

**SCIENCE COMMITTEE CHAIR  
ANGRILY RESPONDS  
TO NSF LETTER** 183

Rep. Robert Walker (R-PA), Chairman of the House Science Committee, noting that "even science has become nothing more to this Administration than an opportunity to play petty politics," has responded to National Science Foundation Director Neal Lane's letter of May 9 (see *Update*, May 13). Walker takes the opportunity to denounce the administration's threats to veto the Omnibus Civilian Science Authorization Act of 1996 and to chastise NSF for opposing his efforts to help the agency.

**A Veto is "Beyond the Pale"**

Asserting that the bill provides \$680 million more for NSF university research, Walker decries the veto threat, saying "to justify a veto recommendation of an authorization bill that is actually providing an increase is amazing, and just a little bit beyond the pale."

The Chairman describes the legislation's provision to reduce the number of directorates as "our plan" to help "NSF to begin taking the necessary steps to reduce bureaucracy," in the face of planned future reductions in the Foundation's salaries and expense (S&E) account. While the Committee's bill reduces the account in FY 1997 by 5 percent to \$120 million, Walker points out that the legislation maintains this amount through 2002. By contrast, the administration's proposed budget reduces the S&E account in FY 1998 to \$118 million, in FY 1999 to \$107 million, and to \$101 million in FY 2000.

Walker declares that "common sense dictates that NSF will have to submit to some form of reorganization" given this 21.7 percent reduction between FY 1997 and 2000. "By mandating the reduction of one directorate, we believe we are taking the proper management steps to maintain NSF for the year 2000 and beyond by reducing bureaucracy," according to the letter. He then reminds NSF that the Science Committee requested a report by November 15 of last (his emphasis) year on the Foundation's

reorganization plans and it has not been received. In Lane's letter, he explains that "any reorganization ought to be preceded by a thorough discussion and analysis from a variety of perspectives, including those of the National Science Board and the scientific community..." He blames the delay on "the need to focus on management issues related to the disruptions we experienced earlier this year."

**House to Act May 29**

Not buying any more delaying tactics, Walker asks NSF to provide "a copy of NSF's proposed reorganizational chart for the year 2000," by May 28. The Omnibus reauthorization act is now expected on the House floor on May 29.

Nowhere in the letter does Walker mention the Social, Behavioral and Economic Science Directorate as the candidate for elimination, even though the Committee report indicates such a preference. There is one point where Walker and Lane share common ground. Both oppose changing NSF's name to the National Science and Engineering Foundation, as the Committee voted, 23-22, to do on April 24 (see *Update*, April 29).

**INSIDE UPDATE...**

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## HILL STAFF SPEAK OF "CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE" IN CENSUS

Two leading congressional staff members on Census issues recently briefed interest groups on the views of Capitol Hill toward the 2000 Census. Appearing before a May 9 meeting of the 2000 Census Advisory Committee were David McMillen, a member of the Democratic staff of the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, and Michelle Lang, a member of the Committee's Republican staff.

McMillen spoke of a "crisis of confidence" on Capitol Hill regarding the Census Bureau. This crisis is occurring because a detailed set of plans for the decennial survey "remains a mystery" to Congress. Commenting that Congress has been urged to act early to form a consensus for the 2000 design and methodology, McMillen faulted the Commerce Department for failing to adequately inform key congressional leaders of their plans. Congress "can't act early if it doesn't know what is going on," he said. McMillen said this particularly applies to the controversial use of sampling for non-response follow-up (see *Update*, March 4).

According to McMillen, leaders of minority groups are concerned with sampling. Minorities were found to be disproportionately undercounted in the 1990 census. McMillen said that Rep. Carrie Meek

(D-FL) is likely to introduce a bill in the coming weeks that would allow sampling only after a 90 percent enumeration has been reached at the census tract level, rather than the county level that the Census Bureau is proposing. At the meeting, the Bureau's Associate Director, Bob Marx, said this would cost an additional \$100 million. The Meek bill, McMillen said, indicates the Bureau "has not done an adequate job educating Congress." That technical details of sampling may be formulated by legislation reveals that "something has broken down" in the process, he added.

McMillen said Congress is "distrustful" of sampling, and the Census Bureau has yet to prove that it will maintain accuracy, and not just lower costs. If these concerns are not addressed swiftly, he said, the Meek bill will be the first in a "flurry of legislation that most of us don't want to see."

Lang said most of the interaction between Congress and the Bureau has been constructive and bipartisan. However, she stated the "bottom line is that the Census Bureau must convince Congress" the proposed methodologies are more accurate, cost effective, and technologically feasible. She termed the cost projections for 2000 "dubious" and said it is hard for those on Capitol Hill to have confidence when the Bureau "can't explain in detail" its proposals. Congress is "feeling frustrated . . . on both sides of the aisle" and is fearing that "worthless numbers" will emerge from the decennial data, Lang commented.

Lang said the Bureau needs further research into the impacts on response rates resulting from a greater desire for privacy and growing distrust and lack of cooperation with government on the part of the public. According to Lang, each one percent of initial non-response costs \$25 million to follow-up. She claimed the Bureau has been slow to respond to congressional requests for greater information on their plans, which she declared appear to be based on "assumptions made incorrectly and numbers that are wrong."

In response to a comment from a panel member noting sampling is a cornerstone of modern political campaigning, Lang acknowledged that her boss, Rep. Bill Zeliff (R-NH) uses statistical sampling in his political efforts. The difference, she was quick to add, is that while he understands that polls have a margin of error, the election itself is based on an actual count.

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), an advocacy organization for federal support for the social and behavioral sciences, was founded in 1981 and stands alone in Washington in representing the full range of social and behavioral scientists. *Update* is published 22 times per year. Individual subscriptions are available from COSSA for \$65; institutional subscriptions, \$130, overseas mail, \$130. ISSN 0749-4394. Address all inquiries to COSSA, 1522 K Street, NW, Suite 836, Washington, D.C. 20005. Phone: (202) 842-3525, Fax: (202) 842-2788.



## HOUSE HEARING LOOKS AT AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

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The 1996 Farm Bill has become law. Yet, the Congress, with one exception, deferred for two years any significant changes in the agricultural research system that currently provides a mixture of grants based on formulas, special targeting and merit-reviewed competition. The one change was the creation of a Fund for Rural America that includes resources for research activities.

On May 14, the House Subcommittee on Resource Conservation, Research and Forestry, chaired by Rep. Wayne Allard (R-CO), held a hearing to examine how well the current system works and to explore the planning for allocating the Fund for Rural America. Peter Barry, Professor of Agricultural Finance at the University of Illinois and past president of the American Agricultural Economics Association, represented COSSA on a panel with other groups concerned with agriculture and farming research.

What became clear from the hearing and from previous COSSA appearances before the Agriculture appropriations subcommittee, is for many years to members of Congress and most of the interest groups, agricultural research meant crops, livestock, and plants. COSSA and its witnesses have always injected the notion that this research should also examine the people and societal questions facing rural America. There are indications that this has helped change some of the mind set in recent years. The recent Farm Bill demonstrates the growing emphasis on economic and people issues such as: improved quality of life for individuals, families and rural communities; global competitiveness; affordable, safe, and nutritious food supply; economically viable production systems; and further development of human capital in the agricultural sciences.

In his testimony, Barry supported the current balanced research funding. He cited recent expenditure data at the federal level that indicate social scientists in recent years received about 4.2 percent of the competitive grant funds allocated under the National Research Initiative (NRI), about 8 percent of the formula funds under the Hatch Act program, and about 12 percent of the special grants mandated by Congress. He suggested that the higher percentage

received from these special grants indicates growing attention to social and economic issues and a desire to meet more quickly newly emerging goals and priorities.

Barry's testimony also endorsed the Farm Bill's provision for a limited number of Policy Research and Education Centers at land grant universities, awarded on a competitive basis, to permit quick turnaround, policy-focused social science analyses of pressing issues. As COSSA has requested previously to the appropriations committee, Barry urged broadening the social science component of the NRI from "Markets, Trade and Rural Development," to "Economic and Social Systems." He also stressed the need for increased interdisciplinary research, particularly in the NRI's five other program areas. Although there is language about socioeconomic implications in their descriptions, Barry noted: "the integration of social science work into these other areas has been slow to develop."

### Fund for Rural America

The recently passed Farm Bill Congress created a Fund for Rural America that would provide \$100 million for rural development activities and research. The fund is split, with "not less than 1/3 and not more than 2/3" of the fund going to the rural development activities. The rest, a minimum of \$33 million, is authorized for research, extension and education grants. The list of suggested topics includes: increasing international competitiveness, efficiency, and farm profitability; reducing economic and health risks; conserving and enhancing natural resources; developing new crops, crop uses, and agricultural applications of biotechnology, enhancing animal agricultural resources; preserving plant and animal germplasms; increasing economic opportunities in farming and rural communities; and expanding locally-owned value-added processing. Since the Farm Bill only authorizes programs, making the Fund a reality will depend on the appropriations committees.

The Farm Bill also establishes a National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economics Advisory Board to set priorities for agricultural research, extension and education. The Board replaces a myriad of advisory councils and committees that had performed the same duties, often in an uncoordinated fashion. The Board would also



oversee the Fund and establish a merit review system to choose grantees.

During her testimony to the Subcommittee, Catherine Woteki, Deputy Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics, received a number of questions concerning the composition and starting date for the new Board's operation. As of the hearing, the Department was still accepting nominations from outside groups and it was unclear when the first meeting would occur.

## **NEW NIMH DIRECTOR OUTLINES HIS VISION**

Steve Hyman, the National Institute of Mental Health's (NIMH) new director, recently outlined what he sees as great challenges and opportunities for NIMH. He made his remarks before a meeting of the agency's advisory committee.

### **"Golden Age for Behavioral Research"**

Describing himself as optimistic, Hyman spoke of an "age of remarkable scientific opportunity for research on mental disorders. We cannot fail to grab these opportunities." Noting that NIMH researchers study "disorders of extraordinary complexity," Hyman asserted this is a "golden age for behavioral research . . . that will result in the true science of prevention."

Neurobiology is the frontier of science, Hyman declared and "great minds recognize it as a growth area." When we speak of "integrative biology," said Hyman, "we are talking about behavior."

Hyman has quickly recognized that federal spending has become a zero-sum game. With a 5.7 percent increase for Fiscal Year 1996, NIH is only slightly ahead of inflation, he said. Several members of Congress have told Hyman that future funding increases will depend on NIH's accountability and its capability to communicate its successes often and effectively to Congress and the public.

With this zero-sum game, Hyman noted, tough choices will have to be made. We all need to reflect on what NIMH is and what NIMH is not and where to focus its efforts, he maintained. With the large increases NIH used to receive, the Institute could

afford to support younger researchers. Now the challenge becomes how to fund innovative research and continue to encourage new researchers.

### **Will Scrutinize Portfolio**

NIMH will also need to scrutinize its portfolio during the next few years. Hyman hopes that the Institute can continue to "focus on the cutting edge." This can be difficult because peer reviewers "become conservative when budgets are tight." Proactive steps will have to be taken, he said.

Furthermore, Hyman remarked, there is a need to make a "greater connection between the disciplines." The difficulty of researchers from different disciplines learning each others' languages can be a challenge. If the NIMH wants to continue its success, it is critical that these connections are made. We must not allow barriers "to inhibit useful knowledge," Hyman stated.

## **KEY HOUSE MEMBER PRAISES NIH RESEARCH**

"The National Institutes of Health should be at the forefront of research," said Rep. Dan Miller (R-FL), speaking before a recent meeting of the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding. Miller, a self-described fiscal conservative and a strong supporter of the NIH, serves on the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Humans Services, and Education. He told the group that while the federal government should focus on federal issues, "all basic research is very important." Miller spoke of the importance of communicating the value of biomedical research to Congress, and added that House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-GA) shares his strong support for research. Miller is one of five House members serving on both the Appropriations and Budget committees.

### **Urges Risk-Taking**

Miller expressed his belief that NIH and basic research should take risks. NIH "should not be taking care of the routine," he maintained. Miller related how NASA became "conservative" after the 1986 *Challenger* disaster. Their efforts "became routine and got beyond taking risks, everything was duplicative." NIH cannot follow NASA's example.



Discussing the current funding situation, Miller cautioned that with the total amount of discretionary funding flat-funded for the next several years: "It is not a win-win game." He declared that, with inflation, choices will have to be made and priorities established. The Congressman also noted several issues he felt the Subcommittee will be addressing: indirect costs, set-asides for small businesses, regulatory relief in areas including animal testing and auditing papers, and other sources of revenue -- third party payments for patient treatment, royalties for patentable scientific efforts owned by the NIH, and establishing a national trust fund for biomedical research.

### **A Restructured Appropriations Process?**

Miller predicted that the FY 1997 appropriations process will be "non-controversial," saying that "there is a good chance that we will get it over much faster than expected." He said that the recent omnibus bill completing the FY 1996 process will serve as a guideline. He also said the Republican leadership is contemplating streamlining the appropriations process for the next Congress. The 13 separate Subcommittees could be consolidated and jurisdictions restructured. Speaker Gingrich's commitment to have a fiscal conservative head the appropriations panel led him to choose Rep. Robert Livingston (R-LA) as chairman, over those with more seniority. Miller said that this spirit helped gain him a seat on the committee.

### **LINGUIST NEW VICE-CHAIR OF SCIENCE BOARD**

Diana Natalicio, President of the University of Texas at El Paso, was elected Vice-Chair of the National Science Board at its recent meeting. A member of the faculty since 1971, Natalicio has served as UTEP's leader since 1988. She is also a Professor of Languages and Linguistics. She has published many books, monographs, and articles in the field of applied linguistics, particularly second language acquisition and bilingualism. Natalicio earned her Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of Texas at Austin. President Clinton named her to the National Science Board in August 1994 and she was confirmed by the Senate in May 1995. President Bush appointed her to the Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. She currently

serves on the NASA Advisory Council, NIH's Fogarty International Center's Advisory Board, and the U.S.-Mexico Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange. She is a past Board Chair of the American Association for Higher Education. Natalicio replaces Maryanne Fox, a chemist from the University of Texas at Austin, who has rotated off the Board.

Richard Zare, a chemist from Stanford University, was elected Chairman of the Board, replacing Frank Rhodes, former President of Cornell University. Zare joined the Board in 1992. The 24-member National Science Board is the governing body of the National Science Foundation. All Board members are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate for six-year terms. At the end of May the terms of eight current Board members expired. Since President Clinton has not announced their replacements yet, these members continue to serve in a consulting capacity.

### **COSSA JOINS GROUPS IN TESTIMONY ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION**

The Coalition for International Education has submitted testimony to the Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. John Porter (R-IL), supporting continued funding for two key international education and foreign language studies' programs in the Department of Education. COSSA joined 23 other groups to ask for restoration to FY 1995 funding levels for Title VI and the Fulbright-Hays program. In FY 1996, these programs suffered slight decreases from their previous year's levels of \$52.3 million for Title VI and \$5.8 million for Fulbright-Hays.

These activities, first authorized in 1958 and 1961 respectively, remain the federal government's primary mechanisms for supporting the development and maintenance of a higher education infrastructure which produces the nation's expertise in foreign languages, area and other international studies, including international business. These programs provide an integrated and comprehensive approach, supporting activities impacting elementary and secondary schools, undergraduate, graduate and advanced research. They emphasize less-commonly-



taught languages and less-focused-upon areas of the world.

### Programs are a Federal Responsibility

The testimony argued that funding these programs must remain a *federal responsibility* because of the "clear relevance of international competence to U.S. foreign policy, to U.S. national security, to the health and vitality of the U.S. economy in a global marketplace, and to increasing the U.S. role in world leadership" in a number of diverse areas. These areas, of increasing importance in a multipolar world, include: terrorism, regional conflicts, globally organized crime, world health epidemics, mass migrations caused by economic, political and military pressures, environmental change, and technology advances. The need to train people who have the depth of knowledge and understanding of other people's languages, cultures, and systems and who can assess the political, economic or social implications of U.S. decisions and actions are federal, not state or private sector responsibilities.

### Many Accomplishments Cited

Among the accomplishments cited for these activities are: training provided for the U.S. Army's Foreign Area Officer Program during the past three decades; promoting the internationalization of American business schools; developing elementary and secondary school curricula packages on world areas; producing language training materials for Vietnamese, Tagalog, Indonesian, and Korean for the National Security Agency and the Department of Defense; promoting exchanges between the American Institute of Pakistani Studies and the Supreme Court of Pakistan to democratize that country's judicial system.

## WHITE HOUSE WEB PAGE PROVIDES ACCESS TO FEDERAL STATISTICS HS

The Federal Statistics Briefing Rooms, giving Americans quick, easy access to the "most recent, used and sought after economic and social statistics," were unveiled at a White House briefing by Office of Management and Budget Director Alice Rivlin on May 20. Key economic and social statistics are now available through the White House Home Page on the Internet at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/fsbr>

The briefing rooms provide a centralized index to current releases and historical economic and social indicators organized, not by agency, but thematically. The Economic Statistics Briefing Room provides information arranged around the themes of Output, Income, Employment, Production, Money, Prices, Transportation, and International Statistics. The Social Statistics Briefing Room's organizing themes are Demographics, Education, Health and Crime.

Included in each theme are the most current government release, graphic displays of time series data, highlights of trends and other noteworthy aspects of the current data, and the name of the agency that provided the statistic. The user can then, through hyperlinks to the agencies' Web pages, further explore the data in depth.

Sally Katzen, Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs at OMB, called the new 'Briefing Rooms' "the beginnings of one-stop shopping for Federal Statistics." Developed by OMB's Interagency Council on Statistical Policy, the new page overcomes the difficulties of locating information in a decentralized statistical system, Katzen declared. When asked whether this was a harbinger of moving toward centralization of that system, Katzen defended the current multiagency structure. She argued that it was important for many of the agencies to work closely with the Department in which they were located. The administration has opposed a current legislative proposal sponsored by Rep. Steve Horn (R-CA) to merge the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census Bureau and Bureau of Economic Analysis (see *Update*, April 29).



## NEWS BRIEFS *MB*

### Litan to Direct Brookings Economics Program

The Brookings Institution has announced that Robert Litan will direct its Economic Studies Program.

A lawyer and an economist, Litan most recently directed the General Government and Finance Division at the Office of Management and Budget. He was a senior fellow at Brookings from 1984 to 1993.

Litan will replace Henry Aaron, who will embark upon a one-year sabbatical at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences before returning to Brookings.

### Katz to Step Down at ACLS

Stanley Katz, president of the American Council of Learned Societies since 1986, has announced his intention to leave ACLS in 1997.

Katz will return to full-time teaching and research at Princeton University. No successor has been named.

### NSF Seeks Division Director

The National Science Foundation seeks candidates to serve as Director of its Division of Science Resource Studies.

The position, a one-to-two year assignment, will manage a division that is the main source of federal statistics and studies on scientists and engineers, their careers, disciplines, funding, facilities and equipment.

For more information, contact Jeff Fenstermacher at (703) 306-1741.

### Rural Poverty Guide Available

The Rural Sociological Society has produced the second edition of the Rural Poverty Resource Directory.

Mailed to Members of Congress and others, the directory provides a means for policy makers to contact social scientists for assistance in understanding the complexities of poverty in rural America. All individuals listed in the guide are dedicated to communicating social science research results to all who seek to reduce poverty.

The directory was first published in early 1995, and the updated and expanded version includes new contacts and new topic areas, such as "Resource Dependent Communities" and "Rural Policy."

For more information on the directory, made possible by a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, contact Gene Summers of the University of Wisconsin at (608) 262-3658.

### Fulbright Opportunities Announced

The Council for International Exchange of Scholars has announced several research opportunities.

The Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence Program hosts a visiting Fulbright lecturer in the arts, humanities, social sciences, and professional fields for a semester or academic year during 1997-98.

### The Fulbright International Education Administrators Program

supports short-term seminars in Germany, Japan, or Korea for academic administrators involved in international education.

The Fulbright German Studies Seminar is a three-week interdisciplinary seminar on German society today for faculty in German studies, communications, history, and political science.

The NATO Fellowships and Institutional Grants promote research leading to publication on political, security, and economic issues directly affecting the health of the NATO alliance.

Deadlines for all but the NATO awards are November 1. The NATO deadline is January 1. For more information, contact CIES at (202) 686-4000.

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American Psychological Association  
American Society of Criminology  
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American Statistical Association

Association of American Geographers  
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American Agricultural Economics Association  
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American Council on Consumer Interests  
American Educational Research Association  
Association for Asian Studies  
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Eastern Sociological Society

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International Studies Association  
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North American Regional Science Council  
North Central Sociological Association  
Population Association of America  
Rural Sociological Society

Society for Research on Adolescence  
Society for Research in Child Development  
Society for the Advancement of  
Socio-Economics  
Society for the Scientific Study of Religion  
Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality  
Sociologists for Women in Society  
Southern Sociological Society  
Southwestern Social Science Association  
Speech Communication Association

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