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MARBURGER, DELAURO, LIGHTFOOT, AND ABRAMS HEADLINE COSSA ANNUAL MEETING

On October 31, COSSA held its Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. More than 70 representatives of COSSA's membership attended to hear key leaders of the science policy community discuss the role of the social and behavioral sciences in the nation's science and technology agenda. In addition, a Member of Congress anchored a panel that examined the influence of religion in American public life and policy.

Marburger Addresses Value of the Social Sciences

Making his second appearance at a COSSA Annual Meeting during his tenure as the President's Science Adviser and director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), John Marburger discussed the "value of the social sciences," deplored "the fact that we are not taking enough advantage of them," and suggested "that the challenges of our times can be engaged more effectively if we use the knowledge and techniques developed in these fields."

Marburger noted that the social sciences "are participating in a broad transformation affecting all of science that is changing the tools, the methods, and the sociology of every field." This enormous shift is driven by the extraordinary enhancements in our ability to gather, store, analyze, visualize and communicate vast quantities of information, he noted. Because of the "remarkable applications of information technology to the social sciences," these fields can now "lay a more effective claim to the resources that are producing these revolutionary changes."

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NSF, NIH, NIJ, BJS RECEIVE APPROPRIATIONS INCREASES, ACS AND CENSUS 2010 SAVED

The conference committee on funding the Departments of State, Commerce, Justice, and the National Science Foundation (NSF) completed its work on November 7. In addition to providing the FY 2006 funding numbers, the committee agreed that all discretionary accounts would face a 0.28 percent rescission. The numbers below do not reflect that rescission.

NSF received a total of \$5.654 billion, a higher figure than either the House or Senate recommendation. This is a 3.3 percent increase over FY 2005 (the rescission would cost NSF about \$16 million). NSF's Research and Related Activities account,

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Inside UPDATE...

- **NIH SEEKS TO CREATE CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE PROGRAM**
- **WILLIAM O. BAKER, ADVISOR TO FIVE PRESIDENTS AND COSSA, DIES**
- **NEW COSSA MEMBER**



ANNUAL MEETING (Continued from Page 1)

As he has previously explained, almost “every contemporary social problem involves behavior that can be informed by existing social science knowledge, and could benefit from research along lines that are already well established.” Marburger further declared: “It is of course precisely because the peoples of the globe do not form a single homogeneous society that we need the social sciences to help us sort things out.”

Marburger reiterated his call from the April AAAS Policy Forum for a “social science of science policy” that would examine the effectiveness of Federal science policy. He noted that the National Science Foundation (NSF) has taken up his challenge, with NSF’s Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate identifying metrics and other information that can inform this evaluation.

He discussed a number of areas where OSTP has developed federal initiatives along social and behavioral science themes. These include: the societal impacts of nanotechnology; multiple activities related to homeland security; disaster reduction; critical infrastructure protection; and scientific collections.

Finally, he mentioned the work of the SBE Subcommittee of the National Science and Technology Council that is developing a strategic plan for these sciences. This interagency working group has identified a number of Grand Challenges, with its report entitled, “Understanding Human Beings: The Grandest Challenge.” The Subcommittee is still considering the final version of its report.

In a brief response to Marburger’s speech, Cora Marrett, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs for the University of Wisconsin system, and a member of the COSSA Board of Directors, suggested that increasingly, investment in science and engineering research is “under close scrutiny.” While acknowledging the special place of the social and behavioral sciences in any science policy agenda, she stressed the importance of partnerships for advancing science, calling collaboration “essential” to moving forward on the important issues that confront us.

In an additional reply to Marburger’s presentation, James S. Jackson, director of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan and also a member of the COSSA Board of Directors, noted that one of the difficulties for the social and behavioral sciences is that their subject matter is “disquieting to the public.” He noted a number of challenges to science and

higher education, including internationalization, equitable access, and financial support. In addition, he emphasized the need to protect peer review, an issue that Marburger agreed was “very important.”

DeLauro Argues Religion in Public Life Must Embrace All Issues

Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) discussed the role religion often plays in the lives of public officeholders. She declared that the influence of religion in public life and policy should not only focus on those issues defined as moral by the religious right, but also on policies where government can play a role in making people’s lives better. She also expressed concern about the influence of religion on scientific endeavors, suggesting that some are “manipulating legitimate scientific conclusions for ideological ends.”

She argued that religion enables public policymakers to grasp the “nuance and complexity” of the current issues before Congress, but that the boundaries between public and private expressions of faith are becoming increasingly blurred. One point of contention that DeLauro has with the current state of religion and politics is the way in which the richness of each individual’s religious heritage becomes subsumed by one or two big issues, such as stem cell research, gay marriage, or abortion.

Speaking from her personal experience growing up as a Catholic in New Haven, she explained that her family instilled in her the idea that “government has a moral responsibility to make opportunities for people real.” Yet, these days expressions of faith seem to come less easily to Democratic politicians than they do to Republicans, she argued. DeLauro, a Democrat, postulated that this might be a function of a more firm ideological belief in the separation of church and state by Democrats. Regardless, DeLauro fumed at what she sees as the current disconnect between traditional moral values and political dialogue. Whereas religious involvement in politics was once frowned upon, the majority of Americans now believe it is alright for churches to be political. She credited President George W. Bush’s for promoting this view in many ways since his campaign. A well-known example, she observed, was his assertion in the 2000 campaign that Jesus was his favorite philosopher. Religion, DeLauro bemoaned, once a political liability, is now “used as a political weapon.”

Clyde Wilcox, a professor of political science at Georgetown University also participated on the panel. Wilcox addressed the speed with which religion has risen to the forefront of politics, arguing that during

the Reagan administration, people were busy studying their own faith, keeping the religious and political spheres somewhat separate. Then in the 1990's, he explained, faith-based politics surfaced as more religious people emerged from their seclusion. He went on to characterize religion in America right now – using Christianity and Catholicism as examples – as a socially-interpreted phenomenon, where leaders politically interpret the Bible for their congregations.

Wilcox said that this often-literal interpretation of religious text is, however, inconsistent. Two well-known examples, he explained, are the Sabbath day and homosexuality. He pointed out that while the Bible states that Sunday is the day of rest, few follow that interpretation literally. On the other hand, the Bible's pertinent passages on homosexuality are often taken strictly at face value. Yet, religion has a powerful influence, according to Wilcox, with over one third of Americans seeing it as a central source of meaning in their lives. People like to hear "moral" language – issues couched in terms of "right" or "wrong" – and politicians often use this religious language and in the process mobilize both votes *and* religion itself, he argued.

Scott Keeter of the Pew Research Center also spoke about Pew's commitment to examining faith in America through the Pew Forum on Religion in Public Life. He noted that Pew had conducted some of the first polls on views of Islam and Muslims and found, perhaps counter-intuitively, that Americans expressed significantly more positive views of Islam and its followers after the 9/11 attacks. Keeter also brought up the possible conflict between political candidates' views and the explicit messages of the religious establishment. For example, he cited the Catholic Church's refusal to give the sacrament to pro-choice politicians during the 2004 election cycle, a position with which a majority of the American people disagreed.

William D'Antonio of Catholic University moderated the panel. A former Executive Officer of the American Sociological Association and Chair of the COSSA Executive Committee, D'Antonio observed that America seems to be in a period in which one particular group is dominating the political and religious scene, but this could change.

Lightfoot: Budget Increases Through Cooperation and Alliances

David Lightfoot, the Assistant Director (AD) for the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences

Directorate at the National Science Foundation (NSF) led off the meeting by noting that during his five months tenure as AD, he has seen that the NSF is viewed by many across the world as a "gold standard" of interdisciplinary research. In other countries with similar agencies, Lightfoot explained, the "experts" are often civil servants who are moved around within the agency, changing their "expertise" as they assume new posts. In contrast, he argued, NSF is an environment in which experts pervade the labor pool and a culture of checks and balances exists that makes NSF unique in the world of research agencies. Emphasizing the need to maintain and continue building the collaborative atmosphere at NSF, he observed that "a lot of productive work comes out of making new connections."

Lightfoot also noted that in a time of tight budget constraints, the social sciences could be a target for funding cuts. The behavioral and cognitive sciences, he believed, are less vulnerable at this juncture, but are still at risk, while economics programs constitute a funding "gorilla" that can often survive even under the tightest fiscal conditions. But Lightfoot argued that by steadily creating more alliances with other sciences, both inside and outside NSF, it is possible to continue "increasing the budget by stealth."

There are three initiatives where Lightfoot hopes future budgetary increases will occur. The first is through NSF's human and social dynamics program, which strongly focuses on interdisciplinary work and analyzes ongoing change in human history. In addition, he explained, this program allows NSF to hand out SGERs (pronounced "sugars"); smaller, shorter-term grants for narrow-scoped research in emergencies situations such as the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Second, Lightfoot stated that he wished to see more funding devoted to studying what Marburger identified as the "science of science policy." This new "science," Lightfoot argued, can help evaluate the investments that we are making in the sciences and the return on that investment. Lightfoot suggested that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has indicated an interest in funding this area in next year's budget. Lightfoot also noted that this program could involve establishing six science-specific evaluation centers across the country.

Finally, he conveyed the hope that cyberinfrastructure, a program that NSF director Arden Bement greatly supports developing, will garner more funding in the FY 2007 budget. Lightfoot argued that the social and behavioral sciences are greatly influenced by cyberinfrastructure and its ties to human

dimensions technology. Lightfoot's directorate just made significant awards under this rubric for developing the next generation of cybertools for social and behavioral science research (see *UPDATE*, October 24, 2005).

Abrams: Growth of Transdisciplinary Approach at NIH

Davis Abrams observed that after six months as director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research (OBSSR), the "honeymoon is over." While the "stark reality" of tight budgetary constraints has begun to set in, Abrams remained optimistic about the future of OBSSR and funding for its initiatives. He noted that at this juncture, approximately \$3 billion of the NIH budget supports some type of social, behavioral, or economic science research.

While the SBE sciences are critical to the NIH mission, Abrams explained, recent changes by institutes such as the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH) during its reorganization will most likely curtail funding in some areas of the social and behavioral sciences (See *UPDATE*, September 27, 2004). Abrams also updated COSSA members on the progress of the Working Group of the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director on Research Opportunities in Basic Behavior and Social Sciences (See *UPDATE*, December 13, 2004). He explained that NIH director Elias Zerhouni wants a "corporate response" to the Working Group's report. Abrams, along with the National Institute for General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) director Jeremy Berg and several other institute directors, are scheduled to begin meetings to come up with such a response modeled after the NIH Roadmap for Medical Research Neuroscience Initiatives.

Abrams went on to argue that social and behavioral sciences affect every aspect of NIH's mission, and that understanding the relevance of new breakthroughs in genetics, neural circuitry, biomarkers, and neurotransmitters to health will require increasingly sophisticated behavioral and social science research in the future. Much like Lightfoot, Abrams emphasized the need for integrated, alliance-based approaches to science. He expressed hope that the "two Davids" at NSF and NIH would work together to advance the best tools in the social and behavioral sciences to "slay goliath" – presumably obstacles hindering the growth of SBE science research programs. He explained that OBSSR is caught up in NIH's emphasis on transdisciplinary

research, which will be increasingly important in the future due to: the complexity of problems; multiple and interacting determinants; the need for a multi-perspective, rich array of perspectives; and advances in measuring tools, statistical methods and sampling time frames.

Abrams also discussed the creation of the new Office of Portfolio Analysis and Strategic Initiatives (OPASI), which was designed to coordinate and identify scientific opportunities for cross-institute and cross-disciplinary research (for more on OPASI, see *UPDATE*, October 24, 2005).

APPROPRIATIONS (Continued from Page 1)

which includes the Social, Behavioral, and Economic (SBE) Sciences Directorate, received \$4.388 billion, a four percent increase over last year. Again, Congress did not set specific funding marks for the research directorates, but gave the NSF director the discretion to allocate funds, subject to Congressional approval. The conference report includes language directing NSF to fund the Children's Research Initiative Centers program at the FY 2005 level.

The Education and Human Resources directorate was given \$807 million, approximately \$34 million lower than its FY 2005 level. The Research, Evaluation, and Communication division received \$49.5 million, a \$10 million reduction from last year, but higher than the Administration's proposed \$33.8 million.

The conferees provided \$812.2 million for the **Census Bureau**. This has delighted the Bureau and its stakeholders, who a week earlier at the 2010 Census Advisory Committee (of which COSSA is a member) were discussing the elimination of the American Community Survey (ACS) and the elimination of the 2006 decennial census test sites as well as the possibility of a return to a long-form census in 2010 if the Senate's funding recommendation stood. With strong lobbying by stakeholders and former census directors, presumably all of the gloom and doom should now be avoided.

Periodic Censuses and Programs has been funded at \$614.2 million, which includes \$203.8 million for 2010 Census redesign, \$169.9 million for the ACS, and \$79.8 million for updating the master address list and digital mapping system (TIGER). Within 60 days of enactment, the Census Bureau must submit an operating plan as to how it will spend FY 2006 funds.

The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) received \$55 million for its base funding, the same as last year's level. Of that total, \$21 million is for National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Centers. NIJ will also receive \$5.1 million from the Violence Against Women account, \$10 million to help local law enforcement identify new technologies, and \$3 million from the Community Oriented Policing program to evaluate police armor vests. The **Bureau of Justice Statistics** (BJS) will receive \$35 million in FY 2006, a slight \$1 million increase over last year.

Aside from the committee's rescission, there could still be a general across-the-board cut. Thus, these numbers may be far from final.

Labor, HHS and Human Services

On October 27, the Senate approved its version of the FY 2006 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill (H.R. 3010) by a 94-3 vote. The bill provides \$141.7 billion in discretionary funds.

For the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Senate bill includes \$29.415 billion, an increase of \$1.05 billion, or 3.7 percent above the FY 2005 funding level, and \$908 million more than the House bill (for funding levels approved by the House, see *UPDATE*, June 12, 2005, and for Senate levels for other agencies in the bill, see *UPDATE*, July 25, 2005).

Several amendments were adopted during consideration of the bill, including an amendment by Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL) which would prohibit "a candidate for appointment to a Federal scientific advisory committee to disclose the political affiliation or voting history of the candidate or the position that the candidate holds with respect to political issues not directly related to and necessary for the work of the committee involved." The amendment also prohibits funding in the bill to "be used to disseminate scientific information that is deliberately false or misleading." A similar amendment by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA) passed during the House consideration of its bill (See *UPDATE*, June 27, 2005).

Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA) also succeeded, by voice vote, in requiring the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to restore its question about women's wages to the Current Employment Survey.

After months of notices and community responses, BLS and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) decided to remove the question from the survey in order to expand the questionnaire to encompass more workers. Heidi Hartman of the Institute for Women's Policy Research, a COSSA member, led the effort to get the question reinstated. Since the House did not deal with this issue, the conference committee will need convincing to keep Kennedy's amendment in the final bill.

Agriculture and Rural Development

The FY 2006 Agriculture and Rural Development Appropriations bill became the fourth spending bill to complete the journey through the congressional process with the approval of the conference report by the Senate on November 3. The House had agreed to the report on October 31.

The numbers reported below do not include any across-the-board cut still under consideration as a method for freeing up funds for Katrina reconstruction projects and deficit reduction.

The Economic Research Service (ERS) received \$75.9 million, \$1.8 million above FY 2005, but \$4.8 million below the request. Part of the increase, \$350,000 is for an agreement with the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a comprehensive study on the economic development and current status of the sheep industry in the United States. ERS was also asked to report on the "impact of increased prices of gas, natural gas, and diesel on agricultural producers, ranchers, and rural communities." The conference agreement provided the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) with \$140.7 million for FY 2006, a \$12.3 million boost over last year.

The conferees ratified the earlier decisions of the House and Senate to reject the Administration's attempts to begin eliminating formula grant programs. Hatch Act payments received \$178.8 million, up slightly over FY 2005. Special research grants went up almost \$8 million to \$128.2 million, as Congress once again asserted its prerogative to fund special projects it deems worthy, despite Administration admonitions to discourage this practice. This included \$1.2 million for the Rural Policy Institutes in Nebraska, Iowa, and Missouri, along with \$1.8 million for a Geographic Information System (GIS) program.

The National Research Initiative Competitive Grants (NRI) program received \$183 million for FY 2006, up approximately \$3.5 million over FY 2005, but below both the House and Senate figures. The conference committee

also rejected the Administration's attempt to move a number of programs associated with water quality and food safety into the NRI, leaving them in the integrated activities account.

Congress continued its ban on funding new Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems (IFAFS) grants. Finally, it continued to limit indirect cost reimbursements to 20 percent.

NIH SEEKS TO CREATE CLINICAL AND TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE PROGRAM

On October 12, National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Elias Zerhouni announced the creation of a new agency program, the Institutional Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSAs), designed to spur the transformation of clinical and translational research in the U.S. Emphasizing that the country is "truly at a crossroads in medicine," Zerhouni argued that "the scientific advances" in recent years "dictate that we act now to encourage fundamental changes in how we do clinical research, and how we train the new generations of clinician scientists for the medical challenges of this century."

The NIH believes that translational and clinical research are critical components for the success of the mission of NIH and a distinct discipline of translational and clinical science is needed to ensure that the rapid and fundamental advances in biomedical and behavioral sciences will be used in patient-oriented research. "The discipline requires the development of well-structured and well recognized career development pathways that re intertwined with original and fundamental research that will explore new ground in the methods and approaches to clinical research."

The NIH is defining clinical research as studies and trials that involve human subjects. Translational research is to include two segments of the research continuum: (1) the process of applying discoveries made in the laboratory, testing them in animals, and developing trials and studies for humans; and (2) research aimed at enhancing the adoption of best treatment practices into the medical community.

According to Zerhouni, the program will allow research institutions more freedom to foster productive collaboration among experts in different fields, lower barriers between disciplines, and encourage creative, new approaches that will help us solve complex medical

mysteries. "Ultimately, patients will be better served because new prevention strategies and treatments will be developed, tested, and brought into medical practice more rapidly," he explained.

The grants are designed to encourage institutions to propose new approaches to clinical and translation research, as well as foster original research in developing clinical research methodologies. The CTSAs are expected to serve as a magnet that concentrates basic, translational, and clinical investigators, community clinicians, clinical practices, networks, professional societies, and industry to facilitate the development of new professional interactions, programs, and research projects.

Drawing on the experience of the NIH Roadmap for Medical Research Funding, along with community input, the NIH has issued a request-for-application (RFA-RM-06-002) Institutional Clinical and Translational Science Awards that will "enable applicants to innovate in their own translational research efforts and to transform their own environment to promote the development and advancement of clinical and translational science as a distinct discipline."

The academic home of the CTSAs can be a center, department, or institute (C/D/I) and expected to include faculty who conduct original research, develop graduate and postgraduate training curricula and lead programs that integrate clinical and translational science across multiple departments, schools, clinical and research institute, and hospitals.

Key functions or components of a CTSA could include:

- Performance of innovative translational research projects that include basic and clinical scientists as co-investigators
- Development of clinical and translational methodologies and technologies
- Biomedical informatics
- Design, biostatistics, and clinical research ethics;
- Regulatory support
- Participant and clinical interactions resources; community engagement
- Education, training and career development
- Capacity for pilot and collaborative studies

The C/D/I is expected to work in close cooperation with activities of the NIH Roadmap, NIH Institutes and Centers, and other appropriate trans-NIH activities.

NIH plans to award four to seven CTSAs in FY 2006 for a total of \$30 million, with an additional \$11.5 million allocated to support 50 planning grants (RFA-RM-06-001) for those institutions that are not ready to make a full application. It is expected that the number of awards will increase annually so that by 2012, 60 CTSAs will receive a total of approximately \$500 million per year. The program will be administered by the NIH's National Center for Research Resources (NCRR).

Funding for the new initiative will come in part from the Roadmap budget and existing clinical and translational programs. This will be accomplished entirely through redirecting existing resources, including Roadmap funds. Zerhouni emphasized that the NIH is "taking great care to preserve the investigator-initiated research support pool in these times of constrained budgets."

To apply for the CTSAs, letters of intent are due: **February 27, 2006**. Applications are due: **March 27, 2006**. For more information contact: Anthony Hayward, NCRR, at 301/435-0790 or via email at haywarda@mail.nih.gov or see <http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-RM-06-002.html>.

To apply for the planning grants, letters of intent are due February 27, 2006 and applications are due March 27, 2006. For more information about the planning grants contact Bernard Talbot, NCRR, at 301/435-0793 or via email at talbotb@mail.nih.gov or see: <http://grants2.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-RM-06-001.html>.

WILLIAM O. BAKER, ADVISER TO FIVE PRESIDENTS AND COSSA, DIES

William O. Baker, former head of Bell Laboratories and an adviser to Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and Reagan died on October 31 at the age of 90. A physical chemist, Baker was president of Bell Labs from 1973 to 1979, and retired as chairman of the Board in 1980. He joined Bell Labs as a research scientist in 1939 and while there during World War II he helped develop synthetic rubber.

Baker served on the President's Science Advisory Committee, the President's Foreign Policy Intelligence Advisory Board, and the Federal Emergency Management Advisory Board. He was awarded the National Medal of Science in 1988.

Following his retirement from Bell Labs, Baker served on the National Science Foundation's Advisory Committee for the Education and Human Resources directorate. He was also a member of the original COSSA Board of Directors serving from 1982 to 1986. On July 19, 1983 he participated in one of the first of COSSA's Congressional briefings: "Education and Economic Competitiveness Abroad." Baker's presentation, entitled, "Foreign Language Skills as Factors in Economic Currency and World Trade."

He spoke about the consequences of the coming times "when every person in the world may speak or otherwise signal specifically to any other in real time." He speculated that "the learning of language and living outside our own will be the cheapest, happiest, surest investment in survival presently available...and if we want to keep our world, we must know how to talk about, to understand, and to deal with theirs."

NEW COSSA MEMBER

COSSA is proud to welcome The George Washington University to its membership. We look forward to working with them to promote and enhance the social and behavioral sciences.

CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS (COSSA)

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), an advocacy organization for Federal support for the social and behavioral sciences, was founded in 1981 and stands alone in Washington in representing the full range of social and behavioral sciences.

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