 2000 appropriations bills with draconian spending numbers. The Democrats, for the moment, appear unwilling to help the Republicans out of this dilemma, since they too are committed to saving Social Security. Thus, it now appears that once again we are headed toward a showdown between the White House and the Congress, probably sometime in late September or early October.

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CENSUS FUNDED FOR REST OF FY 1999; MONITORING BOARD CHANGES DH

On May 21 President Clinton signed the 1999 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (H.R. 1141) which provides "emergency" funds to support various operations of the federal government, including the air war in Yugoslavia. The bill also includes additional funds for the Census Bureau and lifts a restriction, from the FY 1999 Omnibus budget agreement, that would have cut off funding for the Bureau and other federal agencies on June 15, 1999.

H.R. 1141 provides an additional \$44.9 million to fund the Census Bureau's activities for the remainder of FY 1999, which ends on September 30, 1999. The extra money will allow the Bureau to continue preparing for the upcoming decennial census, including \$15 million for advertising and promotion to increase participation, \$10.9 million for opening and staffing more than 500 local offices, and \$9.1 million to support increased door-to-door follow-up operations.

The bill also requires the Census Bureau to submit to Congress by June 1 a revised budget request for FY 2000. Originally, the Bureau and the Clinton Administration asked for \$2.8 billion. The amount, however, was proposed before the Supreme Court ruled that the Bureau can not use scientific statistical sampling for the purposes of apportionment. The revised estimate will likely be much greater than the previous request, since the Bureau testified before Congress that without their original proposed use of sampling costs will increase.

The emergency spending bill did not resolve the issue of using scientific statistical sampling to augment the final count. The two sides will likely continue to grapple with this issue through this year's appropriations process and likely into next year.

Coehlo Out; Blackwell on His Way Out?

Tony Coehlo, Census Monitoring Board Co-Chair for the Presidential Members, resigned his post to lead Vice President Al Gore's campaign for the 2000 presidential election. The Census Monitoring Board was created in 1997 as a part of the FY 1998 Commerce, Justice, State appropriations bill to oversee the Census Bureau's preparations for the 2000 Census. Part of the impetus for the Board's

creation was to resolve the burgeoning dispute over the Census Bureau's proposed use of scientific statistical sampling in the decennial census. The President has named current board member Gilbert Casellas as the new Co-Chair for the Presidential Members. Representative Carolyn Maloney, Ranking Member of the House Census Subcommittee, has called on Kenneth Blackwell, Co-Chair of the Census Monitoring Board, to resign. Blackwell has been asked by presidential aspirant Steve Forbes to run his 2000 campaign effort.

IOM/NAS EXAMINE RESEARCH AND TRAINING ISSUES AS

There has been a recent explosion of studies being initiated and conducted regarding social and behavioral research and training issues at the Institute of Medicine (IOM), the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) and National Research Council (NRC).

On May 14, the Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education's (CBASSE) newly organized study committee, the Board on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences (BBCSS), held its inaugural meeting in preparation to develop a set of research priorities for consideration by the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR). In addition to considering the intersections among the social, behavioral and biological sciences and health needs, the BBCSS will address the "range of interactions among social settings, behavioral patterns, and important health concerns, seeking areas of scientific opportunity, where significant investment is most likely to improve national and global health outcomes." The study is the first analysis by the newly created Board.

According to Burton H. Singer, Professor of Demography and Public Affairs at the Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University and chair of the BBCSS, the public session provides the opportunity for "information gathering" designed to facilitate the maximum amount of information transfer. Singer specifically noted that the discussion represents the views of the panel and not the views of the National Research Council.

OBSSR Director Norman Anderson, explained to the Board that his office is seeking the assistance of the scientific community in identifying the research areas of highest priority in the behavioral and social sciences. The exercise, "stimulated" by NIH Director Harold Varmus approximately one year ago, relates to all of NIH, Anderson told the Committee. The purpose of developing priorities, he said is "to guide the OBSSR as it fulfills its goals, especially concerning the development of trans-NIH funding initiatives, workshops, and conferences."

Anderson charged the group to "develop a set of recommendations for research priorities in the behavioral and social sciences, with emphasis on those "areas that cut across Institute boundaries (i.e., of relevance to two or more institutes)." Institute-specific areas, however, are not precluded, he emphasized. Anderson also stressed that the perspective of NIH is critical and that the Committee should consult, as needed, with an NIH Liaison Committee established to provide the BBCSS with information on topics of interest to the NIH Institutes and Centers. The interaction between the Committee and NIH is essential, he said, because any recommendations will likely be reviewed annually by a NIH-appointed panel to ensure that the priorities continue to reflect the health needs of the public and the areas of scientific opportunity.

Anderson reiterated what he told the COSSA Annual Meeting in November 1998 that the development of the priorities should be guided by three organizing principles. 1.) **Overarching considerations** — the most pressing national and international health problems; research areas representing the greatest scientific opportunities; and the health concerns of the public for which behavioral and social sciences research may provide solutions. 2.) **Domains of research** — identification of disease risk and protective factors; the understanding of basic behavioral and social processes; the understanding of basic biological, behavioral, and social interactions; and the development of new treatment and prevention approaches. 3.) **Levels of analysis** — sociocultural and environment, behavioral and psychological, and biological.

On May 27, the IOM's Committee on **Building Bridges in the Brain, Behavioral, and Clinical Sciences** within the Board on Neuroscience and

Behavioral Health met for the first of a series of four meetings. Terry C. Pellmar is the study's director.

The study, which is being jointly sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), the OBSSR, the National Institute of Aging, and the National Institute of Nursing Research, will: 1) examine needs and strategies for interdisciplinary training in the brain, behavioral, social, and clinical sciences to enhance the translation of brain/behavior to clinical settings and vice versa; 2) define necessary components of true interdisciplinary training in these areas; 3) examine the barriers and obstacles to interdisciplinary training and research; and; 4) review current educational and training programs to identify elements of model programs that best facilitates interdisciplinary training.

OBSSR Director Anderson told the group that the NIH needs researchers to work across what he termed the levels of analysis (social/ environmental, behavioral/psychological, organ systems, cellular and molecular). The use of the committee, he said, is important because the "question is how do you train people to work across these levels?" There is a need, Anderson emphasized, for systematic training, yet there are currently no models to do so. He added that their work was just one part of three to four activities in which the OBSSR is involved, noting that the **Future Directions for Behavioral and Social Sciences Research at the National Institute of Health** Committee expressed concern regarding the role of training social and behavioral scientists in addressing any priorities that are established. He also noted that a Social Science Research Council work group is examining best practices in biobehavioral research and is looking for models of interdisciplinary research teams.

NIMH Director Steven Hyman stressed that within his Institute there is a mismatch between research needs and what academic institutions are training behavioral scientists and clinicians to do. Citing the "knockout mouse" as an area where behavioral scientists are needed to think about how to map behavior on the brain, Hyman told the committee that genetic technology is "going to be worse than wasted" without the expertise of behavioral scientists and an ability of researchers from different disciplines to work together. People will think we have discovered things we have not, he added. The question, he said, is how to get more

behavioral scientists to feel that they own the most exciting part of the brain. Hyman also noted that there are structural and cultural barriers to interdisciplinary research within the NIMH Intramural Research Program. He further cited the issue of adherence, topic of a recent COSSA congressional briefing (See *UPDATE*, May 3, 1999), as another example of the need for interdisciplinary research. Not everything is brain ready, he continued, social psychologists and social scientists have a lot to offer to this enormous problem. It is a problem, Hyman said, that we are a long way from solving.

A third project, **Capitalizing on Social Science and Behavioral Research to Improve the Public's Health**, within the IOM's Division of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, is designed to identify important areas of behavioral and social science research that may prove to be fruitful for wider public health application, says the study director Brian Smedley.

According to Smedley, to fulfill the charge the committee will: identify focus areas of behavioral and social science research that offer promise for larger-scale application to effective public health practice; select researchers to prepare commissioned papers for each identified area; sponsor a public symposium at which the papers are discussed; and develop conclusions and recommendations about the nature of interventions, including demonstration projects, which could be developed based on research findings. A report of committee's findings and recommendations will be written.

Meanwhile, the results of an earlier study, **Health and Behavior Research, Practice, and Policy**, updating the 1982 study entitled **Health and Behavior: Frontiers of Research in the Biobehavioral Sciences** are anticipated to be released late fall/early winter, says the study director Wendy Pachter. According to Pachter, the data collection is complete. Regarding the differences between the other studies currently within the IOM, Pachter emphasized that the Health and Behavior Research study provides an overview of the field. At their core, all of the studies are different, she said.

A fifth study, **Committee on Future Directions for Cognitive Research on Aging**, also within CBASSE but not yet officially posted, is scheduled to

hold its first meeting (closed to the public) in June. A workshop, which will be open to the public, is scheduled for November. While the scope of the project has yet to be defined, members of the Committee have been selected.

Finally, there is the periodic review of the *National Needs for Biomedical and Behavioral Research Personnel* by the National Research Council's Office of Scientific and Engineering Personnel (OSEP). The update is the eleventh in a series of reports since Congress passed the National Research Service Award of 1974 and subsequent amendments. The report will describe the nation's overall need for research personnel, assess the adequacy of current training programs, identify the availability of research positions, and determine what modifications should be made to the programs established by the legislation. According to OSEP, the study will broaden its perspective and examine in more detail other issues specified by the sponsor. The most recent iteration of the report was completed in 1994; the next report should be available later this year.

CONFERENCE EXAMINES IMPACT OF INFORMATION REVOLUTION

The digital economy is upon us. E-Commerce is all the rage. In an attempt to comprehend the impacts of this new phenomenon, on May 25 and 26, the Department of Commerce, the National Science Foundation, and four other agencies sponsored a two-day conference *Understanding the Digital Economy: Data, Tools and Research*.

John Haltiwanger of the Commerce Department laid out the issues: 1) the shape and size of the key components of the digital economy; 2) the process through which firms develop and apply advances in Information Technology; 3) the change in the structure and functioning of markets; 4) the social and economic implications of the IT revolution; and 5) the demographic characteristics of user populations.

Conference speakers included academics, federal officials from the Departments of Commerce, Labor, and Justice, the Federal Trade Commission, the Small Business Administration, the private sector,

and groups such as the Conference Board and the National Federation of Independent Business. Secretary of Commerce William Daley and Presidential Science Adviser Neal Lane also addressed the participants. Papers from the conference are available at <http://www.digitaleconomy.gov>.

Many conference speakers indicated the need for better measurements and data. Secretary Daley noted that we require "a far better grasp of how it [Information Technology] is affecting the economy as a whole," including finding a better way to track E-commerce with government statistics. Undersecretary of Commerce Rob Shapiro cited measurement problems with rates of return, productivity, and service industries. As an example, Jack Triplett of the Brookings Institution, asked "How do you measure the output of economic consulting firms?" Bret Moulton of the Bureau of Economic Analysis, indicated that the banking and insurance sectors of the economy are still "not measured well."

Triplett noted the astounding price declines for computers. A \$2,000 personal computer today would have cost \$20 billion in 1954 for the equivalent power. He noted that the "new economy" flows "from this largest price decline in economic history." Paul David of Stanford and Oxford Universities suggested that "digital technologies are percolating (rather than diffusing) through the economy." He cautioned that the transformation will be slow and uneven. Robert McGuckin of the Conference Board also advised against too much excitement, since "we haven't seen the full gains [from the new economy] yet."

IT and Organizational Change

Focusing on organizational change, Rob Kling of Indiana University, warned that "people and organizations change more slowly than the technology." This was echoed by Kathleen Carley of Carnegie-Mellon, who noted that we know how social networks affect social structures, but that more research is necessary to track knowledge networks. Wanda Orlikowski of MIT also pointed out that there is little research "on the meaning and implications of being on the net." She concluded that the digital economy is not "a single thing out there," but a complex "social product." It is a product that needs

examination in a non-linear way, according to Carley. David Partridge of IBM asked: "What drives the change? Technology or Social Situations?" Eventually, he suggested, there will occur a re-alignment between the "virtual and the physical," but only after the development of "virtual business models," that will create a \$4 trillion electronic economy.

Hal Varian of University of California-Berkeley declared that although "E-commerce will undoubtedly change the way business is done, . . . many of the fundamental principles of competition will still be relevant." Erik Brynjolfsson of MIT, discovered that prices on the Internet for books and CDs are 9-16 percent lower than prices in conventional outlets. In addition, Internet retailer prices differ by an average of 33 percent for books and 25 percent for CDs. Shane Greenstein of Northwestern argued that a fundamental question remains unaddressed: "What is the typical empirical pattern by which commercial firms translate Internet technology into private value, and more broadly, into sustained economic growth."

Access remains a difficult problem, but there are increasing numbers of computers going into an increasing number of schools. The problem is still teacher training and the disparities in access to computers in the home. General trends in the workforce are converging to create a shortage of qualified workers in the foreseeable future. According to Carol D'Amico of the Hudson Institute, these trends include: an aging population, stagnant population labor force growth, escalating skill requirements, and unprepared new, and existing workers — this last item specifically impacts the digital economy.

The Commerce Department has published *The Emerging Digital Economy* and expects the proceedings from the conference to lead to a second volume.

EDUCATION RESEARCH: CHANGES NEEDED

Education research has become a hot topic in recent months. In fact, three publications are devoted solely to the nation's education research system and

the federal government's investment. The National Education Research Policy and Priorities Board (NERPPB), the National Academy of Science's National Research Council (NRC), and the National Academy of Education (NAE) have all recently weighed in on the subject. The three come to close consensus on the need for the Office of Education Research and Improvement (OERI) to conduct more collaborative research, and to include practitioners to ensure that their concerns are being met by education researchers.

The report published by the NERPPB, *Investing in Learning: A Policy Statement on Research in Education*, calls the federal investment in education research "shamefully under-financed," and urges dramatic increases in federal support for education research. The Board recommends a boost to \$1.5 billion a year — five times the current investment. This recommendation is similar to that of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), contained in their March 1997 *Report to the President on the Use of Technology to Strengthen K-12 Education in the United States*.

The Board lays out a total of 23 research priorities, with an emphasis on student achievement. OERI should focus its efforts on a smaller number of critical areas, said the Board. A more narrow focus would greatly improve education research, because the resources are currently spread too thinly over a broad array of topics. At the same time, the NERPPB also calls for comprehensive research, similar to that conducted and sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Department of Defense. Finally, OERI needs a national focus, in conjunction with more rigorous scientific standards. For more information on the report or the Board, contact the NERPPB webpage at: <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/NERPPB>.

The National Research Council's report, *Improving Student Learning: A Strategic Plan for Education Research and Its Utilization*, comes to the conclusion that "[i]n education . . . the potential for research has not been realized." In contrast to the utilization of research in the public health and agricultural fields, the field of education "does not rest on a strong research base."

Echoing the NERPPB report, the NRC notes that the federal investment in education research is small

when compared to the research investment in many other fields, including space exploration and technology. While the NRC notes that the federal government's investment in education research accounts for nearly "75 percent of the total spent on education research in this country, this amount is less than 1 percent of total federal spending on education." Thus, the NRC concludes that "the nation has made an enormous social investment in education with relatively little reflection, scientific rigor, or quality control." In addition, the NRC — like the NERPPB — suggests that past federal investment in education research has been "diffuse", with a lack of focus.

The NRC proposes "an ambitious and extraordinary experiment: the establishment of a Strategic Education Research Program (SERP)." The SERP would consist of four different networks of researchers, teachers, policy-makers, community leaders, and teacher associations, among others. These networks would address four different aspects of education research. Each network would be comprised of 7 to 15 members and would be overseen by a governing board. The governing boards would convene a congress every four years to report on each network's progress. In the meantime, the networks would plug-away at their research and produce periodic reports. The NRC, however, does not suggest how much the SERP would cost and where it would be housed. For more information about the NRC report, contact Alexandra Wigdor, NRC, 2101 Constitution Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20418; Telephone: 202/334-3026; Email: swigdor@nas.edu.

The NAE study, commissioned by the NERPPB, was directed to *research priorities that would further progress toward high achievement for all students.* The NAE report focuses on three topics: 1) strengthening the capacity of research for contributing to education improvement; 2) critical transitions in learning and development; 3) teaching, teachers' professional development, and professional communities of teachers.

The study suggests that the OERI should adopt a new organization for education research. The NAE calls its new approach, "problem-solving research development." The NAE envisions a research system in which researchers and practitioners work "side by side." The new research system, based on Donald Stokes' book *Pasteur's Quadrant*, should "be

focused explicitly on solving specific current problems of practice and at the same time should be accountable for developing and testing general principles of education that can be" broadly applied.

The report stresses the importance and need to understand the context in which children learn. Research must not only include students' activities within school, but "the competencies and practices students . . . develop in the rest of their lives." Additionally, the NAE calls for education research that examines the connection between better teaching and students' learning, and teacher professional development. For a copy of the study, contact the NAE at New York University, School of Education, 726 Broadway, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10003-9580; Telephone: 212/998-9035; Fax: 212/995-4435.

CNSF PRESENTS EXHIBITION OF NSF SUPPORTED RESEARCH HS

The Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) presented its 5th Annual Exhibition and Reception on May 19. Thirty exhibits displayed research results and education activities conducted with support from the National Science Foundation (NSF). Scientists, graduate students, and undergraduate students explained their projects to 10 Members of Congress, more than 100 congressional staff, NSF officials, including Deputy Director Joe Bordogna, and White House Office of Science and Technology Policy leaders, including Associate Director for Science Arthur Bienenstock.

Among the exhibits were the American Psychological Association's *How Neighborhoods Affect Children and Families*, presented by Professor Jeanne Brooks-Gunn of Columbia University, and the Linguistic Society of America's *Savoring Cajun and Creole Repertoires and Cultures*, presented by Professor Sylvie Dubois of Louisiana State University. CNSF Chairman, COSSA Executive Director Howard Silver, expressed delight at the continued success the exhibition enjoys and looks forward to next year's event. The CNSF is an ad-hoc advocacy organization of groups across all the sciences, engineering, higher education associations and industrial groups interested in maintaining the excellence of the U.S. scientific enterprise by generating increased funding for the National Science Foundation.

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