

COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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HOUSE PANEL ELIMINATES AN NSF DIRECTORATE; SBE IN DANGER *HS*

The House Science Committee voted on June 28 to eliminate one of the National Science Foundation's seven directorates. The vote, which occurred shortly before midnight, came on an amendment offered by panel chair Rep. Robert Walker (R-PA), that limits NSF to "not more than 6 Assistant Directors to assist in managing its divisions." There are currently 7 Assistant Directors who head up the directorates, including the one for social, behavioral and economic science (SBE). The amendment was adopted shortly before the committee approved legislation, H.R. 1852, to reauthorize NSF for two years.

Under the bill, by November 15, 1995, NSF "shall transmit to the Congress a report on the reorganization" required by the reduction in the number of directorates. Although the bill itself provides the NSF Director Neal Lane with the discretion to decide on the reorganization, there will be report language accompanying the bill that strongly suggests that the SBE directorate should be given close scrutiny and is the prime candidate for integration into the other directorates. Report language does not have the same force as bill language, but is often respected as an indication of the intent of the legislators when bill language is left deliberately vague.

During the committee's markup, Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) offered an amendment to make the reduction in Assistant Directors an option for reorganization. She also wanted NSF "to carry out a review and analysis of the organizational structure ... for the purpose of developing a plan for reorganization that will result in reduced administrative costs, while maintaining the quality and effectiveness of the Foundation's programs." Lofgren's amendment also would have pushed back the timing for the reorganization report to February 15, 1996.

Walker opposed the Lofgren amendment and insisted on the reduction in the number of directorates, citing reductions in the funds available for salaries and

expenses in the near future. He claimed that during extensive discussions with Lane, he was told that the Director, while "not thrilled" with the change, could "live with it." Walker also asserted that Lofgren's provision to do a study would move the implementation of any reorganization into the next budget cycle denying NSF the savings it needed to concentrate its funds for supporting basic research. Since this discussion occurred at 11:30 p.m., other members were reluctant to join in and prolong the proceedings. Lofgren's amendment went down to defeat on a voice vote.

Other provisions in the Walker amendment called for:

- a study by the Office of Science and Technology Policy to determine how the indirect costs of research can be reduced by 10 percent and how to reduce the variance among indirect cost rates of different institutions of higher education;
- an anti-earmarking provision that excludes from NSF grants for five years, any person who received funds after FY 1995 from any Federal funding source for a project that was not subjected to a competitive, merit-based award process;
- a name change from the Critical Technologies Institute to the Science Studies Institute; and

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• an anti-lobbying provision that prohibits the use of NSF funds for any activity whose purpose is to influence legislation before Congress;

SBE Program Receive Funding

The authorized funding levels remain the same as they emerged from the Basic Research Subcommittee. The total for NSF is \$3.126 billion for FY 1996 and \$3.171 billion for FY 1997. Research and Related Activities is authorized at \$2.226 billion for FY 1996 and \$2.286 billion for FY 1997. SBE is authorized at \$111.3 million for FY 1996. For FY 1997 the bill does not authorize by research directorates. The legislation authorizes Education and Human Resources at \$600 million for both years.

The bill that emerged from the House Science Committee is not expected to reach the House floor until September. In the Senate, the Labor and Human Resources Committee and the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee have jurisdiction over NSF authorization. For the moment, neither committee has demonstrated any urgency to take up NSF.

The House VA, HUD, Independent Agencies Appropriations Committee markup was postponed from June 22 to July 10 to give White House and Congressional negotiators a chance to revise the FY 1995 rescissions bill to overcome Presidential objections that led to a veto. On June 29, the White House and the Republicans in Congress reached an agreement on this issue.

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SCIENCE WINS IN HOUSE-SENATE BUDGET AGREEMENT

As Congress continues its work on authorization bills and begins the appropriations process, the House and Senate have reconciled their different versions of the budget resolution. The resolution sets the guidelines for the specific decisions about programs and agencies made by authorizers and appropriators.

On the Science Function (#250), the conference report notes: "While [this function] must contribute to deficit reduction, the conference agreement recognizes it must also provide for future research opportunities. Consequently, it assumes that basic research will be a priority." In line with this assumption, the Science Function received an additional \$2 billion over the House number for the next seven years, with NASA and NSF "as candidates for this restored funding." There is no mention of the social, behavioral and economic sciences.

For the National Institutes of Health the two Houses compromised, assuming a one percent reduction in FY 1996, and a three percent reduction from the FY 1995 level thereafter. This would result in a \$2.1 billion reduction in outlays over seven years, compared with \$0.8 billion in the Senate and \$3.6 billion in the House.

The conferees disagreed on the elimination of the Departments of Education and Energy (the House wants to abolish them, the Senate is not so sure). They did agree that the Department of Commerce must go. They also decided that "the entire foreign affairs apparatus of the United States needs to be completely reassessed and restructured." Legislation to accomplish this is working its way through the House and Senate, with changes contemplated for the United States Information Agency, the Agency for International Development, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the State Department, various multilateral development banks and international organizations.

The resolution assumed a \$44.3 billion reduction in budget authority for education programs. There are no reductions for the Chapter 1 program of Aid to Disadvantaged Children and the in-school interest subsidy for undergraduate student loans survives.

The conferees provided substantial funding of the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund, but assume the termination of federally funded entities such as the State Justice Institute, the U.S. Parole Commission and the Administrative Conference of the U.S. Courts.

The agreement also assumed that the Federal Communications Commission is provided sufficient authority to recover value from auctioning the electromagnetic spectrum amounting to \$14 billion over seven years. Basic research in game theory and economic experimentation has helped the FCC reap these significant revenues for the government.

Finally, on the major stumbling block to the reconciliation of differences, the House and Senate concurred on a \$245 billion tax cut. The tax writing committees are encouraged to include provisions that will reduce the burden on families with children and on two-earner married couples, and help boost savings, capital investment, job creation and economic growth.

HOUSE PANEL CONSIDERS CREATING SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

MB

The House Science Committee held a June 28 hearing to consider the creation of a cabinet-level Department of Science. The idea has been promoted by committee chair Rep. Robert Walker (R-PA) and was supported by all four witnesses at the first of a series of hearings on the subject.

In his opening statement Chairman Walker said that the idea of combining some or all Federal science programs is not new, rather it has been discussed since the end of World War II. He cited the parallels of the 1862 creation of the Department of Agriculture fulfilling the recommendation President George Washington made to Congress in 1796 to coordinate agricultural activities. As the United States prepares to enter the 21st Century, Walker said, "we should fully examine what our future needs will be and rationalize and structure the government accordingly." He argued that a Department of Science would improve the effectiveness of Federal efforts through greater coordination and integration as well as provide a high-level adviser to the President on science and technology issues.

Department Should Not be "An Orphanage"

Rep. George Brown (D-CA), the panel's ranking Democrat and former chair, supported the idea, but lamented that after GOP budget cuts for science there may not be much left to merge into a Department. Brown said that while favoring consolidation, he does not want the new Department to be "an orphanage for what's left of our science establishment." He also commented that the science community has historically resisted change.

Rep. Steve Schiff (R-NM), chair of the panel's Basic Research Subcommittee, said of the proposal, "the more I think about it the more I like it," saying it would consolidate priorities and lead to a more unified science budget, one that would emerge from one Appropriations Subcommittee. Schiff favored including the National Institutes of Health in such a Department, commenting that "health research is becoming so technologically motivated." Rep. Tim Roemer (D-IN), who holds a Ph.D. in political science and taught at American University, presented what he termed "the skeptic's analysis" and said he wanted to know more about the costs and benefits of such a move.

"Scientists are simply spoiled"

Former Reagan science advisor G.A. Keyworth, currently Chairman and Senior Fellow at the Progress and Freedom Foundation, endorsed a Department of Science, advocating that it would restore public trust in science. Saying "American science no longer enjoys the level of public trust that sustained it for so long," he gave several reasons for this erosion: science has become a bureaucracy that resists change; basic research sacrificed for the sake of competitiveness; a rate of technological change outpacing federal support; and "scientists are simply spoiled -- the result of too much wealth, acquired too easily." According to Keyworth, in creating such a Department "the scientific community is likely to be about as helpful as the AARP has been in coping with the rising costs of Medicare." Keyworth dismissed the notion that it would eliminate pluralism in sources of funding, saying instead that it would "place them under a common, more accountable structure."

Former Rep. Don Ritter (R-PA), currently Chairman of the National Environmental Policy

Institute, testified in support of a Department that he said would serve "as the protector of the quality and integrity of the science." Ritter said a broader, more unified approach to science would enhance competitiveness by helping government ascertain the best areas of research and, citing the Environmental Protection Agency as an example, would "begin the appropriate separation between scientific and regulatory functions." Turning to the issue of pluralization of funding, he said: "The time has come to think less of the federal government as the great locus of science funding opportunity. New vastly pluralistic opportunities are being found for those willing to innovate in industry and at state levels. In the future, pluralism will be induced via capital gains tax cuts and new research and development incentives which will connect more (not all for sure) of the scientific community directly with the market."

Former Rep. W. Henson Moore (R-LA) recounted his experiences as Deputy Secretary of the Energy Department in the Bush Administration. Moore, who explored consolidation of research programs while in the Executive Branch, backed a Science Department, saying it "would bring about a more focused vision of the federal role in science, a more efficient expenditure of the people's money, a better opportunity to prioritize projects, more coordination of federal research, and a higher visibility and perception of the importance of science to our citizens and abroad." Moore cited roadblocks such as Departments or agencies losing turf, appropriations, and career job positions. Citing his unsuccessful efforts to consolidate Energy Department programs, he said, "if one cannot do it internally, imagine the difficulty of trying to do it across multiple federal agencies."

Joseph Spigai, Associate Director, Technology and Engineering Systems, at the University of Maryland, presented the committee with a detailed outline of a Department of Science and Technology (DOST), which would include NIH and Department of Defense research. Under his plan, fourteen Cabinet agencies would be streamlined into nine. DOST would be led by an Office of the Secretary, which would include the Office of Science and Technology Policy and the National Science Foundation, with the latter serving as a centralized grants/contracts office under the Secretary. Spigai's plan would merge existing Federal programs into seven operating divisions: Physical, Information, Computer Sciences and Mathematics; Natural and Life Sciences; Health,

Medical and Social Sciences; Earth and Space Sciences and Energy Research; Science and Technology Standards, Exchange and Education; Applied Science, Technology and Engineering; and Defense and Weapons Research.

Administration Opposes Idea

John Gibbons, White House Science Advisor, has expressed opposition to the Department, calling it unnecessary. He said that the current National Science and Technology Council already operates as a "virtual" Department, providing the coordinating role for science and technology efforts by the Federal government (see *Update*, April 3).

CLINTON TO NOMINATE NEW SCIENCE AIDE

President Clinton has announced his intention to nominate Ernest Moniz as Associate Director for Science at the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). Moniz replaces M.R.C. Greenwood, who left her post April 28 (see *Update*, May 8).

Moniz heads the Department of Physics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and is the former Director of the Bates Linear Accelerator Center at MIT. He also currently serves as the chair of the Department of Energy's and the National Science Foundation's Nuclear Science Advisory Committee. In addition, he also chairs the External Advisory Committee for Physics for the Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The new Associate Director played a significant role in both the Forum, in January 1995, and the publication *Science in the National Interest*, released in August 1995. He has also provided expertise and advice to OSTP during the past three years.

Moniz received a B.S. in physics from Boston College and his Ph.D. from Stanford University in theoretical physics. His career spans teaching, research, and administration and has included numerous advisory roles to the Federal government. His nomination will require Senate confirmation.

SENATE ASKS ECONOMISTS TO STUDY PRICE INDEX *HS*

After holding hearings on the matter, (see *Update*, June 19) the leaders of the Senate Finance Committee have agreed to appoint a commission to study the methodology used to compute the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and to advise Congress on whether this methodology provides an accurate measure of the cost of living and inflation.

Named to the non-partisan commission by Committee Chair Sen. Robert Packwood (R-OR) and Ranking Democrat Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) are:

- Michael Boskin, former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers and now Tully M. Friedman Professor of Economics and Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University;
- Ellen Dulberger, Program Director, IBM Global I/T Services Strategy and Economic Analysis;
- Robert Gordon, Chairman and Stanley G. Harris Professor in the Social Sciences, Northwestern University
- Zvi Griliches, Paul M. Warburg Professor of Economics, Harvard University; and
- Dale Jorgenson, Chairman and Frederic Eaton Abbe Professor of Economics, Harvard University.

Boskin will serve as Chairman. The Commission will conduct research and meet several times over the next year. An interim report is due September 15, 1995. The final report, including recommendations on ways to improve the CPI, is due by June 15, 1996. Both reports will be submitted to the Congress and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The CPI has come under attack for overestimating the amount of inflation in the U.S. economy, although there is disagreement on the magnitude of the miscalculation. Some members of Congress and others have seized on recalculating the CPI as a way of reducing government spending, since the index is utilized for cost-of-living entitlement increases. The House Budget Resolution provides for a reduction of

the CPI by 0.6 percent, which would save \$52 billion over the next seven years. The Senate resolution reduces the CPI by 0.2 percent, contributing \$19.2 billion to deficit reduction by 2002. The budget resolution conference agreement did not settle this difference. The Bureau of Labor Statistics, which calculates this measure of the average changes in prices paid by consumers for a fixed market basket of goods and services, also admits that its methodology overstates the changes in consumer prices by a small but measurable amount.

APPROPRIATORS THREATEN COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS *HS*

In the latest version of budget-cutting frenzy, the House Treasury, Postal Service, General Government Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Jim Ross Lightfoot (R-IA), at its markup on June 28, voted along party lines to abolish the Council of Economic Advisers (CEA).

The CEA, created in 1947 to provide economic advice to the President, is part of the Executive Office of the President and Presidents have looked to it for independent economic analysis and advice. Many distinguished economists, including COSSA President Charles L. Schultze, have served as CEA Chairman and members of its staff. The council has a staff of about 40 and a budget of \$3.4 million.

Trying to find another way to save federal dollars, Chairman Lightfoot said that the President would still have plenty of economists in the Office of Management and Budget and the National Economic Council from whom he could solicit advice.

Defenders of the CEA, such as Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Ranking Democrat on the Appropriations Subcommittee, have accused the Republicans of "playing games with the White House budget." Schultze and another former chairman, Herbert Stein, who served in the Nixon and Ford Administrations, responded to the Lightfoot proposal by noting, "a President makes decisions affecting the performance of a \$7 trillion economy. To skimp on giving him the best possible advice in the hope of saving \$3-1/2 million would be short-sighted in the extreme."

Clinton Names Stiglitz CEA Chair, Munnell as CEA Member *mb*

On the same day, President Clinton announced that he would elevate current CEA member, Joseph Stiglitz to chairman, and nominate Alicia Munnell to fill the third seat. Stiglitz would replace Laura Tyson, who moved to chair the White House Economic Council, when Robert Rubin became Secretary of the Treasury. Martin Neil Baily is the third member of the Council.

Stiglitz has been a member of the council since August, 1993. He is on leave from Stanford University, and has also taught at Princeton, Yale, and Oxford. Stiglitz helped create a new branch of economics -- "The Economics of Information" -- which has received widespread application throughout field. In 1979 the American Economic Association awarded him the John Bates Clark award, given to the economist under 40 who has made the most significant contributions to the discipline. He has been elected to the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Econometric Society. He earned his B.A. from Amherst College and his Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Munnell is currently Assistant Secretary for Economic Policy at the Treasury Department, and had previously served as Senior Vice President and Director of Research at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. She is co-founder and served as the first president of the National Academy of Social Insurance. She is a member of the Institute of Medicine, the National Academy of Public Administration, and the Pension Research Council of the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce. She graduated from Wellesley College and received her doctorate in economics from Harvard University.

NIH EXAMINES RESEARCH GRANTS DIVISION *MS*

The Working Group on the Division of Research Grants (DRG), chaired by Marvin Cassman, the acting director of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, has completed its examination of the structure of DRG as part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) efforts to review and, if necessary, restructure its activities.

As noted in a memo from NIH Director Harold Varmus, "Peer review is recognized as the cornerstone of the NIH extramural program in that it is the principle mechanism by which we identify high quality research that is worthy of funding." The purpose of the review "was not to evaluate and assess the details of peer review process within DRG, but rather to consider the manner in which DRG operates within the NIH community," according to the report.

The committee developed the following major recommendations:

1. A central oversight body, the Peer Review Oversight Group, should be established by the NIH Director. It would be charged with coordinating, evaluating, and making policy recommendations for all peer review conducted at NIH.
2. Peer review should be conducted in both DRG and the Institutes.
3. DRG study sections should be broadened.
4. The Committee could not reach a consensus as to whether DRG should remain an autonomous organization, reporting to the Director, NIH, or should be a part of the Office of Deputy Director for Extramural Research. Accordingly, the reports presents the arguments for both.

The report concluded with the working group stating that "in general, peer review has served NIH well, and DRG has been effective as a central mechanism for conducting peer review." According to the Committee, the Division of Research Grants "can be considered in large part responsible for the success that NIH has had in supporting and promoting research in the biomedical sciences."

**SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT:
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH** *kc*

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.

National Institute of Nursing Research

The purpose of this biobehavioral pain research program announcement is to inform the scientific community of the interests of the various institutes at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and to stimulate and foster a wide range of basic and clinical studies on pain as they relate to the missions of these Institutes. In order to develop a research agenda, ten NIH institutes sponsored a workshop, "Biobehavioral Pain Research: A Multi-Institute Assessment of Cross-Cutting Issues and Research Needs," in January, 1994. This meeting, under the aegis of the NIH Health and Behavior Coordinating Committee, resulted in the identification of research needs from a broad spectrum of the scientific community expert in pain research.

The following pain research areas cut across Institutes and programs and should not be viewed as restricted to only one specific Institute:

- Understanding Critical Interfaces Between Biology and Behavior
- Pain, Suffering and Emotion
- Pain and Behavior
- Behavior-Related Interventions
- Commonalities and Differences in Pain Expression, Experience, and Treatment
- Pain in Special Populations

Application Procedures: Applications are to be submitted on the grant application form PHS 398 (rev. 9/91) and will be accepted at the standard application deadlines as indicated in the application kit. Application kits are available at most institutional offices of sponsored research and may be obtained from Division of Research Grants, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 1040 MSC 7710, Bethesda, MD 20892-7710, telephone (301) 594-7248.

Review Process: Applications will be assigned on the basis of established PHS referral guidelines. Applications will be reviewed for scientific and technical merit, in accordance with the standard NIH peer review procedures. Following scientific-technical review, the applications will receive a second-level review by the appropriate national advisory council. As part of the initial merit review, all applications will receive a written critique and undergo a process in which only those applications deemed to have the highest scientific merit, generally the top half of applications under review, will be discussed, assigned a priority score, and receive a second level review by the appropriate national advisory council or board.

Deadline: As this is an ongoing program announcement deadlines are as follows: February 1, June 1, and October 1.

Contact: For programmatic inquiries contact: Dr. Andrew Monjan, Neuroscience and Neuropsychology of Aging Program, National Institute on Aging, Gateway Building, Suite 3C307, Bethesda, MD 20892, telephone: (301) 496-9350. For fiscal inquiries contact: Joanne Colbert, Grants Management Office, National Institute on Aging, Gateway Building, Suite 2N212, Bethesda, MD 20892-9205, telephone: (301) 496-1472.

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