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BUSH VICTORIOUS, GOP GAINS IN CONGRESS

Whether this was the most important election in our lifetime, as some had claimed, awaits history's verdict. The re-election of President George W. Bush and the significant gains made by the Republicans in boosting their congressional majorities, especially the Senate, provide opportunities for changing the landscape of American politics and policies. With Vice President Dick Cheney claiming that the Administration has a mandate and the President outlining an agenda that includes reforming the tax code and entitlement programs, the next few years could see battles that will foster seismic shifts in the American polity. Furthering this is the probability that Bush will finally get his chance to reshape the Supreme Court.

The President's large majorities in key states helped Republican congressional candidates, particularly Senate candidates in North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Alaska. The defeat of Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle in South Dakota deprives the Democrats of their key congressional voice of opposition to the Administration. His probable replacement, Senator Harry Reid of Nevada, is viewed as relatively less effective on television and would likely allow individual Senators more leeway. The enlargement of the GOP Senate Majority to 55-45 (independent Senator Jim Jeffords of Vermont will continue to caucus with the Democrats) should give the President an easier time on a whole host of issues, including Court appointments. It is a lot easier to get the 60 votes needed to cut off filibusters by picking off five Democrats rather than nine.

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ACS IN DANGER OF LOSING FUNDING

In response to proposed funding cuts for the American Communities Survey (ACS), COSSA joined several other social and behavioral science research organizations in asking Congressional Appropriation Committees to reconsider raising the ACS appropriation to adequate levels.

The ACS, a shorter form survey with more frequent data collection, would greatly improve the frequency and timeliness of data for researchers and decision-makers alike. It also hopes to provide more accurate data on the smaller, rural populations that the long-form census often skims over.

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BUSH, (Continued from Page 1)

With House Majority Leader Tom DeLay's successful redistricting of Texas congressional districts, which provided five new Republican House members at the expense of longtime Democratic incumbents, the GOP increased its margin in the House to 231-202, with two Louisiana seats going into runoffs in December. The House should continue to provide President Bush with lock-step support.

Lame Duck Appropriations

Congress will return to Washington the week of November 15 to try and complete work on the FY 2005 appropriations legislation. With only four bills enacted, the leadership hopes to wrap the remaining nine into an Omnibus package and finish the process. One stumbling block is that the total funding in the Senate bills is about \$8 billion more than the House bills. According to Congressional staff, five or six of the bills are relatively non-controversial and can be completed quickly. The others, including the large Labor, HHS, Education bill and the VA, HUD Independent Agencies bill, which includes funding for the National Science Foundation, are a bit more problematic. One scenario has these latter bills facing a full-year Continuing Resolution, which means with some exceptions, the agencies and programs funded by them will remain at last year's levels. This, for the most part, would preclude any new initiatives.

The election may have changed these calculations. It would appear that the Republican leadership would want to move these bills off the table, so that the second term and the new 109th Congress could start with a clear deck and a new agenda. Whether the Democrats or the conservative Republicans who are dismayed by increased spending can stop this is up in the air. Another incentive for finishing is the turnover in the leadership of the funding committees. Both Senate Appropriations Chairman Ted Stevens (R-AK) and House Appropriations Chairman Bill Young (R-FL) must give up their posts because of term limits. They would both like to cap off their tenure with completed spending bills.

Congressional Changes

Aside from the Democrats getting a new leader in the Senate – Reid's ascension may be challenged by Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT) and others – the imposition of term limits on committee and subcommittee chairs will bring about significant changes in other key positions.

As noted above, the Appropriations Committees will get new leadership. In the Senate, Thad Cochran (R-MS) will take over. In the House, there are three candidates:

Rep. Ralph Regula (R-OH), who leads the Labor, HHS, Education Subcommittee, Rep. Jerry Lewis (R-CA), who leads the Defense Subcommittee, and Rep. Harold Rogers (R-KY), who chairs the Homeland Security Subcommittee. Regula is considered the slight favorite.

Term limits will also shift subcommittee leadership in the House Appropriations Committee. Predicting the "musical chairs" rotation is difficult at present, especially given the contest for the top slot. Rep. James Walsh (R-NY) has asked for a waiver from the term limitation so that he can maintain his leadership of the VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies panel.

On the authorizing side, the Senate will see considerable shifting. Sen. Judd Gregg (R-NH) has a decision to make. He is in line to chair the Budget Committee, but he would have to relinquish the Health, Education, Labor and Pension (HELP) chairmanship. If Gregg doesn't leave, Sen. Wayne Allard (R-CO) would get the Budget Committee. If Gregg does take Budget, Sen. Mike Enzi (R-WY) would likely get the HELP Committee, although Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT) may get his old post back.

Sen. Stevens would replace Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) as head of the Commerce, Science and Transportation panel. The panel shares jurisdiction with the HELP committee over the National Science Foundation. In what could be a very interesting shift, Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA), one of the few GOP moderates left, could assume the leadership of the Judiciary Committee and its role of scrutinizing court appointments. If Sen. Pat Roberts (R-KS) stays as head of the Intelligence panel, Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), first elected in 2002, would lead the Agriculture Committee.

Aside from appropriations, House committee leadership is not expected to change much. Rep. David Dreier (R-CA), Chairman of the Rules Committee, is term limited, but may get a waiver from Speaker Hastert. If Dreier is not reappointed, Rep. John Linder (R-GA) is expected to get the job. At the subcommittee level, Rep. Howard McKeon (R-CA), who chairs the 21st Century Competitiveness Subcommittee of the Education and Workforce panel, which is responsible for reauthorizing the Higher Education Act, may move to the Appropriations panel.

New Members Include Political Scientists

The election brought 39 new members to the House of Representatives. Rep. Dan Lipinski, who replaced

his father as a Democratic Congressman from Chicago, has a Ph.D. in Political Science from Duke and was an Assistant Professor at the University of Tennessee, specializing in research methodology. Rep. Henry Cuellar, who defeated incumbent Rep. Ciro Rodriguez in a bitter Democratic primary, won the seat in Southwestern Texas. Cuellar has a Ph.D. in Government from the University of Texas at Austin. Since he also has an M.B.A. and a law degree, he has not taught with the exception of a brief stint at Laredo County Community College.

In addition, Allyson Schwartz held the suburban Philadelphia seat for the Democrats that was vacated by losing Senatorial candidate Joe Hoeffel. Schwartz has a Masters in Social Work. Virginia Foxx, who won the old House seat vacated by successful North Carolina Senate candidate Richard Burr, has an Ed.D. from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and was President of Mayland Community College in North Carolina. The list of successful candidates also includes 12 lawyers and two doctors, three with Public Administration or Public Policy Master's degrees, and three MBAs.

Impact on Science

The recent campaign featured highly publicized efforts by the Union of Concerned Scientists and 20 Nobel Prize winners in the natural and physical sciences to defeat President Bush. Whether this leads to any "push-back," as former Congressman Robert Walker suggested (see UPDATE October 11, 2004), and what form that might take is unclear.

The National Academy of Sciences is working on its quadrennial report to the President on appointments to scientific advisory committees and councils and other forms of scientific advice. Whether the Administration heeds such advice is open to question. One can rightly suspect that the accusations of the politicization of science will continue.

Bush's re-election will ensure that Arden Bement will receive Senate confirmation and become the next director of the National Science Foundation. The Administration's nominees to the National Science Board should also win approval soon. Whether John Marburger, Presidential Science Adviser and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), remains is unclear at the moment.

One of the first people in the Administration to announce his resignation is Paul Gilman, assistant administrator for research and development at EPA.

Finally, with a more conservative House and Senate and with evangelical Christians receiving credit for many of the electoral victories this year, attacks on peer review and certain kinds of research will continue and perhaps, accelerate. Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN), one of the leaders in the amendment to defund the NIH sexual health grants in 2003 and the NIMH grants in 2004 has just been elected head of the Republican Study Committee, the conservative group of House members which is sure to push their agenda hard.

ACS (Continued from Page 1)

In order to get more accurate data for the implementation of many federal programs, Congress ordered the Census Bureau to develop a shorter-form questionnaire that would collect data more often.

Also, the Director of the Census Bureau, Charles Louis Kincannon, testified that nation-wide conversion to the ACS form would save the American taxpayer over \$800 million compared to the cost of implementing the long-form census in 2010.

Thus far, Congress has invested \$334 million into developing the ACS in hopes of providing an alternative to the long form. When Congress returns on November 16, the appropriators will decide the fate of the study. At this point, the House has passed a version of the bill that allocates \$146 million for the ACS, while the Senate's version only appropriates \$65 million. The Census Bureau has declared that if the ACS is funded at any less than \$142 million, it would force them to abandon ACS and return to planning for the traditional long-form census instead.

SACHRP CONVENES TO DISCUSS RESEARCH, MODELS FOR IRB REVIEW

At its October 4th and 5th meeting, the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Human Research Protections (SACHRP) met to discuss the latest subcommittee reports on research involving children, prisoners, and issues affecting federal policy that applies to all research involving human subjects, including a cursory evaluation of emerging models for Institutional Review Boards (IRB) certification review.

Children and Research

Co-chairs Celia Fisher of Fordham University, and Susan Kortensky of Children's Hospital in Boston presented the Subcommittee on Research Involving Children with its fourth report for SACHRP consideration. The 18 proposals offered for deliberation were designed to clarify regulations for “non-beneficial” research involving children and to adopt a uniform standard of definitions such as “minimal risk” and “minor increase over minimal risk” under Subpart D (research involving children) of Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46 the Protection of Human Subjects.

The subcommittee suggested that the definition of minimal risk, when applied to Subpart D, should be interpreted as those risks encountered by normal, average, healthy children living daily in safe environments. Additional proposals, which seek to clarify how “minimal risk” should be evaluated, stipulate that it should be age-indexed, represent the upper limits of risk to which children can be exposed, should meet the criteria for equivalence – which includes duration, cumulative characteristics, and the reversibility of harm – and be applied internationally.

As for interpreting “minor increase over minimal risk,” the subcommittee again proposed a uniform standard that utilizes equivalence criteria taking into account the magnitude of pain or discomfort, probability of risk, duration, cumulative effect, and reversibility of harm. SACHRP members vocally supported a recommendation that called for an index of “minor increases” to common medical or psychological diagnostic procedures, but felt it warranted further discussion on what a “minor procedure” is. There was also concern over whether an acceptable procedure list should be generated and applied uniformly or based on particular conditions.

Subpart C and Prisoners

Mark Barnes of Ropes & Gray and Nancy Neveloff Dubler of Montefiore Medical Center, the Co-chairs of the Subpart C Subcommittee on Research Involving Prisoners, asked SACHRP Chairman Ernest D. Prentice of the University of Nebraska Medical Center to agree to a voice vote to approve each of the recommendations made in the latest report. This would have enabled the subcommittee to submit the final version to SACHRP at their next meeting in January

2005. However, time constraints forced Prentice to defer voting on most of the recommendations until then.

Acknowledging that Subpart C needs “tremendous help” but not wanting to undertake the task of rewriting it, the subcommittee’s report addressed ways to close the gaps and inconsistencies within the existing policy and increase protections for those with restricted liberties. The subcommittee proposed using Subpart A 46.111 in the federal code of regulations as the basis to create special guidance for those not included within the definition of prisoner under Subpart C, who have restricted liberty and possible compromise of free choice. Categories of people would be covered under Subpart A would be those who do not meet the formal definition of “prisoner” under Subpart C and those whose institutions have not chosen to extend their assurance to include Subpart C, regardless of funding sources.

The subcommittee also sought to provide additional safeguards for “subsequent incarcerated persons.” To enable researchers not to have to drop research participants from their study when they become incarcerated and to ensure that the treatment protocol for participants is not interrupted, the subcommittee recommended that “populations whose prospective incarceration is reasonably foreseeable should be entered into protocols only after the protocol has passed by the appropriate IRB in accordance with a full Subpart C review including the participation of a prisoner representative.” Regardless, when any research subject is incarcerated, the subcommittee determined that “there must be a focused inquiry regarding the risks and benefits to that particular subject of continuing in the protocol as an incarcerated person.”

Quality Improvement Discussed

Dr. Michael Carome, Commander of the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps and currently the Associated Director for Regulatory Affairs at the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP), opened the panel entitled, “Definition of Research vs. Non-Research Issues” He began with an overview of the applicability of Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations for the protection of human subjects, the regulatory definition for research, the relationship between human subject research and other activities, and the parameters for determining whether an activity involves research.

James Hodge, Jr. of the John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health then presented the practical legal and ethical guidelines on which he and the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists

Advisory Committee collaborated to assist public health officials and IRB members in distinguishing public health practice from public health research. His model proposes a workable two-stage framework (see <http://www.cste.org/pdffiles/newpdffiles/cstephresrpthodgefina1.5.24.04.pdf> for the full report).

Like Hodge, Mary Ann Bailey, an expert on ethics and health policy at the Hastings Center, presented the framework that she, the Hastings Center, and the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality conceived in order to determine the differences between quality improvement (QI) programs and clinical research. Although the project is still a work in progress, upon completion, it should also provide public health officials with guidelines that would assist in determining, “What makes a QI activity ethical or unethical?” and “What social arrangements should be in place to ensure that QI activities are conducted in an ethical manner?”

SACHRP’s charter was recently renewed through 2006. For more information about SACHRP and federal policy regarding the protection of human research subjects, please visit the DHHS website: <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/>.

Human Subject Regulations Decision Charts Revised

OHRP recently updated the set of Human Subject Regulations Decision Charts, which are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/decisioncharts.htm>. The revised decision charts are designed to assist IRBs, investigators, and others who decide if an activity is research involving human subjects that must be reviewed by an IRB under the federal policy requirements of DHHS. The charts address whether an activity is research subject to IRB review, expedited review procedures, and waiver of informed consent.

NRC STUDY STALLS

Many graduate study programs across the nation often depend upon the National Research Council’s (NRC) survey of doctoral programs as a report card of their progress. The first national survey was released in 1982, the second in 1995, and the third was supposed to be ready for publication in 2005, but has been delayed until approximately 2007 due to haggling over funding and the taxonomy of the survey.

On October 22, the National Academy of Sciences hosted a seminar entitled, “The NRC Assessment of Doctoral Research Programs: Relevance to the Research Mission of Federal Agencies.” Meeting participants included a myriad of federal agencies and organizations representing universities, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Association of American Universities (AAU), the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and COSSA, all of which were perceived to have an interest in the NRC study.

Debra Stewart, President of the Council on Graduate Schools, stated that the NRC study can help to monitor program efficiency, time to degree, completion rates, and can give indicators on how to better create “a deep and broad pool of human talent.” Jerry Ostriker, the Chair of the Committee to Examine the Methodology for the Assessment of Research-Doctorate Programs, pointed out several advantages that the new survey will bring to the table. One of the primary improvements is that the entire survey will be conducted on the web and accessible on the web after publication. With this method of data collection, the survey can be conducted every few years, instead of every 10-15. Ostriker also laid out the current proposed timeline, which involves starting data collection in July of 2005.

While it was expected that the taxonomy of the study was going to be an item under heavy discussion, it was noticeably pushed to the back burner. Instead, the focal point became the \$4 million that must still be garnered in order to run the study. Already, the NRC has \$1.2 million, but the project is expected to cost more than \$5 million by its projected completion in 2007. In fact, several of the agencies at the meeting were clearly wrangling with the issue of the study’s relevance to their programs. While many agencies praised the study’s goals, none were able to definitively commit to any promises of funding. As the meeting concluded, the participants agreed to meet again in order to better address the agencies’ questions and threshold requirements for possible funding.

REPORT TO NSF RELEASED ON SBE SCIENCES’ EDUCATION

At the request of the National Science Foundation, Felice J. Levine, Ronald F. Abler, and Katherine J. Rosich conducted the National Workshop on Improving

Education in the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) in June 2003. The workshop report was recently released, and as per NSF's request, contains an assessment of and recommendations for improving K-12 through post-graduate education in the SBE sciences.

According to the report, SBE sciences are "largely absent from the K-12 curriculum and their presence in the high school curriculum is limited, especially compared to the natural sciences." National committees of economists, sociologists, political scientists, psychologists and geographers, have all made proposals for increasing SBE K-12 education.

The report argues that access for more SBE investigators within a number of programs in the NSF Directorate for Education and Human Resources (EHR) would be beneficial to K-12 education. One of the report's specific ideas included creating a Research Experience for High School students (REHS) program similar to the current Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program.

In the immediate future, the report made three recommendations: First, that Assistant Directors in the SBE and EHR Directorates author articles stressing the importance of SBE sciences in K-12 education. Second, NSF should request that the National Research Council's (NRC) Committee on Science Education K-12 (COSE K-12) include the SBE sciences in their National Education Standards. Finally, the report recommends that the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), integrate the SBE sciences into its Project 2061.

Diversifying the Student Body

In the undergraduate and post-graduate studies of SBE sciences curriculum, the tone decisively shifted away from a concern about awareness and the presence of SBE sciences in the curriculum and toward the need to diversify the student population that the SBE sciences currently engage.

Citing the long absence of SBE funding in programs such as the Lewis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) Program or the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP), the report stated that for NSF, "greater access and enhanced funding for SBE sciences in EHR programs designed to attract and retain underrepresented minorities should be a priority."

In the immediate future, the report called on NSF to encourage more SBE nominations for the NSF Director's

Award for Distinguished Teaching Scholars, convene a workshop to examine the innovations of recent REU and SBE Course, Curriculum and Laboratory Improvement Program grantees, as well as calling on NSF to request that the NRC include the SBE sciences in its future workshops and committee composition.

In the field of graduate education, the committee enumerated many shortcomings, including the homogeneity of college and university faculty, limited funding for graduate student training and research, and the absence of SBE scientists on most national commissions and committees in charge of improving science education. Diversity was also on the agenda as a priority: "NSF can play a significant role by supporting initiatives to transform graduate education, create innovative training programs, and attract a wider and more diverse pool of talented students..."

More specifically, the report called on the SBE and EHR Directorates to collaborate in supporting programs such as a Transformed Grants for SBE Doctoral Dissertation Improvement, Transition and Early Career Initiative for Graduate Students, Graduate Education Reinvention Program, and Preparing Future SBE Scientists. While these are clearly long-term goals, the more immediate recommended courses of action include modifying NSF proposal standards to account for potential contributions to graduate student career development, providing a venue in which principal directors and advisory committees working on "re-thinking" graduate education can meet, and partnering or commissioning a study that focuses on the rates of attrition and retention in SBE sciences education.

More Direction Needed for Post-Docs

In the area of post-doctoral and early career education in the SBE sciences, the report pointed out that there is a lack of mentoring and guidance after the doctoral degree. In first positions, most post-doctoral students and researchers are preoccupied with daily activities, rather than the direction of their development. This creates a large impediment in building strong SBE research programs. According to the report, the immediate steps needed include: "urging the extension of the data gathering conducted by the SBE Directorate's Division of Science Resources Statistics to include detailed information on employment choices, research activities and productivity, and career trajectories across sectors of employment of new SBE doctorates; and including SBE sciences in the AAAS Postdoc Network and the electronic career database."

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

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

The **National Institute of Justice (NIJ)** is seeking proposals to establish a research center devoted to civil justice issues. It will be called the NIJ Research Center for Excellence in Civil Justice. NIJ anticipates that the Center will be funded at \$1 million per year for three years with the possibility of an additional two years of funding.

NIJ is seeking to develop a research plan for building a base of knowledge about civil justice issues. Such issues may include, but are not limited to, trends in settlements and the use of alternative dispute resolution, changes in class action proceedings, mass tort litigation, trends in non-monetary damage awards, the effects of procedural and

substantive reforms on litigation and settlement trends, trends in the resolution of medical malpractice disputes, and trends in the treatment of expert testimony in civil actions. The deadline is **January 12, 2005**. For more information, go to: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>.

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice. Created in 1995, OVW implements the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and subsequent legislation and provides national leadership against domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Funds for the OVW Technical Assistance (TA) Program are derived from the Violence Against Women Act's STOP formula and discretionary grant programs. In making its technical assistance awards, OVW enters into cooperative agreements with successful applicants. Applicants should understand that entering into a cooperative agreement requires a higher level of involvement and interaction with the Federal government and OVW than receipt of a typical grant award.

OVW encourages technical assistance strategies that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Development and dissemination of state-of-the art resource materials;
- Partnership- and team-building opportunities for victim advocates and criminal justice professionals;
- Efforts that educate the intended audience about culturally appropriate responses that enhance the safety of women of all populations;
- Computer and Internet-facilitated training (e.g. online distance or e-learning);
- Conference-calls, institutes, and/or conferences to share the development and implementation of promising practices and model policies and protocols;
- Small, topic-specific workshops and other interactive educational opportunities;

Final applications are due **December 14, 2004**. For more information, go to: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm>.

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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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