

COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

Volume X, Number 8

April 29, 1991

BROMLEY, MASSEY AND MIKULSKI: SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH IN A TOUGH BUDGET CLIMATE *HJ*

On April 24 Presidential Science Adviser Allan Bromley and National Science Foundation Director Walter Massey urged support for the president's FY 1992 science research budget before the Senate Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee.

Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), subcommittee chair, noted that while she is clearly "supportive of the goals" of the budget and believes that the U.S. is underinvesting in science, "our will and our wallets don't exactly match." Appropriating the requested increases in science funding will be difficult, according to Mikulski, given the competing forces at work in her subcommittee -- housing, environment, veterans, space and science.

Bromley, proudly pointed to his appointment of Pierre Perrolle, whose responsibilities include the social sciences, to be Assistant Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) as an example of the growth of his office to meet all the science policy challenges facing this nation.

Mikulski congratulated him on the "increased visibility" of OSTP and the two organizations connected to it, the Federal Coordinating Council on Science, Engineering and Technology (FCCSET) and the President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology (PCAST). FCCSET is an inter-agency group of Cabinet officers responsible for government-wide science policy initiatives. PCAST is a group of distinguished citizens from outside the government who meet with the President to provide advice on science and technology policy (see UPDATE April 15, 1991).

Massey, making his first appearance as NSF Director before Mikulski's subcommittee, argued the case for the proposed 17.5 percent increase for the Foundation. He stressed the role NSF is playing in the major scientific initiatives of the administration -- Global Change, including its economic and human impacts, High Performance Computing and

Communication, and Education and Human Resources (Math and Science Education).

Both Bromley and Massey faced a number of questions concerning the issue of indirect costs for research (see following story)

Science education

On the previous day, Bromley and Massey were joined by current Deputy Secretary for Education Ted Sanders to discuss the administration's science education efforts. (President Bush has nominated former Xerox CEO David Kearns for this position, but he has not yet been confirmed by the Senate.) Most of the discussion focused on the report of the FCCSET Committee on Education and Human Resources By the Year 2000. While stating that this inventory of math/science education programs across the federal government was significant, Mikulski added there is an "urgency to act," if the U.S. is to achieve one of the objectives of the National Education Goals -- making U.S. students the best in the world in math and science by the year 2000.

All three witnesses and the Senator focused their attention on the retraining and retooling of math and science teachers. Bromley noted the science education problem is mainly at the K-12 and undergraduate level. He urged that we should "not do anything to harm graduate education," which he called one of the nation's "most important exports."

Mikulski concentrated her comments on the problem of dissemination of information about innovative programs to the schools. She noted

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there should be a continuum of 1) materials developed, 2) materials delivered, and 3) materials utilized. She chided the Education Department for its inability to accomplish the delivery of these materials, thereby preventing their use.

Education Legislation set for May

There was also some discussion of the plan made public by President Bush on April 18 to radically restructure the nation's school systems. One proposal is to develop "new world class standards" in five core subjects -- English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography. Sanders promised that legislation to implement the president's plans would be sent to the Congress in early May.

CONGRESS AND ADMINISTRATION FOCUS ON INDIRECT COSTS

Recent highly publicized accounts of federal research funds being misspent by universities have produced a public outcry for Washington to reform the way in which indirect costs -- those costs not directly associated with research but overhead related to use of physical plant and other factors -- are reimbursed by the federal government.

On April 22 the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released a list of expenses which could no longer be considered reimbursable by the government. This list includes such items as entertainment expenses, home or office furnishings for university officials, transportation expenses, as well as country club fees. Moreover, OMB Director Richard G. Darman stated that in the next few weeks he will be proposing placing a limit on the

percentage of a federal research grant that can be used for indirect costs.

Darman's action was viewed by many as an attempt to respond to a growing sense in the Congress that steps must be taken to restrict the indirect charges of research grants. Many Members of Congress, having recently returned from the Easter recess period, report constituent outrage over media accounts of federal money going towards parties and liquor for university leaders.

On April 23 the Science Subcommittee of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology held a hearing to examine the issue of indirect costs. Much to the chagrin of panel chair Rick Boucher (D-VA), no representatives from OMB accepted the committee's invitation to testify. Boucher said that OMB's absence, "further reflects the lack the lack of priority OMB has assigned to this matter."

Dr. Roland W. Schmitt, President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a former chairman of the National Science Board, told the panel that he supported OMB's proposed new regulations. He also believes Congress should adequately fund compliance audits of research grants in an effort to curb abuses and restore public confidence.

While expressing support for Darman's proposal, Chairman Boucher blamed OMB for much of the current controversy, saying that OMB is, "largely responsible for the misinterpretation and confusion about what costs are properly allowable." Boucher said OMB's current set of regulations is, "outdated and vague, inviting misunderstanding and misinterpretation."

Boucher's comments are important because recent controversies have led some to lose faith in the integrity of government-funded research, and Boucher's comments fall clearly on the side of supporting the research community on this issue.

Panel members expressed broad support for the OMB proposal, but agreed with Boucher that further clarification of the indirect cost issue is needed. There appears to be support in the Congress for placing caps on the percentage of costs devoted to indirect costs. Committee member Harris Fawell (R-IL) questioned the whole concept of indirect costs, contending that it leads to fiscal mismanagement and lack of accountability.

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Freshman Rep. Tim Roemer (D-IN), whose district includes the University of Notre Dame, spoke of the possibility of a "death penalty" -- suspending federal grants to universities that violate federal grant regulations. Roemer's "death penalty" reference was to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) policy of barring universities that violate NCAA rules from intercollegiate competition.

On the second day of the Science subcommittee's hearings, April 25, members heard from representatives of the research community who had been dealing with the indirect cost issue well before the current flurry of activity. The hearing began with assurances from full committee chairman, George Brown (D-CA), that many members of the subcommittee felt the whole issue had been blown out of proportion. "Attention to indirect costs is not because it represents a major financial threat to the country," said Brown, "but because we hold universities to a higher standard."

The first witness of the day was David Packard, CEO of Hewlett-Packard Corporation, member of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), and co-author with Allan Bromley, the current White House science advisor, of an earlier report on indirect costs. Noting that he had been involved in the issue since the 1940s, Packard dated the history of the current system of federal reimbursement for university research to the emergence of land grant colleges, where agricultural research produced obvious social and economic benefits for the nation. While the benefit of research is still real, it is sometimes less evident, said Packard. Furthermore, increased government regulation has imposed on universities an unwieldy paperwork and reporting burden that adds to higher administrative costs.

Bromley: Caps aren't the answer

Packard's co-author, science adviser Bromley had testified to the VA-HUD-Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee on April 24 that an immediate modification to OMB Circular A-21, which sets forth indirect cost reimbursement policies, was in the works, but that all parties -- OMB, Office of Science and Technology Policy, federal research agencies, universities, and congressional committees -- need to meet to focus on long-range solutions to the problem. He stated that caps are not the best approach and that severe restrictions on indirect costs would have "a dramatic effect on universities both public and private."

Subcommittee Chair, Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), noted the connection between increases in indirect costs and the lack of federal funding for research facilities modernization. She hoped any congressional rush toward caps could be delayed while more useful solutions were found. Mikulski suggested that just because "some universities went Gucci," all should be not be punished.

AAU recommendations

Cornelius Pings, Provost of the University of Southern California, presented the recommendations of the Association of American Universities (AAU) committee report on indirect costs (the so-called "Pings Report"). Four major recommendations were: 1) to split indirect costs into two categories: facilities/equipment and administrative; 2) to establish a threshold rate for administrative costs with an option to exceed it with proper documentation; 3) to charge more to direct costs; and 4) to adopt realistic rates for "technologically obsolescent" equipment. Pings suggested that all of these recommendations could be adopted through changes in OMB's Circular A-21 rather than through enacting new legislation.

Some of these recommendations were reiterated by Robert Johnson, of Florida State University, who spoke about the Florida Demonstration Project--now the Federal Demonstration Project. Johnson reported that the FDP, by reducing the principle investigator's administrative responsibilities, had showed an increase in research productivity. Like Packard, he recommended that current administrative requirements be streamlined; and, like Pings, thought that modification of the indirect cost system could occur within the domain of the OMB Circular without new legislation from Congress.

Questions from subcommittee chair Boucher centered around the desirability of capping administrative costs. All three witnesses agreed that there should be some cap but a specific level was not recommended. Furthermore, there was disagreement about the extent to which private and public universities should be allowed different levels.

Both witnesses and committee members agreed that the current investigations into the indirect cost rate system are healthy, if they do not become shrill. "The remedies we develop out of these hearings should not be punitive, but rather preventive," summed up Rep. Ray Thornton (D-AK), former President of the University of Arkansas system.

Late in the week the government announced it would sharply reduce research payments to Stanford University as a result of Stanford's \$200 million overbilling of indirect costs to the federal government. Federal research officials reduced Stanford's indirect cost rate from the current 74% to 55.5%, a move estimated to cost the university \$20 million this year.

ADAMHA SCOLDED BY HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Fred Goodwin, the Administrator of the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA), most likely did not expect the lashing his agency received at the April 22 hearing of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Resources. Goodwin, accompanied by the directors of the three ADAMHA institutes-- the National Institutes on Drug Abuse (NIDA), Mental Health (NIMH), and Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse (NIAAA)--came to the committee to defend the President's FY 1992 budget request for his agency (See Update, March 4, 1991). After presenting his statement and fielding tame questions from Chairman William Natcher (D-KY), Goodwin and the institute directors faced a firing line of other committee members frustrated about the perceived failure of ADAMHA-funded research to produce significant results.

Representatives Carl Pursell (R-MI), Louis Stokes (D-OH), and Joe Early (D-MA) all commented on the gap between NIDA-funded national surveys that indicate declining drug use in America and evidence that the drug problem-- as well as drug-related crime--is epidemic in many communities. They criticized the methodology of the High School Seniors Survey, noting that the very population most at risk of drug abuse--high school drop-outs--is not included. Similarly, they pointed out that homeless people--many of whom have an addictive disorder--are not among the sample for the National Household Survey which is used to chart trends in drug use among adult Americans. The point, Rep. Pursell said is that "we haven't seen any report that shows whether federal research money has made a difference" in reducing drug abuse.

The story at NIAAA is a little different, according to its director, Enoch Gordis, who detailed two concrete examples of research supported by the institute which have had a direct effect on behavior and public health. First, he said, research on the

relationship between alcohol consumption, accidents, and death among young people led to adoption of a nationwide drinking age of 21 which in turn resulted in a decline in alcohol-related mortality among youth. Second, Gordis noted, research on fetal alcohol syndrome led to the placement on alcohol products of warning labels directed at pregnant women. NIAAA is currently studying the extent to which these labels have changed behavior among women.

After hearing these examples, Rep. Pursell inquired if the federal government has been spending enough on alcohol research relative to drug research. He was referring to the large increase in NIDA's budget over the past few years relative to very small increases in NIAAA's funding. Gordis agreed that alcohol had been neglected during the war on drugs. "In relation to the size of the problem, alcohol has taken a back seat," he said. When asked why he thought this was the case, Gordis suggested that the country has accommodated itself to the negative effects of alcohol, and that the crime of alcohol abuse is not as visible as that of drugs, although the total cost of alcohol abuse is much greater.

In the end, calling ADAMHA "bureaucracy at its worst," Rep. Early reiterated Congress's frustration that the statistics produced by the agency's research are contradictory and misleading, that efforts don't appear to have been made in the populations that need them, and that ADAMHA's research will be increasingly expected to produce measurable results.

NIH HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR RESEARCH TO RECEIVE 6.4 PERCENT INCREASE FOR FY92

Much of the social and behavioral research supported by the National Institutes of Health comes under the rubric of "health and behavior."

CINCINNATI SIGNS ON AS NEWEST CONTRIBUTOR

COSSA is pleased to announce that the University of Cincinnati has joined the Consortium as a Contributor.

Each institute allocates a certain proportion of its overall funds to intramural and extramural research on the behavioral components of diseases and disorders. However, this amount historically has been small. In its report on the FY 1990 budget for the Department of Health and Human Services, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies stated that it was deeply concerned about NIH's continuing to support health and behavior research at only 3 percent of its overall funding. The committee directed the NIH to establish a comprehensive 10-year plan for steadily increasing its funding of health and behavior research. The Acting Director of NIH asked the NIH-wide Working Group on Health and Behavior to coordinate the development of the plan, focusing on four areas: (a) Behavioral epidemiology, (b) Development, maintenance, and change of health-related behaviors, (c) Basic behavioral mechanisms, and (d) Behavioral interventions to prevent and treat illness or to promote health. The report and long-term plan have just been completed, but have not yet been released by NIH.

The table below illustrates proposed funding of health and behavior research in each institute for FY 92. Overall, health and behavior research receives a 6.4 percent increase from FY 91 levels. As a total of institutes' budgets, health and behavior research in FY 92 ranges from 0.2 percent (NIAID) to 54 percent (NCNR), with an average of 8 percent. Aside from NCNR, the institutes with the largest proportion of their budgets committed to health and behavior research are NIA (18 percent) and NICHD (10 percent). Following is a list of the full names of the individual institutes (which are abbreviated in the table) and a note on their health and behavior research areas:

National Cancer Institute (NCI): NCI supports research on behavioral and social approaches to the prevention of cancer, promotion of good health practices, and treatment of cancer patients and their families. Particular attention is paid to tobacco use, diet, and nutrition.

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI): Health and behavior activities at NHLBI include research and training-- primarily through the Behavioral Medicine Branch-- on disease prevention, etiology, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation.

National Institute of Dental Research (NIDR): NIDR funds research on oral conditions, including pain, disease prevention, and epidemiology, recog-

nizing the contribution of social, psychological, economic, and environmental factors in oral health promotion and disease.

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK): Behavioral research supported by NIDDK relates to treatment compliance, disease-stress relationship, eating behavior, and disease control through behavior modification.

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS): NINDS supports behavioral research related to the nervous system, including studies of sensory perception, cognitive functioning, recovery of function after nervous system damage, and sleep, as well as behavioral factors in the etiology and treatment of nervous system disorders.

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID): NIAID supports very little behavior and social research, even though the spread of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases has increased the institute's awareness of the value of such research, especially with regard to prevention. One area of health and behavior research at NIAID is psychosocial factors affecting medical treatment compliance.

National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS): NIGMS supports basic, undifferentiated research and research training, not targeted to any specific discipline or disease. While some support has been provided for health and behavior research, it is not a significant initiative.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD): NICHD is one of the institutes with the greatest support for social and behavioral research related to factors influencing human development throughout the lifespan. Health and behavior research includes human learning and behavior, population dynamics, and mental retardation and developmental disabilities.

National Eye Institute (NEI): Health and behavior is a very minor focus at NEI, which specializes in research on blinding eye disease, visual disorders, mechanisms of visual function, preservation of sight, and the needs of blind people.

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS): NIEHS examines the effects of environmental agents on human health and well-being, with particular attention to behavioral and neurological effects of exposure to toxic substances.

National Institute on Aging (NIA): NIA provides significant support for social and behavioral research related to the aging process and to specific diseases and conditions of the aged. NIA research on health and behavior investigates how good health, effective functioning, and productivity can be prolonged, and disability and dependence postponed.

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMSD): NIAMSD supports basic and clinical research on the debilitating disorders of the musculoskeletal system and the skin. Health and behavior research includes investigations of behavioral factors related to diet, exercise, and injury, as well as health services research.

National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD): Established only in 1989, NIDCD has not yet developed a record on

health and behavior research. However, 5 percent of its overall budget for FY 92 is earmarked for that purpose.

National Center for Research Resources (NCRR): NCRR provides a wide range of resources to improve the research environment. Although its support is non-categorical, NCRR does support health and behavior research.

National Center for Nursing Research (NCNR): NCNR examines biological and behavioral factors that influence health and the environment in which health care is delivered. With 54 percent of its FY 92 budget dedicated to health and behavior, major areas of attention at NCNR include responses to illness, family caregiving, reproductive health, and health promotion.

NIH Health & Behavior

Explanation: This chart outlines institutional funding levels at the National Institutes of Health for health and behavior research. Column 1 provides actual spending figures for fiscal year (FY) 1990. Column 2 provides the current FY 1991 budget level. Column 3 offers the Bush Administration's proposed budget for FY 1992. Column 4 provides the total budget proposal for each institute (including all non-health and behavior programs). Column 5 shows the percentage change from current 1991 funding to proposed 1992 funding. Column 6 shows the percentage of overall institute funding devoted to health and behavior research.

Name	Actual FY90	Current FY91	Prop. FY92	Prop.Inst. Total FY92	%Change P92-C91	% of Inst. Total FY92
NCI	65.2	68.2	70.5	1810.2	+3%	4%
NHLBI	42.7	50.7	60.5	1209.9	+19%	5%
NIDR	5.3	5.9	6.4	160.9	+8%	4%
NIDDK	15.4	16.0	16.7	658.6	+4%	3%
NINDS	17.0	17.9	19.1	583.4	+7%	3%
NIAID	1.3	1.4	1.5	976.7	+7%	0.2%
NIGMS	2.5	2.5	2.5	833.2	0	0.3%
NICHD	48.1	50.5	53.0	520.6	+5%	10%
NEI	4.3	4.5	4.7	272.3	+4%	2%
NIEHS	3.7	3.9	4.0	254.5	+3%	2%
NIA	51.0	56.5	61.4	348.6	+9%	18%
NIAMS	5.8	6.3	6.5	204.8	+3%	3%
NIDCD	6.1	6.9	7.5	146.3	+9%	5%
NCRR	20.7	19.7	18.3	321.0	-7%	6%
NCNR	18.0	21.4	23.6	43.7	+10%	54%
NLM	2.1	2.7	2.8	100.6	+4%	3%
Total	309.2	335.0	359.0	8445.3	6.4%	8%

National Library of Medicine (NLM): NLM uses the principles and methodologies of the social and behavioral sciences to improve utilization of health care information by health professionals. Activities include development of computer systems and training programs, evaluation of the impact of such systems, and evaluation of informational needs.

(Editor's note) -- This information was unavailable at the time of COSSA's special budget edition of *Update* (March 4, 1991).

SOCIOLOGIST REPRESENTS COSSA AT WOMEN'S HEALTH MEETING

Rebecca Reviere, Assistant Professor of Sociology at Howard University, presented testimony on behalf of COSSA at the April 23 Scientific Advisory Meeting of the Society for the Advancement of Women's Health Research in Washington, D.C. The Society, a year-old, non-profit organization comprised of medical, research, and women's groups is interested in promoting greater attention to women's health research by working with Congress and federal research agencies. In an effort to develop a research agenda for its advocacy activities, the Society solicited presentations from representatives of biomedical and behavioral professional organizations to help identify a set of priority areas.

The organizations represented at the meeting included specialty medical associations related to cardiovascular, gastroenterological, oncological, ophthalmological, reproductive and other disease areas, as well as professional nurses and physicians groups. While greatly outnumbered by representatives from biomedical fields, COSSA, The American Psychological Association (APA), the American Anthropological Association (AAA), and the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences represented the social and behavioral sciences community.

Presenters were asked to address the dearth of research on diseases and conditions prevalent among women throughout the life cycle, and to identify three areas of research in their field that deserved priority attention.

Reviere, focusing on sociological research, emphasized the importance of looking beyond specific disease conditions to the whole of women's experience. "To truly understand the dynamics of women's health," she said, "we must look at women, their bodies, their understanding of their bodies, and

their environments," including race and class dimensions. The three areas Reviere focused on were aging women, family and work contexts, and the gender role itself.

The mortality differential by gender is now a well-known fact, Reviere noted, but we still know very little about why women outlive men. Furthermore, she argued, we must examine not just the etiology of diseases of the aged, such as arthritis, but also their effects on the lifestyles and emotional well-being of older women.

Medical researchers also need greater understanding of the effect of gender itself on women's physical well-being, continued Reviere. Women are the caregivers in our culture, but we do not know whether their health benefits or suffers from caregiving responsibilities. There is evidence from current research, for example, that the stress of caregiving may lower one's immune system functioning and thereby expose the caregiver to illness and disease. So, we must ask whether living up to her expected gender role may in fact be dangerous to a woman's health, cautioned Reviere.

Finally, in looking at women's health throughout the life cycle, we have a great deal to learn about the effects of work and family status. Reviere noted that "women with jobs, husbands, and children have the best health profile of any other combination of those three," but, she asked, "what is it about a husband that translates into better health--the support, the income, the insurance his job provides?" We don't yet have the answers. Furthermore, studies that have identified unhealthy characteristics of jobs for men have not been conducted with comparable attention to women. "We need to know what characteristics of what jobs produce what health outcomes for what women," Reviere concluded.

With other compelling testimony from APA, AAA, and the Federation, by the end of the day's meeting, participants articulated a new appreciation for the intersection of biomedical and behavioral approaches in understanding women's health. The ultimate recommendation--aside from specific disease foci--was to urge greater attention to, and funding of, what finally became labeled "biosychosociocultural" models of health.

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