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CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

# COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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## NSF APPROPRIATIONS PASS HOUSE: REPORT PROTECTS SOCIAL SCIENCES

The House of Representatives passed a spending bill July 20 that allots \$1.999 billion to the National Science Foundation (NSF) next fiscal year. Passed by voice vote, the FY 1990 Veterans Affairs-Housing and Urban Development-Independent Agencies Appropriations bill also includes funds for the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

NSF received an increase of 8.3 percent for research and related activities, a reduction from the administration's requested increase of 14 percent. Thus, when NSF produces its operating plan for FY 1990 it will need to reduce the requested increases for its various programs. In the spending bill's language, the Subcommittee offered the following advice to NSF on how to make those reductions in the research area:

"The Committee directs that the balance of reduction be applied equally across all disciplines except those

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The Consortium represents more than 185,000 American scientists across the full range of the social and behavioral sciences, functioning as a bridge between the research world and the Washington community.

Raymond E. Wolfinger, *President*

Howard J. Silver, *Executive Director*

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programmatic areas enjoying a requested increase of 7.5 percent or less (such as social and economic science, astronomical sciences, etc) shall not be reduced by more than 75 percent of the reduction required in other functions."

Thus, the social and economic sciences are afforded some protection from the full force of the funding shortfall.

The Committee also included language in the bill prohibiting the funding of the already-authorized facilities program. The prohibition was removed on the House floor in an amendment proposed by Science, Space and Technology Committee Chairman Rep. Robert Roe (D-NJ). Yet no money was appropriated, so proponents of facilities funding must now seek support from the Senate.

The Committee also reiterated its historic efforts to protect individual-investigator-initiated research and recommended that "the Foundation carefully consider the advisability of committing any additional funds to engineering, science and technology or other research centers."

The bill now moves on to the Senate, where subcommittee markup probably will not occur until after the August recess.<<

#### APPROPRIATIONS BILL LANGUAGE DAMAGES PROSPECTS FOR SEX SURVEY

While awaiting a decision from Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Louis Sullivan on whether the proposed National Survey of Health and Sexual Behavior could conduct its pilot study, (see Update April 14, 1989) the House Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee made Sullivan's task somewhat easier. The Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. William Natcher (D-KY), stated in its report: "This [survey] does not appear to be an appropriate use of public funds...The Public Health Service is directed not to proceed with this study." The Subcommittee also deleted \$11.05 million from the FY 1990 appropriation of the Centers for Disease Control to fund the full survey.

At the markup of the bill on July 25 by the full House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Rep. Jamie Whitten (D-MS), the actions of the Subcommittee were upheld. Rep. Bill Green (R-NY) expressed his opposition to the actions taken regarding the survey but did not receive any support from his fellow appropriations committee members.

This strong prohibition against conducting the survey appears to be primarily a reaction to political pressures spawned by Rep. William Dannemeyer (R-CA) and other conservatives. Foes object to federal financing of a survey that would update, from the Kinsey studies of over 40 years ago, information on Americans' sexual

behavior. The proposed survey, however, would provide data to help decision makers devise policies to cope with the AIDS epidemic, other sexually transmitted diseases, and other social problems such as teen pregnancies. Subcommittee staff suggested that a fight on the House floor was probable and that a vote to support the survey was probably "unwinnable." Thus, the Subcommittee protected House members from having to cast a controversial vote, which is a time honored congressional practice.

The study was approved by a peer review panel at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), received a strong endorsement from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Advisory Council, and was endorsed by the outgoing Director of NIH James Wyngaarden. A General Accounting Office report and the National Academy of Sciences also recommended conducting the survey. Yet once again science has been defeated by the politics of sex.

The survival of the survey now probably hinges on the ability of the scientific community to convince the Senate Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Subcommittee (Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA), chairman, and Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA), ranking Republican) that peer review and scientific research should not be sacrificed to congressional fears about studies of sexual behavior.<<

#### BROMLEY SUPPORTS SOCIAL SCIENCES AT CONFIRMATION HEARINGS

In Senate hearings held recently to confirm D. Allan Bromley as director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), Bromley used the occasion, when asked, to offer words of support for the social and behavioral sciences, noting that they have an important role to play in the science policy arena.

The Henry II Ford Professor of Physics and director of the A.W. Wright Nuclear Structure Laboratory at Yale University, Bromley now serves President Bush as special assistant for Science and Technology. The hearings to confirm him as OSTP director were held July 21 by the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, chaired by Sen. Al Gore (D-TN) in the absence of Sen. Ernest Hollings (D-SC).

During the course of the hearings, Bromley asserted: "I do not intend to be a lobbyist for the science and technology community." He assured, rather, that the community's input would be sought and its judgments respected. He also said he intends to emphasize the "T" in OSTP, and specifically noted his desire to appoint someone from the private sector as an associate director for industrial technology.

Bromley noted that the national agenda for science and technology includes: environment and ecology, economic competitiveness, public health, national security, education and

training, space, energy utilization and supply, information science and technology, the science and technology base, and international science. Bromley, quoting President Bush, said OSTP must "play a central role in developing and coordinating federal science and technology strategies and in analyzing crosscutting issues in research and development."

Asked what role the social and behavioral sciences should play, Bromley reiterated his view, expressed in a 1987 lecture at the University of Virginia, that these disciplines often provide the key unknowns for important science and technology issues associated with public policy decisions. He told the Committee "the social sciences have an important contribution to make in science and technology policy overall, and I will ensure that appropriate attention is given to those fields of inquiry in the work and the staffing of OSTP and of scientific advisory panels under my purview," including President Bush's National Council of Science Advisers.

Committee members urged Bromley to model himself on recent Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, whose high public profile attracted much needed attention to health prevention. If Bromley could do the same for science and technology, Committee members suggested, he would succeed in his desire to meet the "wealth of opportunities and challenges" presented by the national agenda in science and technology.<<

#### CENSUS BUREAU ANNOUNCES PLANS TO MEASURE UNDERCOUNT

The U.S. Census Bureau has agreed to conduct a random survey of 150,000 homes to measure the degree of undercounting expected to occur in the 1990 census. It remains to be seen, however, whether the Bureau will actually use the resulting findings to adjust the official census tally, according to a recent NewYork Times article.

The historic undercounting of the poor and minorities became a major source of contention several years ago when statisticians began to explore ways of correcting the problem through adjustments. In 1987, the Commerce Department scuttled plans to make such adjustments to the 1990 census, setting off an unending round of criticism from various quarters, including Congress and the statistical research community (see Update, October 7, 1988). It also led to COSSA Board Member Barbara Bailar's resignation from her post as associate director for statistical standards and methodology at the Census Bureau; she now serves as executive director of the American Statistical Association, one of COSSA's 10 Member associations.

The Commerce Department decision also resulted in a lawsuit against the agency, filed last November. Plaintiffs in that suit included civic and civil rights groups and state and local

governments across the country. The Census Bureau's July 17 announcement to conduct the undercount measurement survey coincided with what was to be the first day of trial in that case.

The Bureau plans to conduct the measurement survey in July 1990, three months after the decennial census is taken. Unlike post-enumeration surveys conducted in the past, this one would be designed in a way that would allow it to be used for adjusting the census, should the government decide to use it for that purpose.<<

#### SOCIAL SCIENTISTS OUTLINE BARRIERS BLACK MEN FACE

Education, employment, and community involvement are the keys to eliminating the structural barriers facing America's young black men, according to witnesses testifying July 25 before the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, chaired by Rep. George Miller (D-CA). Six researchers and community activists described the socio-economic hurdles confronting young African Americans and stressed the need for more economic, educational, and social opportunities.

Mercer Sullivan, a senior research associate at the Vera Institute for Justice in New York, described for the Committee his work on the crime patterns of young men in New York City. In a study of three community-based groups -- one black, one hispanic, and one white -- Sullivan discovered that crime patterns began similarly in all three groups. As the subjects aged, however, disparities developed between the minority groups and the white group, with crime involvement dropping more among whites than among blacks and hispanics. The explanation, according to Sullivan, lies in the greater employment opportunity for white youth and the lower tolerance within white communities for criminal activity among youths.

Sullivan's study suggests that the traditional dichotomy between tougher law enforcement and increased preventative measures is largely illusory. "They're two sides of the same coin," he said. The key to reducing crime among America's young blacks involves preventive measures such as increased family participation in education and more extensive employment counseling and support, but also depends upon community-based enforcement measures.

Also testifying before the Select Committee was Andrew Sum, director of the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University, who stressed the correlation between poor education and insufficient annual earnings among young black men. Sum also called for an increase in cooperative work/school programs that could provide young black men with better employment training.

Antoine Garibaldi, chairman and associate professor of education at Xavier University in New Orleans, echoed Sum's call for improvements in education, but emphasized that real progress depends upon renewed effort from all segments of the community, not just schools. "This problem is too widespread for one solution and, and it is unrealistic to believe that only schools can ameliorate this situation," he said.

Wade Nobles, director of the Institute for Advanced Study of Black Family Life and Culture, Oakland, CA, testified that efforts to improve self-image among young black men are crucial to eliminating the structural barriers founded on societal racism. Nobles promoted "culturally consistent (Afrocentric) manhood training programs" -- such as the HAWK Federation Project in Sacramento, CA -- as the vehicle for self-image improvement.<<

TABLES AVAILABLE ON UNIVERSITY SUPPORT, R&D FUNDING BY AGENCY

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has released two sets of detailed statistical tables on federal support for science and engineering. Both sets should be of interest to grantee institutions and researchers in the field.

One report, Volume XXXVII of Federal Funds for Research and Development: fiscal years 1987, 1988, and 1989 (NSF 89-304), examines basic and applied research and development by agency, character of work, performer, science or engineering field, geographic distribution, and historical obligation. It includes overall summaries of federal R&D funding for fiscal years 1987-1989, including a breakdown of such support by agency. Fields used in the tables include psychology and the social sciences. (Multi- and inter-disciplinary projects are lumped together under an "other sciences" heading.)

As its name implies, the other report, Federal Support to Universities, Colleges, and Selected Nonprofit Institutions: Fiscal Year 1987 (NSF 88-330) comprises tables representing all categories of direct federal support that year to institutions of higher education in the United States. (Fiscal 1987 is the latest year for which such data are available.) Tables supplied in this report examine federal support by agency, science or engineering field, geographic distribution, and historical obligation. It also includes institutional listings by state, as well as summaries by agency and type of activity.

Copies of these reports may be obtained by contacting Elizabeth Michael, Division of Science Resources Studies, Room L-602, National Science Foundation, 1800 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20550; 202/634-4622.<<

**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.

**Division of Materials Development, Research,  
and Informal Science Education**

The National Science Foundation's Division of Materials Development, Research, and Informal Science Education (MDRI) supports a wide range of projects designed to generate new knowledge and provide new and improved models and materials that can help to increase the quality of the nation's systems for math and science education.

The Division's Instructional Materials Development Program (IMDP) seeks proposals focusing on the creation of improved materials and model programs for math instruction at the middle school level. Prospective developers of middle school materials should note that National Science Foundation awards in this area indicate a trend toward broadening the topics covered in math education. This trend presents opportunities for integrating knowledge from science, technology, the humanities, and social sciences to lend context and relevance to math education. Other areas of interest under this proposal include teaching methods, teacher support, and methods and materials for assessment.

**Application Procedure:** Interested individuals should request further information from the contact below before formulating a proposal. A preliminary proposal and subsequent response from IMDP are required before a formal proposal will be accepted. Early submission of the preliminary proposal is strongly encouraged.

**Budget:** The budget for this solicitation is contingent upon applicant response and availability of funding.

**Funding Mechanism:** The Division expects to fund approximately five awards. Each award may be funded for up to five years.

**Deadlines:** January 1, 1990 (preliminary proposals)  
June 1, 1990 (formal proposals)

**Contact:** Tom Berger, Program Director  
SEE - MDRI, Room 635  
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