

HOUSE VOTES DOWN CENSUS SAMPLING; WHITE HOUSE THREATENS VETO MB

In yet another setback for the Census Bureau's proposed use of statistical sampling in the 2000 Census, the House-passed version of the Bureau's Fiscal Year 1998 spending bill includes provisions prohibiting sampling until the Supreme Court rules on the constitutionality of such methods.

Proponents of the use of statistical methods said that the High Court is unlikely to consider an expedited review of the matter before the Census were to actually occur. An amendment by Reps. Alan Mollohan (D-WV) and Christopher Shays (R-CT) to allow the Bureau to proceed with its testing and design of sampling was defeated, 228-197, after a lengthy and generally partisan debate.

The Senate passed its version of the Commerce spending bill in July. The Senate only prevented the Census Bureau from making "irreversible" plans, language that mirrored the compromise that ended the stalemate between the White House and the congressional Republicans and held up passage of the disaster relief bill in May.

Mollohan and Shays proposed to replace the bill's prohibition on sampling with the less restrictive Senate language, and also sought to create an independent "Board of Observers for a Fair and Accurate Census" to monitor the entire Census process, including the 1998 dress rehearsal. Republicans have charged that the use of statistical methods would leave the Census vulnerable to political manipulation. Privately, Republicans have expressed fear that sampling would lead to a greater count of Democratic-leaning urban dwellers and minorities.

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CONGRESS AGREES TO BOOST NSF FUNDING FIVE PERCENT HS

The House-Senate conference committee on the VA, HUD, Independent Agencies appropriations bill has agreed to fund the National Science Foundation in FY 1998 at \$3.429 billion, an increase of \$179 million or 5 percent over the FY 1997 level. Congress, once again, boosted funding above the level of the administration's requested 3 percent increase. NSF Director Neal Lane proclaimed that he was "extremely pleased" by the "continued bipartisan support for the many research and education programs NSF undertakes." Lane also thanked the science and engineering community, whose efforts, he said, "played a large part in obtaining such strong Congressional support for NSF."

The conference agreement provided \$2.546 billion for NSF's Research and Related Activities account, a \$114 million or just below 5 percent increase over last year. In the report accompanying the conference agreement, the legislators still expressed their unhappiness with the Foundation's new Knowledge and Distributed Intelligence

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initiative. The Senate Appropriations Committee report had been critical of this initiative because NSF had not explained what it was about very well. The conferees "expect to receive such milestones and guideposts before the Foundation obligates any further funding for these programmatic areas."

The plant genome initiative, a favorite of Sen. Christopher 'Kit' Bond (R-MO), Chairman of the Senate VA, HUD, IA Appropriations Subcommittee, received \$40 million above the budget request for "a competitive, peer reviewed" program in this area. NSF should consult with the National Science and Technology Council's Interagency Working Group on plant genome research in developing this expanded research program, the report stated.

The conferees provided \$23 million for the Next Generation Internet project. The funds for this effort will come from an "intellectual infrastructure" fund that was established from the collection of fees for the registration of Internet domain names. This funding is not included in the total appropriation.

The Education and Human Resources directorate will receive \$632.5 million in FY 1998, a \$13 million increase above FY 1997. Included in the increase are \$2 million for Advanced Technology Education at junior and community colleges, a program initiated by Rep. David Price (D-NC), and \$6 million for an undergraduate reform initiative to increase the

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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 sciences. *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.

number of under-represented populations in mathematics, engineering, and the sciences.

The bill also provides \$36.5 million for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research. The \$2.5 million increase over FY 1997 includes \$500,000 for a National Academy of Public Administration evaluation of HUD's effort to implement needed management systems and processes, including the Department's compliance with the Government Performance and Results Act.

The conference report should pass both Houses of Congress and go to the President's desk by Columbus Day. The President is expected to sign the bill, although certain provisions, none affecting NSF, could become targets for the use of the new line-item veto.

SATCHER OUTLINES HEALTH GOALS AT CONFIRMATION HEARING

"As the Assistant Secretary for Health and the Surgeon General, I would take the best science in the world and place it firmly withing the grasp of all Americans," said David Satcher during the October 8 Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee hearing on his nomination for both posts. Satcher is currently the Director of the Centers for Disease control and Prevention (CDC).

A graduate of Morehouse University, Satcher earned his medical degree from Case Western Reserve University. He was the president of Meharry Medical College in Nashville, Tennessee for a decade before being named CDC Director in 1993.

Satcher is President Clinton's third nominee to fill the post of Surgeon General. Jocelyn Elders, who actually served in the position, resigned in 1994 after making too many controversial statements. Clinton next nominated Henry Foster. He withdrew from consideration after the maelstrom over the number of abortions he had performed. Audrey Manley had served as Acting Surgeon General before leaving office last summer. Phil Lee was the Assistant Secretary of Health until 1996.

If confirmed by the Senate, Satcher would be the first person to serve as both Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH) since Julius Richmond, who held both posts between 1977 and 1981. "I believe that combining the Surgeon General's visibility with the Assistant Secretary for Health's ability to marshal public health resources would give the nation a strong single voice for public health," emphasized Satcher.

Committee member Senator Bill Frist (R-TN), who is also the chairman of the Subcommittee on Public Health and Safety, emphasized that because of organizational changes at the Department of Health and Human Services allowing for the decreased administrative burden of the Assistant Secretary, there is no need for two people in those positions. Frist said that he welcomed the streamlining, saying it allows for an "efficient and clear voice on the link between illness and personal behavior."

He insisted that not only would he "speak to Americans" but he would "really listen to them. I would want to hear about their expectations and their experiences, their questions and their concerns, and engage them in an ongoing conversation about physical activity, good nutrition, responsible behavior and other passports to good health and long life."

Satcher informed the Committee that at no time in history has the position of Surgeon General been more important. "As we witness major challenges in our health care and public health system with the move toward managed care and more focus on population-based prevention, public health science tells us that the opportunities for lifestyle modification as a way of improving health are greater than ever before . . . I want to bring more attention, awareness, and clarity to the opportunities for disease prevention and health promotion that are available to individuals, families, and communities," he said.

Frist further questioned Satcher on whether or not there is "a bias" against handguns on the part of CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention that skews their analysis of raw data on firearms injuries. Satcher answered that he did not believe that was the case, and said that "the issue of violence is more complex than that."

Committee chairman Senator James Jeffords (R-VT) lauded Satcher and expressed his support for Satcher's ability to handle both posts. Jeffords said he hoped the Senate would move swiftly to confirm him.

NIH DAZZLES HILL WITH SCIENCE; ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS RAISED *HS*

Last Spring, the National Institutes of Health invited members of the House Committee on Commerce to visit the campus in Bethesda and learn about the important research and clinical care that occurs there. On September 30, leaders of NIH testified before the Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Health and the Environment. Using overheads, videos, and computerized demonstrations, NIH provided the panel a vivid demonstration of why Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA) called it the "National Institutes of Hope."

Orchestrating the show was NIH Director Harold Varmus, who delivered a brief opening statement touting the virtues of NIH's multifaceted operations to support basic research and the clinical testing of these scientific breakthroughs to improve human health. He then turned over the presentations to Frances Collins, Director of the National Human Genome Research Institute, Donald Lindberg, Director of the National Library of Medicine, David Lipman, also from the National Library of Medicine, Richard Hodes, Director, National Institute on Aging, Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, and Zach Hall, Director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

Each, in turn, dazzled the Subcommittee's members with displays of advances in fighting diseases. Collins focused on research where scientists have identified genes responsible for diseases such as, colon cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, Alzheimer's, and diabetes. He also expressed the view that despite these genetic advances, environmental factors can still play an important role in disease occurrence, a concern of a number of committee members. Although his brief oral presentation did not mention it, Collins' written testimony discussed his Institute's commitment to "funding to anticipate,

analyze, and address the ethical, legal and social implications of the [Human Genome] project's new advances in human genetics." The program has identified four priority areas: privacy and fair use of genetic information; responsible clinical integration of new genetic technologies; ethical issues surrounding the conduct of genetics research; and professional and public education about these issues.

Hodes focused on Alzheimer's Disease in his oral remarks. He noted that with the over 85 year old population growing rapidly in the next decade, he expects the number of Alzheimer's cases will continue to grow as well. In addition, his written statement included discussions of the Health and Retirement Survey, the Edward Roybal Centers of Research on Applied Gerontology, and the Aging Institute's large investment in basic research on age-related changes in cognitive function.

Fauci discussed NIH's battle to fund basic science to cope with the AIDS pandemic. He noted the recent decision to focus on the development of a vaccine. He pointed out that epidemic episodes recur throughout history, citing the flu epidemic in the early part of this century. Hall focused on Parkinson's Disease. Lindberg and Lipman demonstrated how the National Library of Medicine has established on-line access to medical information through MEDLINE and other databases. They also discussed the Visible Human Project which provides computer-generated images of male and female cadavers. At <http://www.nlm.nih.gov> there are further explanations of these information sources.

Concerns About Micromanagement

Members of Congress expressed great support for NIH. Subcommittee chairman Michael Bilirakis (R-FL) called it "America's hospital" and declared the federal investment "first rate ... with solid, demonstrative returns." Ranking Democrat Rep. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) praised NIH's commitment to basic scientific research and the willingness of researchers to "work in obscurity for years," before producing significant breakthrough discoveries. Rep. Greg Ganske (R-IA), a physician, expressed his concern about congressional attempts to micromanage the agency. He hoped that "political pressure groups were having no overall negative

effect" on the agency's operations. He worried about "turning the floor of Congress into a scientific peer review panel."

Eshoo and Brown also expressed their concern about the relationship between environmental factors and diseases, especially breast cancer. Collins noted that genetic predispositions, are just that, and do not guarantee disease occurrence. Varmus indicated that 45 percent of those prone to breast cancer do not get it. Collins said that continuing research on "environmental triggers" is important, as well as discovering what "protective factors" operate. The National Institute on Environmental Health Sciences, another component of NIH, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are working on this situation, Varmus said.

The Subcommittee will attempt to provide NIH with a reauthorization in the next session of Congress.

HOUSE REJECTS CENSUS SAMPLING

(continued from page one)

The House allocated \$381 million for the decennial Census, but is allowing the Bureau to spend only \$100 million, and none of it on sampling. Given the costly "ramp up" for the decennial survey, many in the data user community are concerned that the House would virtually shut down the agency.

The matter now moves to a joint House-Senate conference committee. According to published reports, the Senate Republican leadership has signaled their intention to consent to the House version of the bill. With President Clinton threatening to veto any bill banning sampling, a showdown is likely.

Advocates of sampling said on the House floor that it is needed to reach those hardest to enumerate, will save money and improve accuracy, and has been endorsed by several panels of the National Academy of Sciences and leading scientific organizations.

Opponents said sampling is unconstitutional, inaccurate, and open to political manipulation. Said Rep. Henry Hyde (R-IL): "Your Administration does not exactly wear a T-shirt saying 'Trust me'"

SCIENCE ADVISERS PANEL HEARS ABOUT EDUCATION AND CHILDREN *HS*

The President's Committee of Advisers on Science and Technology (PCAST) heard from NSF Director Neal Lane and Department of Education Undersecretary Marshall Smith as they continued to wrestle with the problem of improving the performance of U.S. students in mathematics and science. In addition, Duane Alexander, Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) briefed the group on the White House Children's Initiative.

The eighteen member panel of non-governmental scientists, educators, and business people met on September 29. Lane and Smith were there to provide, what White House Science Adviser John Gibbons called the "fusion of approaches and activities" of the two agencies with regard to K-12 education. Heightening the concern was the weak achievement of U.S. students on the Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS) and the continuing national debate over voluntary national testing. The U.S. students did not perform particularly well on the TIMMS tests in comparison with students from many other countries. The House version of the Labor, HHS, Education appropriations bill contains a provision banning the national tests. In addition, PCAST has issued a report, authored by member David Shaw, a businessman who runs his own high-tech company, that called for increased federal support for education research and the use of education technology (see *Update*, July 14).

Lane described NSF's efforts as a catalyst for systemic change in math and science education in the States, urban and rural areas. Stressing the partnerships developed from the Foundation's efforts, the Director noted that these are "high risk ventures." He cited the PRIME program in Pittsburgh that provided funding for teacher enhancement in mathematics. The difficulty has always been, he acknowledged, discovering a program that works in a small site and then scaling it up to a larger situation. Lane did say that the federal government has the information, tools and resources to help improve education.

Smith called for a three pronged approach to improving education: challenging national standards, aligning assessments to those standards, and training teachers. He dismissed many of the standards developed by the States as not "very challenging" to students and noted that the evidence from TIMMS indicated that the nature of the curriculum and classroom teacher performance were keys to achieving success. The national tests would be "a powerful motivator" and one way "to mobilize people all around the country to get better teaching," he said. We need a set of strategies to implement what we know, although changing an "embedded system" will not be easy, Smith declared. Lane suggested that we could learn about institutional and organizational change from some of the projects supported by NSF's Transformations to Quality Organizations (TQO) program.

Shaw did not accept that we really know what works, and again called for more long-term empirical research. Smith suggested we need to take the advances in brain research and the cognitive science discoveries in studies supported by NSF and translate them into classroom practices by improving instructional science. PCAST member Shirley Malcolm, Head of the Education Directorate at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, argued that "we are ignoring our own research" that indicates a strong connection between hands-on science and reading, and learning mathematics in the context of learning science. She argued for creating a demand for change through incentives to communities and industries to help in this effort.

Alexander Describes Children's Report

Although billed as what the government was doing to follow-up to the children's report issued last Spring, Alexander's presentation, squeezed somewhat for time, ended up simply providing another review of the report itself.

The report, *Investing in Our Future. A National Research Initiative for America's Children in the 21st Century*, was produced by the OSTP National Science and Technology Council's Committees on Fundamental Science and Health, Safety and Food. The goals of the report were to: assess the size and

scope of the Federal research portfolio on children and adolescents; identify important research issues in children's biological, cognitive, and social development; and strengthen research-policy linkages and develop a sustainable process for collaboration and communication of scientific knowledge about childhood and adolescence within the Federal government.

The Federal investment in research on children was found to be quite small: an estimated \$2 million, less than four-tenths of one percent of total government expenditures on children and youth. Looked at another way, this amounts to less than three percent of the total federal research enterprise. Children and youth under the age of 21 make up approximately 30 percent of the population.

Important research topics identified include: a focus on health and behavior, especially risky activities; children and environmental hazards; learning; the influence of families on communities and development; longitudinal studies to assess child development under "normal" conditions; and policy research, particularly follow-ups to welfare reform and changes in health care systems.

Alexander did not report very much in the way of new activities. There are indications that the Administration will make a major effort on improving child care, as First Lady Hillary Clinton returns to the bully pulpit on this issue. In addition, as federal agencies' plan their FY 1999 budgets there are indications that the research agencies will attempt to enhance their support for research on children.

NIH CREATES CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT WORKING GROUP

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According to a Child Abuse and Neglect Working Group (CANWG) review, "\$33.7 million is currently devoted primarily to child abuse and neglect research, and another \$48 million of additional research [funding] is relevant to understanding the precursors and consequences of abuse and neglect." CANWG, established by the National Institutes of Health, consists of the major research institutes and offices that support research in this area, as well as

the Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research (OBSSR). CANWG was created in response to a congressional request that such a group examine NIH's current research efforts in this area, its accomplishments, and its future plans.

According to the report, *NIH Research on Child Abuse and Neglect: Current Status and Future Plans* "significant research and knowledge gaps remain in a number of critical areas:

- the definition, identification, and assessment of child abuse;
- the determination of appropriate and effective interventions; and
- the transfer and application of research knowledge into "real world" settings.

The report further highlights that "child neglect, the most commonly reported form of child maltreatment, has remained relatively understudied," noting that conducting research in this area is a "very difficult process due to difficulties in recruiting samples and in navigating the ethical and legal reporting requirements in collecting information from families where abuse has occurred." Considerable training in complex research design issues, according to the report, is needed for new researchers who may be interested in conducting research in this field. Furthermore, only a small handful of experimental researchers with conceptual and methodological sophistication to provide such training are available.

CANWG, in order to build the research capacity of the field, "will explore the development of a series of conferences and/or workshops to train and attract new investigators." In addition, it will examine the utility of various funding mechanisms and announcements that may be used to stimulate more research proposals in critical areas. The Working Group will also work with other federal agencies, such as the Administration for Children and Families, National Institute of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Department of Education, and the Department of Defense to "explore ways to increase knowledge transfer and research application to practice."

SOCIOLOGY GROUP SEEKS INFORMATION RELATED TO RACE INITIATIVE *HS*

The American Sociological Association (ASA) seeks help in order to provide input to President Clinton's Initiative On Race: "One America." The association wants to identify topic areas, concepts, studies, indicators, and findings to help educate the nation about the facts surrounding the issue of race. According to ASA Executive Officer Felice Levine, the hope is to map the domain of race relations and what is known about the causes and consequences of racism and society. If resources are available, a workshop will take place and a research monograph will be produced.

The ASA Web Page: <http://www.asanet.org> will serve as a communication and information exchange tool for this project. In addition, a special E-mail address: race.project@asanet.org has been established for this activity. Levine hopes that scientists from all disciplines will participate in this effort.

URBAN AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION JOINS COSSA *MB*

COSSA is pleased to announce that the Urban Affairs Association has joined the Consortium as an Affiliate. We look forward to working with the organization on issues of common concern.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT *KE*

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.

**Department of Health and Human Services:
Agency for Health Care Policy and Research,
National Institute on Drug Abuse, National
Institute of Mental Health, and the Substance
Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**

The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR), in cooperation with the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) invites applications for research on the effectiveness and/or cost-effectiveness of child mental health and substance abuse treatment interventions and guideline-based treatment strategies for children, adolescents and youth in the general health sector.

Letter of intent is due by November 13, 1997.
For more information contact Charlotte Mullican
AHCPR (301) 594-1485 or by email:
chdmhrfa@ahcpr.gov.

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:
National Center for Environmental Research and
Quality Assurance**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as part of its **Science to Achieve Results (STAR)** program, is offering Graduate Fellowships for masters and doctoral level students in environmentally-related fields of study, including the social and economic sciences. The **deadline for receipt of pre-application is November 14, 1997.**

The purpose of this program is to encourage promising students to obtain advanced degrees and pursue careers in environmentally related fields. This goal is consistent with the mission of EPA, which is to provide leadership in the nation's environmental science, research, education, assessment, restoration and preservation efforts. For additional information call 1-800-490-9194 or consult NCERQA Home Page at: <http://www.epa.gov/ncerqa>.

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Midwest Sociological Society
National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration
National Council on Family Relations
North American Regional Science Council
North Central Sociological Association
Population Association of America

Rural Sociological Society
Society for Research on Adolescence
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
Urban Affairs Association

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