



CONSORTIUM of SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

FY 2018 APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS for SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE & RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

COSSA joins the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) and other scientific organizations in urging Congress to appropriate **\$8 billion for the National Science Foundation (NSF)** in FY 2018.

NSF funds basic scientific discovery, workforce training, and state-of-the-art facilities that keeps the U.S. ahead of its global competitors. It is the only U.S. federal agency tasked with *supporting scientific research across all fields of science*. By funding innovative, cutting-edge research in all STEM areas, the U.S. is not betting on a single field of research to produce the next big innovation or life-changing finding. Instead, we are making investments that allow researchers to simultaneously uncover breakthroughs on all possible fronts. The agency utilizes a “portfolio” approach with the projects it supports. This recognizes that not every project will—or is expected to—yield a positive result, but that taken together, a diverse portfolio of research can collectively advance science.

NSF supports about a quarter of all federally-funded basic scientific research conducted at colleges and universities nationwide. **Notably, the agency serves as the largest single funder of basic social and behavioral science research.** Though the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate (SBE)—one of seven research directorates at NSF—represents less than 5% of the entire NSF research budget, it supports around two-thirds of total federal funding for academic *basic research* in the social and behavioral sciences (excluding psychology). Further, NSF’s Education and Human Resources Directorate (EHR) plays a critical role in fostering a well-prepared and diverse STEM workforce—across all STEM fields—and also supports research into education, learning, and teaching across the continuum of education.

Social science discoveries funded by NSF have helped to **improve public health, enhance the safety of troops in combat zones, understand how to prepare for and respond to natural and human-made disasters, reduce violence among our youth, improve the effectiveness of the criminal justice system, and generate billions of dollars for the U.S. Treasury with the creation of the telecommunications spectrum auctions.** Further, every winner of the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences over the last 20 years has been an NSF grantee, with a total of **54 Economics Laureates** having received NSF funding at some point in their careers.

NSF, through its gold-standard merit review process, allows the demands of scientific discovery to dictate how best to spend basic research dollars, leaving politics and individual ideologies at the door. This process has been emulated the world over. COSSA urges Congress to maintain NSF’s authority over the distribution of its precious research dollars and not set arbitrary funding levels for NSF’s individual directorates, keeping with current practice.

“Social and behavioral science” encompasses a collection of STEM disciplines engaged in the rigorous study of why and how humans behave as they do as individuals, groups and within institutions, organizations, and society. It often refers to the disciplines of and fields within anthropology, communication, demography, economics, geography, history, law, linguistics, political science, psychology, sociology, and statistics, as well as countless multidisciplinary subfields.



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

COSSA urges Congress to appropriate **\$40 million for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ)** and **\$48 million for the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)**, respectively, for FY 2018.

Numerous pressing criminal justice and law enforcement issues are at the fore of public consciousness today, including understanding the **mental health** needs of people who become involved in the justice system, the **drivers of domestic radicalization**, **effective solutions to opioid addiction**, and **ways to improve police officer safety** and **community relations**. By working with jurisdictions at all levels to compile data and support research, DOJ provides key insights to help improve public safety by funding research through NIJ and BJS and other DOJ agencies. Making the results of this research available to state and local officials and the public allows justice and law enforcement professionals to learn what works, adopt best practices, and improve public safety by leveraging the best research and data to protect the public, reduce recidivism, and support law enforcement and communities. While objective research is needed now more than ever, federal funding in support of such research has been largely stagnant. **Congress must prioritize federal data collection and research if we are to provide local, state, and federal officials with the information they need** to develop strategies to improve public safety in our communities.

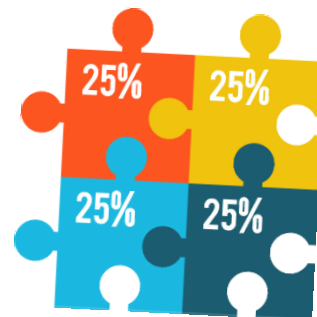


CENSUS BUREAU

COSSA urges Congress to **appropriate sufficient funding to the U.S. Census Bureau** in FY 2018 to keep the agency on track to execute an innovative and cost-effective 2020 Decennial Census.

The 2020 Census is less than three years away. After years of research, testing, evaluation, and development, activities will culminate next year in the 2018 End-to-End Census Test—a “dress rehearsal,” if you will—which will integrate all systems and operations into a census-like environment. The success of the 2018 End-to-End Test is central to ensuring an accurate and cost-effective Decennial Census. At this critical juncture when testing moves to implementation, **reliable funding is essential**.

Technological advancements just since 2010 make the 2020 Census poised to be the most innovative yet. New counting methods—enabled by Internet response options, digital mapping and imagery to update address lists, and the use of administrative data—hold the potential to save about \$5 billion over the lifecycle of the 2020 Census. To do that, though, the Census Bureau will need to stay on schedule and finalize and test its new design, IT systems, and operations within the next year in advance of the End-to-End Census Test in 2018.



In addition, **COSSA calls on Congress to fully fund the American Community Survey (ACS) and maintain its status as a mandatory federal survey**. The ACS is the only source of comparable, consistent, timely, and high quality demographic and socio-economic data for all communities in the U.S. As a component of the Constitutionally-mandated Decennial Census, the ACS is a “mandatory” national survey. The accuracy of the data collected by the ACS relies on this mandatory status. Targeted cuts and changes to its status would significantly undermine the ability to collect usable data on all U.S. counties, particularly in less populous, rural areas of the country.



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