START OF NEW FISCAL YEAR LOOMS; APPROPRIATORS PUSH ON

October 1 begins the federal government's 1996 fiscal year. Federal agencies await their new spending levels from the Congress, and in some cases the decision on whether they will continue to exist. The Senate rushes to complete action on the thirteen appropriations bills and the House awaits the reconciling conference committees necessary to iron out differences between the two bodies on funding levels and other actions. The President waits with his veto pen poised.

With ten days to go it is clear that a Continuing Resolution will be adopted. The White House and the Congress continue to negotiate over the length and provisions of the resolution. How many agencies it will have to fund depends on the efficiency of the Congress' conference committee process and the President's willingness to accept their decisions.

The three major appropriations bills discussed below are all said to be targets of presidential disfavor. They are all expected to reach the Senate floor the week of September 25. The VA, HUD, Independent Agencies bill that funds the National Science Foundation has zero funding for the Corporation for National and Community Service, a major Clinton administration initiative, and the House bill contains the prohibitions against EPA enforcement.

The Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary appropriations bill contains the Republican anti-crime bill that block grants funds to the States and eliminates President Clinton's cherished community policing (COPS) program. There are considerable differences between the House and the Senate in the approach to the Census and economic statistics.

In the massive Labor, Health and Human Services, Education appropriations bill, the Senate Appropriations Committee restored funding for some small education programs that neither the administration nor the House wanted. In order to do this it provided a smaller increase for NIH, cut back the statistical agencies, and altered other funding levels that should make for a difficult conference with the House. The Senate committee also removed some of the legislative riders attached to the bill by the House, including an amendment by Rep. Ernest Istook (R-OK) that would limit lobbying by non-profits. The President is unhappy with both the funding for education and job training and the Istook amendment.

In the pages that follow COSSA provides the details concerning the agencies within these three bills that impact social and behavioral science research.

SENATE COMMITTEE BOOSTS NSF RESEARCH FUNDING

The Senate Veterans' Affairs, HUD, Independent Agencies appropriations subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Christopher 'Kit' Bond (R-MO), provided the National Science Foundation's research account with $2.294 billion in its markup of the FY 1996 legislation considered on September 11. This figure is $14 million above the FY 1995 level, and $40 million more than appropriated by the House in July. Two days later, the full Senate appropriations committee confirmed the subcommittee's decisions.

The Senate committee allocated $3.2 billion for all of NSF's operations in FY 1996, resulting in a slight decrease ($28 million or $63 million depending on how you count some carryover money) from the FY 1995 level. Although this represents a $160 million decrease from the President's requested budget, NSF still fared better than HUD, EPA, NASA and some of the other agencies in the subcommittee's jurisdiction.

INSIDE UPDATE...
- More Appropriations News
- OERI Sets Priorities for Centers
- Sources of Research Support: Department of Education
For the other accounts at NSF, the Senate committee provided the same amounts as the House: Education and Human Resources, $599 million; Major Research Equipment, $70 million; Academic Research Infrastructure, $100 million; Salaries and Expenses, $127.3 million.

The committee report accompanying the bill did not include any language concerning the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) directorate. The committee questioned whether the original justification and the size of the commitment to the Antarctica program remained valid. The committee also commended NSF for establishing an opportunity fund to assist the Foundation in "responding quickly to emerging or unique opportunities in science and engineering."

HUD POLICY RESEARCH

In another portion of the bill, HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research received $34 million from the Senate committee, the same as the House figure and $8 million less than FY95.

CRIME RESEARCH, CENSUS FARE WELL IN SENATE BILL

On September 12 the Senate Appropriations Committee approved Fiscal Year 1996 funding for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State and related agencies. Approved on a 15-13 party line vote, the bill is the product of Sen. Phil Gramm (R-TX), chair of the appropriations subcommittee that oversees these agencies.

JUSTICE RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

For the National Institute of Justice, the bill allocates $30.0 million, $2 million above the House amount and $3 million over current funding. The report accompanying the Senate bill concurs with the House report's call for NIJ to study correctional health care issues.

In appropriating $21.4 million for the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Senate panel agreed with the House in holding BJS funding at the current FY 1995 level. The bill funds the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at $148.5 million, an amount equal to the President's request and the House vote. Current funding is $155.3 million.

In a controversial move, the Senate appropriations bill includes a package of anti-crime legislation similar to that passed by the House. In February the House voted to eliminate most of the federal crime prevention and domestic spending programs of the 1994 crime bill and replace them with block grants to the states for their own anti-crime efforts. The Senate bill incorporates provisions, initiated and advocated by COSSA, that would reserve $60 million of the block grants in FY 1996 for federally-sponsored research and evaluation of anti-crime programs. Observers have speculated that Gramm, a 1996 presidential candidate, included the anti-crime component to highlight that his rival for the GOP nomination, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-KS), has not brought the Senate's crime bill to the floor this year.

CENSUS AND ECONOMIC STATISTICS

The Senate bill is far friendlier to the Census Bureau than the House was earlier this year. For the salaries and expenses line item (which includes regular census programs), the Senate allocates $144.8 million, an amount equal to the administration's request and $8.8 million over both current funding and the House appropriation. For periodic censuses and programs (which supports the 2000 census), the Senate granted the presidentially-requested $193.5 million, $51.4 million above current funding and $58.5 million above the House vote.
In contrast to the House, which for several years has been sharply critical of the Census Bureau's programs and management, the Senate report merely notes the importance of adequate planning for the decennial survey, and asks the Bureau to submit regular updates on designing the 2000 survey.

For the Economic and Statistics Administration, the Senate panel voted the President's request of $57.2 million, $10.3 million above current funding and $17.2 above the House allocation. This line item funds the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Report language noted that statistical data and measures "form the basis of nearly all governmental decisionmaking, and support informed and intelligent investment strategies in the private sector."

The Senate appropriations bill provides for the dismantling of the Commerce Department. Recently the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee voted to abolish the Department, and similar legislation is working its way through several panels in the House. Under the Senate Governmental Affairs bill, the economic statistics functions would move to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Educational and cultural exchanges at the U.S. Information Agency were dealt a blow, funded at $190.0 million, down from current funding of $238.3 million. The House had allocated $192.1 million.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

The Senate, like the House, regards federal investment in research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) "as one of its highest priorities." Yet, the committee appropriated $11.59 billion for NIH, $341.5 million less than recommended by the House, although $301 million above the FY 1995 level. The Committee notes in its report accompanying the legislation that the Committee "struggled to recommend funding for NIH which reflects its strong commitment to NIH-supported research while also maintaining support for other essential primary and preventive health programs."

A number of the Institutes were praised by the Committee for their support of the social and behavioral sciences. After citing reports calling for more health and behavior research, the Committee requested information from the respective Institutes concerning the implementation of recommendations during the FY 1997 budget hearings.

In contrast to the House, the Senate bill continued the consolidated appropriation for the NIH Office of AIDS Research (OAR), recommending $1.38 billion in funding for OAR, $19.14 million less than the administration's request and $52.95 million more than last year. The report supported the "major evaluation initiative to review and assess each of the components of the NIH's AIDS research endeavor."

The Senate report urged the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) "to work in partnership with other NIH institutes and outside organizations" on several health and behavior issues. The Committee also requests that the OBSSR inform it on the progress toward implementing the National Research Council's report, Meeting the Nation's Needs for Biomedical and Behavioral Scientists, which "recommends placing high priority on NRSA awards to behavioral scientists in order to address a shortage of behavioral science researchers."

The Committee appropriated $580.5 million for the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), $6.4 million less than the President's request, $11.6 million more than in FY 1995 and $14.7 million less than the House version. The Committee expressed its support for the high priority funding that NICHD has provided research on behavioral development and encouraged it to continue the commitment to research on: "biobehavioral research that focuses on interactions between biological and behavioral factors in development; risk taking behaviors in middle childhood and adolescence; and learning disabilities." Like the House, the Committee urged NICHD to "continue giving demographic research high priority."

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) received a funding level $442.8 million, $4.8 million less than the administration's request and $11.1 million less than what is recommended by the House. NIA is urged to vigorously maintain its support for the demographic research currently underway at the Institute, specifically, "the health and retirement and the AHEAD studies." The report notes NIA's work in
the area of self-care and "encourages NIA to continue to emphasize research on self-care behaviors."

The Committee recommended $54.5 million in funding for the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), $0.6 million less than the administration's request and $1.37 million less than the House's recommendation. The Committee applauded NINR's efforts and leadership in "a major NIH-wide research initiative that addresses both biological and behavior aspects of pain."

The bill allocated $193.7 million in funding for the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), $2.1 million less than requested by the President, $4.9 million less than the House. The Committee "strongly encourages the Institute to develop a major behavioral research initiative to achieve a significant reduction in Fetal Alcohol Syndrome." NIAAA's efforts relating behavioral research to alcohol abuse and alcoholism, were also noted "with great interest."

The bill funds the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at a level of $446.8 million, an increase of $9.4 million more than FY 1995 and $5.3 million less than the administration's request. This amount is $11.6 million less than the House. The Committee noted NIDA's efforts to expand its support of behavioral science research, as signaled in part by the establishment of a separate behavioral sciences research branch and "believes that this area should continue to be one of the Institute's highest priorities." Likewise, the Institute's efforts to expand the number of social work researchers conducting drug abuse research was supported by the Committee.

The bill appropriated $645.4 million in funding for the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). This sum represents $6.7 million less than the administration's request, $14.1 million more than in FY 1995 and $15.9 million less than the House. The report lauds NIMH for "funding its third social work research development center and recommends that NIMH continue its efforts to develop social work research, including considering funding an additional social work research development center during 1996." A status report was requested by the Committee by the FY 1997 budget hearings on the 1991 NIMH task force report Social Work Research.

The Committee urged NIMH to begin implementation of the recommendations in the National Advisory Mental Health Council's report: Basic Behavioral Science Research for Mental Health: A National Investment. The report identified "promising research directions for the basic behavioral sciences at NIMH."

RESEARCH AND STATISTICS AT LABOR DEPARTMENT CUT

Searching for ways to restore funding to education programs, the Senate Labor, HHS, Education appropriations subcommittee reduced funding for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the research and evaluation component of the Employment and Training Administration (ETA). The subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA), had its decisions confirmed by the full appropriations committee on September 15.

For BLS, the committee provided federal appropriated funds of $280.6 million (BLS will also receive $49.8 million from trust funds). The appropriated dollars represent a decrease of $17.0 million from the 1995 level, $16.4 million below the House level; and $39.7 million below the President's request; all "necessitated by severe budgetary conditions." The Committee did recommend more than doubling, to $11.5 million, the funding for the Consumer Price Index Revision. BLS' basic programs such on employment and unemployment statistics, prices and the cost of living, and compensation and working conditions suffered significant reductions.

BLS also faces the prospect, under one version of the Commerce Department elimination plan, of joining a Federal Statistical Agency, that would include the Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and perhaps some other components of the federal statistical system.

For ETA research and evaluation, the Committee allocated $6.2 million, same as the House and an almost 50 percent reduction from the FY 1995 level.
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PLANNING AND EVALUATION

Policy research at the Department of Health and Human Services received $14.5 million from the Senate committee. However, $5.5 million has been included to fund the job creation demonstration program authorized by the 1988 Family Support Act (an earlier version of welfare reform about to be superseded). Thus, the $9 million remaining reflects a $3.2 million reduction from the FY 1995 appropriation. The House provided a similar amount for FY 1996. Peter Edelman, former counselor to the Secretary and featured speaker at the 1994 COSSA Annual meeting, has been named Acting Assistant Secretary for ASPE.

Unlike the House, the Senate committee did not eliminate funding for aging research at the Administration on Aging. It did concur with the House’s decision to abolish child welfare and social services research at the Administration on Children and Families.

AGENCY FOR HEALTH CARE POLICY AND RESEARCH

The Senate committee has stemmed the rush to oblivion faced by the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR). Buoyed by positive press in the days preceding the subcommittee markup, the agency received a total of $127.3 million from the Senate committee. This is almost twice the amount appropriated by the House. Of the $127.3 million, $62.2 million comes from federal funds, $59.2 million from the Public Health Service’s 1 percent evaluation set-aside, and $6 million from Medicare Trust Fund transfers.

In contrast to the House, the Senate committee report recognized the important work done by AHCPR in providing policymakers, health care professionals, and the public with the information necessary to improve the cost effectiveness and appropriateness of health care.

Health services research was allocated $69.2 million, $35 million from the federal appropriation, and another $34.2 million from the evaluation set-aside. These funds will allow continued funding for the National Medical Care Expenditure Survey to gather information on the costs of health care systems.

The third wave of the survey will begin data collection in January 1996.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS RESTORED; SOME FUNDING REDUCTIONS

Early in 1995 when there was talk about eliminating many small programs, particularly in the Department of Education, a Senate appropriations staffer noted that many of these programs had the strong backing of individual Senators. He noted further, that in a body where individuals can still make a difference, it would be extremely difficult to abolish these programs. The actions of the Senate Appropriations Committee on September 11 appear to have confirmed this observation. What happens on the Senate floor, or in the House-Senate conference, may change things, but so far, programs slated for budgetary death by the House and the administration remain alive and kicking.

GRADUATE EDUCATION

The Senate committee revived a number of programs supporting graduate and professional education. The Harris and Javits graduate fellowship programs, not wanted by the administration or the House, received $9.3 million and $6.3 million respectively from the Senate committee. Although both programs have suffered significant cuts from their FY 1995 appropriated level, their survival is important. The Faculty Development Fellowship program, which the administration wanted to fund, did not survive, receiving no funding from either the House or the Senate committee. The Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need program received $27.3 million, same as last year, the request, and the House level.

Two programs dealing with legal education also survived in the Senate committee, after receiving neither a funding request from the administration nor an appropriation from the House. The Law School Clinical Experience program received $5.5 million, which will provide the "final year of funding for this program." The Legal Training for the Disadvantaged Program, known as CLEO, was appropriated slightly less than $3 million, the same as last year.
EDUCATION RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT

The Senate committee recommended $90 million for education research at the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI). Although this is $11.6 million below the House, it represents an increase of $3.8 million over the FY 1995 appropriation. In constrast to the House, the Senate did not transfer, without sufficient funding, many other research programs within the Department.

The National Center for Education Statistics was allocated $44.3 million, $3.9 million below the FY 1995 appropriation and the amount provided by the House, and $12.7 million below the request. The Senate committee appropriated $32.5 million for assessment, slightly below the FY 1995 level and the House allocation. The assessment supports the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the National Assessment Governing Board. Funding for the National Diffusion Network was restored at $10 million.

The Committee eliminated support services, including research and evaluation, from the bilingual education office. At the same time it asked OERI "to support research and demonstration initiatives which support the development of culturally and linguistically sensitive diagnostic data, assessment instruments, service procedures, and intervention programs for Hispanic youth."

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

The Senate treated the Department's International Education programs differently than the House. While the House maintained funding for domestic programs at $52.2 million, the Senate committee provided only $46.7 million. However, the Senate was more generous to the Fulbright-Hays overseas programs, providing $5.5 million compared to the House total of $4 million. In addition, the Senate continued funding for the Institute for International Policy at $920,000. The House had allocated no separate funding for this program.

OERI SETS PRIORITIES FOR CENTERS COMPETITION

The Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) has announced final priorities to support seven national research and development centers that would carry out research and development on nationally significant problems and issues in education. In addition, OERI announced an enhanced Field Initiated Studies competition. These two announcements go further toward implementing the changes legislated in last year’s OERI bill.

The priorities are connected to the five new national research institutes created in the reauthorization. The first priority relates to the Institute on Early Childhood Education. The second and third priorities connect to the Institute on Student Achievement, Curriculum and Assessment. Priority four relates to the Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students. Priority five relates to the Institute on Educational Governance, Finance, Policy-Making and Management. The sixth and seventh priorities connect to the Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Life-Long Learning.

The seven priorities are:
- enhancing children's development and learning;
- improving student learning and achievement;
- improving assessment and accountability;
- meeting the needs of a diverse population;
- increasing the effectiveness of state and local education reform efforts;
- improving postsecondary education; and
- improving adult learning and literacy.

The Department is inviting applications for the centers. The first year budget for the seven (possibly eight) centers is $21,350,000.

One of the provisions COSSA and the other groups in the Intersociety Group for Educational Research fought for during OERI's reauthorization was to increase the amount of funding allocated for Field Initiated Studies (FIS). The new law requires each of the new Institutes to set-aside 20 percent of its funding for FIS. Another new announcement from OERI provides almost $9 million for these unsolicited proposals in the FY 1996 competition. In recent years funds for FIS amounted to less than $1 million. For more information, see Sources of Research Support on the following page.
SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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.

Office of Educational Research and Improvement
National Institutes' Field-Initiated Studies Grant Program

The Secretary invites applications for new awards for fiscal year 1996 and announces closing dates for the transmittal of applications under the Field-Initiated Studies Grant Program supported by five new National Institutes: Student Achievement, Curriculum, and Assessment; Education of At-Risk Students; Educational Governance, Finance, Policymaking, and Management; Early Childhood Development and Education; and Postsecondary Education, Libraries and Lifelong Learning. The Field-Initiated Studies (FIS) Grant Program will support educational research projects related to the missions of the Institutes.

The FIS Grant program provides assistance to institutions of higher education, public and private organizations, institutions, agencies, and individuals for educational research and demonstration to improve American education. The Educational Research, Development, Dissemination, and Improvement Act ("Act") defines "educational research" to include basic and applied research, inquiry with the purpose of applying tested knowledge gained to specific educational settings and problems, development, planning, surveys, assessments, evaluations, investigations, experiments, and demonstrations in the field of education and other fields relating to education.

The Act defines the term "field-initiated research" to mean education research in which topics and methods of study are generated by investigators, including teachers and other practitioners.

Application Procedures: Applications for each institute are available October 13, 1995, with a deadline date of January 5, 1996 for all applications.

Budget: The estimated available funds total $8,600,000 with a range from $860,000 to $2,580,000. Estimated range of awards will be $50,000 to $400,000, with an average range from $150,000 to $250,000. The total amount of awards will be 37, ranging from 5 - 10 awards. All ranges depend upon the institute.

Review Process: The evaluation criteria falls into five (5) categories: National Significance; Quality of the Project Design; Quality and potential contributions of personnel; Adequacy of Resources; and Quality of Management Plan. Each category is weighted differently, please check announcement for specifics.

Contact: For applications or information the contact person for each institute is as follows:

- Clara Lawson-Holmes, National Institute on Student Achievement, Curriculum, and Assessment, (202) 219-2079;
- Beth Fine, National Institute on the Education of At-Risk Students, (202) 219-2239;
- Joe Caliguro, National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education, (202) 219-1935;
- Elizabeth DeBra or Edward Fuentes, National Institute on Educational Governance, Finance, Policy-Making and Management, (202) 219-2021 or 2032;
- Delores Monroe, National Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning, (202) 219-2229

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