

SENATE COMMITTEE BEGINS CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET PROCESS: RESEARCH INCREASES PROVIDED *HS*

The Senate Budget Committee, chaired by Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM), began the legislative process on the FY 1999 budget by reporting out its version of the budget resolution. As the committee points out, a budget resolution "is a fiscal blueprint, a guide, a road map, that the Congress develops to direct the course of federal tax and spending legislation." It does not have the force of law, the President does not sign or veto it, and the appropriations committees are the ones who actually determine spending for federal agencies and programs.

The resolution, which passed out of the committee on a party line vote of 12 Republicans for and 10 Democrats against, did not assume funding for many of the programs in President Clinton's proposed budget, including several in the education area, such as the reduction in class size initiative. The President, as a meeting at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy made clear on March 17, also assumed that research funding increases for FY 1999 would come from money made available from tobacco legislation. Senator Domenici and his committee decided that, if indeed there are funds from a tobacco agreement, they would go into the Medicare Trust Fund. Congressional committees continue to debate the scope and provisions of the tobacco legislation and where to direct the funds. Although the White House is optimistic that the legislation will get enacted, many on Capitol Hill are not so confident.

Nevertheless, the resolution did provide language that assumed increases for both the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. In Function 250, Science and Technology, the resolution "assumes an increase for the NSF above the Balanced Budget Agreement for NSF Research and Related Activities. [It] continues strong funding for basic research programs and activities of the

federal government, especially those activities within NSF and the Department of Energy." Whether this is meant to provide NSF the full ten percent increase in the administration's budget is unclear.

For NIH, the resolution in Function 550, Health, assumes funding in FY 1999 of \$15.1 billion, an 11 percent increase (the President had asked for 8.4 percent). It also assumes NIH funding of \$15.5 billion from 1999 to 2003. This will surely not satisfy members of Congress and their allies who have called for the doubling of NIH funding in the next five years (see other story on page 6).

The Senate committee proposed a tax cut of \$30 billion. This is clearly not sufficient to meet the desires of Senator William Roth (R-DE), chair of the tax law writing Finance Committee, and many in the House of Representatives, who are looking for larger returns to the taxpayers. In addition, the committee provided funds for the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). In order not to break spending caps put in place by the Balanced Budget Agreement, the committee intends to fund the significant increase in ISTEA by offsets in certain allowances in mandatory spending by the federal government. This is a procedure the administration hoped to use to fund its education and research initiatives.

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Other highlights of the resolution with regard to programs of interest to social and behavioral scientists: an additional \$500 million for "final preparations for the decennial census;" assumed reductions for various programs at the Department of Agriculture, including the Economic Research Service and the National Agricultural Statistics Service; greater block granting and consolidation of federal education programs; full funding of the President's request for the National Park Service; and another attempt to eliminate the Economic Development Administration. Abolishing EDA is something the Republicans have been trying to do for many years, both when they controlled the Presidency and since they have controlled the Congress.

The full Senate is expected to pass the resolution before recessing on April 3 until April 21. The House of Representatives has decided to wait until the April revenue figures are in before moving their version of the budget resolution. There are many who are anticipating another better than expected infusion of dollars into the Federal treasury that will provide the House budget writers with more flexibility and funds for their priorities.

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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.

VARMUS TESTIFIES TO HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

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 Making his fifth formal appearance before Representative John Porter (R-IL) and the House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Committee, National Institutes of Health (NIH) Director Harold Varmus paid tribute to retiring Congressman Louis Stokes (D-OH). Noting his appreciation of Stokes' support for the NIH, Varmus applauded Stokes' efforts to increase the attention paid to "disparities in health status" and the persistence of health problems in the African American community, as well as other minority populations.

Varmus noted the NIH's enthusiasm "about the prospects for building vigorously on the handsome increases the NIH has received over the past few years, when budgetary prospects were more problematic." For FY 1999, the President requested \$14.797 billion for the NIH, an increase of \$1.15 billion, or 8.4 percent, over the FY 1998 appropriations of \$13.647 billion (See *UPDATE*, March 2).

"We believe that the President's request for larger investments in the health sciences has come at an especially opportune time," said Varmus. "First, discoveries are occurring at an unprecedented pace in biology and medicine, presaging revolutionary changes in medical practice during the next decade. Second, improved methods of care, based on laboratory and clinical science, can help the nation confront new and growing public health needs: the aging of the human population . . . ; the disproportionate growth of groups in the U.S. that have historically experienced poorer health and shorter lives; and the persistence of many serious diseases in all parts of the world, despite remarkable scientific advances."

In his opening remarks, Chairman Porter noted that he was encouraged by the President's budget request for the NIH. He noted, however, concern regarding the President's cancer initiative, saying that while he was "skeptical of the earmark, he looked forward to providing funding for cancer research." Replying to Porter's question of whether the cancer initiative was "politicization of science," Varmus

emphasized that the "NIH's budget was put together in response to the scientific opportunity," further emphasizing the budget request for NIH affords "increases to many cancer-related activities." He added that the NIH's budget provides "handsome increases for every disease area." The President's request for the initiative is consistent with the NIH's budget, said Varmus. Porter, "satisfied with Varmus' answer that the National Cancer Institute budget does not discriminate against other disease areas," noted that he will treat the initiative that way.

Porter, inquiring about the role of the mind in molecular medicine, asked Varmus what the NIH is doing in this area and what Institutes and Centers are involved. Varmus related that the mind and health connection are being explored by a range of technology including imaging and classical behavioral therapies. He noted that while the understanding of the activities of the brain are germane to a number of institutes and centers, including the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the National Institute of Neurological Disease and Stroke (NINDS), the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) serving as the coordinating body. Porter also questioned whether the "brain, like other organs, can be reduced to the molecular level, and not be concerned about behavior." Varmus stressed that the NIH is not "interested in studying the organ without being interested in the consequences." He said, "It is very difficult to separate the molecular components from the behavior."

Responding to Porter's question of whether the NIH could absorb a 100 percent increase in its budget in the next five years, Varmus stressed NIH's "capacity to make use of the funds are at an all time high," noting the difficulty of calibrating where the limit is reached. According to Varmus, there are a number of under explored areas.

Stokes asked how NIH's budget addresses the health disparities between the majority population and minority population. Varmus answered that the gaps have not closed as much as he and Stokes would like but it "is beneficial to have the focus" on this issue. The heightened attention to the health disparities between the populations, he continued, will help to energize the research.

ALEXANDER HIGHLIGHTS NICHD'S CHILD CARE RESEARCH

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Testifying before the Subcommittee on March 17, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Director Duane Alexander noted that the NICHD is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year. Alexander highlighted the Institute's accomplishments. Among the areas featured were the "results of research on the association between characteristics of child daycare (quantity, quality, stability) and children's social, cognitive, and language development" from the NICHD Study of Early Child Care. The study, the "most comprehensive and detailed study of child care ever undertaken," is a longitudinal study of 1,300 families.

Replying to Porter's question of what effect does being born wanted have on the health of children, Alexander stressed that the effect is significant and has a significant impact on the infant mortality rate which tends to be lower when children are wanted. Porter, alluding to the current international family planning debate in the Congress, questioned how to reconcile abortion as a moral issue with the issue of family planning. Alexander responded that the need for abortions would be reduced by the development of better family planning interventions.

Representative Anne Northrup (R-KY), citing recent results of the Adolescent Health (AddHealth) Study (see *UPDATE*, February 2) regarding emotional connectedness between teens and their families, asked Alexander what long-term-research was NICHD pursuing regarding the study, as well as research on "good daycare options." Alexander noted that there is a one-year follow-up study to the AddHealth Study and that he expected a five-year follow-up study proposal to be submitted for funding.

Regarding child daycare research, Alexander noted that adding to "results described before, this year scientists continue to find that family income, quality of the home environment, maternal education or language ability, and mother's behavior toward the child are the best predictors of children's cognitive, language and social development. Scientists also found that children in exclusive maternal care do not have a cognitive or language advantage over children

in child care, and that those in center care actually do better on cognitive and language measures at age three than those in maternal care."

Representative Rosa DeLauro (D-CN), noting that several articles have used the NICHD Study of Early Child Care to conclude that daycare is bad, particularly for low-income disadvantaged kids, asked if these conclusions were consistent with findings from NICHD research. Alexander replied that the findings were cited out of context. The study, said Alexander, was not set up to study whether child care was good or bad and it is not possible to conclude that from the findings. He noted that NICHD was putting together a 15-page fact sheet of all child care studies. DeLauro said that the fact sheet is "critically important," noting that there is child care legislation before the Congress. "NICHD's fact sheets on all of the research conducted on daycare could help to dispel the misinterpretation of data," she concluded.

Porter, noting that health costs result from particular lifestyle choices, asked Alexander what can be done to get the message out regarding the need for a change in behavior. Alexander noted that the Institute is learning how to get the message out, but there still is a research agenda here. He said that the NICHD was participating in the health and behavior research initiative coordinated by the OBSSR designed to encourage the study of innovative behavioral interventions to achieve long term change in behaviors that are risk factors for a wide array of health problems. It is important to reach kids earlier, said Alexander, before lifestyle habits are formed. We need to know how to deliver the interventions, and/or message. It is a very useful area for investment, he emphasized.

NURSING RESEARCH MAKES A DIFFERENCE

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"Nursing researchers are at the frontiers of science . . . Our research is not disease specific, nor is it dedicated to a particular age group or population. What nursing research does is ask the questions that probe the very core of patients' and families' personal encounters with illness or its avoidance . . . On the issue of behavioral changes and interventions, we ask

what can prevent low birthweight babies among minority women, or reduce and prevent risky behaviors in children and adolescents? Or further, can changes in behavior modulate the neuroimmunological system to ease or prevent the symptoms of illness? About compelling public health concerns, such as emerging infections, we ask what types of behavioral changes will prevent these diseases," said National Institute of Nursing Director Patricia O'Grady in her opening statement before the Subcommittee on March 18th.

Grady noted in her testimony, that as discussed at the Subcommittee's briefing last November (See *UPDATE*, November 10, 1997) "the role of the mind in healing and health, the relationship between behavior and the immune system, known as neuroimmunomodulation, is an important but nebulous area in need of clarifying research." The NINR will solicit proposals to examine the "impact of behavioral interventions on physical status and how altered immune function affects people's psychological state and willingness to change behaviors," she said.

Grady noted that because so many health problems associated with adulthood have their beginnings in unhealthy childhood and adolescent behavior, the NINR "plans to expand its prevention research in this area." NINR will issue a program announcement to stimulate research that "will reduce or prevent risky behaviors in young people, such as smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, and poor eating habits." The Institute will also encourage research to understand better "the effects of behavioral influences on adherence to medical treatment, diet, personal hygiene, and sexual behavior."

Pointing to recent findings regarding the best environment for preventing the decline in brain power and the maintenance of underlying skills, Porter inquired about the research NINR is conducting in this area. Grady pointed to preliminary findings surrounding mental exercises and the prevention of Alzheimer's and said that the Institute will be able to report back to the Committee in a couple of years with findings from the research in this area. Porter also inquired about the effect of art and music on patients. In response, Grady said that the NINR is indeed supporting research that looks at the role of music in cognitive stimulation and its effects on mood

and mental health and would report the findings to the Committee.

RALLY TO DOUBLE NIH'S FUNDING BY 2003 HELD

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COSSA joined with more than 450 representatives of behavioral and biomedical research organizations, Christopher Reeve, Mary Tyler Moore and more than a dozen members of Congress on Capitol Hill to kick off the campaign to double the NIH's budget.

COSSA noted that doubling NIH's funding would allow:

- ✓ For the support of research to translate proven individual strategies to communities.
- ✓ NIH, through the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR), to stimulate research regarding the influences of socioeconomic status, allowing for the exploration of factors responsible for the well-documented relationship between SES and health, including the role of biological, social, psychosocial, and behavioral mediating mechanisms and their interactions.
- ✓ For more research on the effects of lifestyle and family connections.
- ✓ NIH, through the OBSSR, to stimulate investigations to increase our understanding of what social and behavioral factors influence the likelihood of patient's adherence to medical advice given to them by their physicians.
- ✓ NIH to increase its interdisciplinary training, which is crucial and necessary for researchers to investigate successfully complex biobehavioral health problems.

The rally, coordinated by the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding, Campaign for Medical Research, National Health Council, NIHx2, and Research!America, is in response to "the need for a well-funded national medical research initiative to expedite breakthroughs and cures of catastrophic and chronic diseases and disabilities." The goal of the campaign is to double NIH's budget by 2003.

The full text of COSSA's statement is available on the Web at <http://members.aol.com/Socscience/DOUBLENIH.htm>

SHOW OF BIPARTISAN SUPPORT FOR CENSUS AND THE "LONG-FORM"

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In a show of bipartisan support, Democratic and Republican lawmakers gathered Wednesday, March 18 to express their support for the Census 2000. Speaking at a luncheon organized by the Working Group on Ancestry in the U.S. Census, Representatives Constance Morella (R-MD), Thomas Sawyer (D-OH), and Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) joined in calling for the preservation of the "long-form" questionnaire in the upcoming decennial census. In their talks, Morella, Sawyer, and Maloney all lauded the long form and the information that it provides government officials, lawmakers, and the private sector. The Census Bureau, on April 1, is required to provide the questions on the long-form for Congressional review.

Morella pointed to the importance of the data derived from the long-form by noting that investment strategies, job training programs, transportation and infrastructure requirements and housing needs all rely on these "invaluable" data. Morella noted that among its other attributes, census data provides for economic stability and economic growth. Morella urged other lawmakers to support the census and the preservation of the long-form questionnaire. On Tuesday, March 17 she introduced a resolution — House Continuing Resolution 246 — "expressing the Sense of the Congress that the 2000 Census should continue to collect demographic and socioeconomic data to promote sound decision making."

Joining Morella in cosponsoring the resolution are three Republicans: Nancy Johnson (CT), Christopher Shays (CT), and John Sununu (NH); and 14 Democrats: Benjamin Cardin (MD), John Baldacci (ME), John Dingell (MI), Eliot Engel (NY), Bob Filner (CA), Earl Hilliard (AL), Carolyn Maloney (NY), William Pascrell, Jr., Nancy Pelosi (CA), Nick Rahall II (WV), and Thomas Sawyer (OH).

Echoing the remarks of Morella, Sawyer stressed the importance of the long-form data and its continued use in the upcoming census. He likened census and long-form data to historical markers that allow us to "compare who we are to who we've been" to determine "where we are going." This is key belief expressed by the speakers at the COSSA

Congressional Seminar, *Using the Census: What It Tells Us About America's People, Workforce, and Small Communities* held last year. The loss of the richness of the long-form information, noted Sawyer, "cannot be measured." He also called upon his fellow lawmakers to support Morella's resolution and the inclusion of the long-form questionnaire in the 2000 Census.

Like her two colleagues, Maloney stressed the need for long-form data in order for the government and private sectors to make sound decisions. She said that this data is absolutely critical for both government and private planning. Many government agencies, Maloney stated, use census and long-form data to plan, shape, and implement federal programs. Maloney noted that the advancement of our citizens depends largely on census and long-form data.

DIGITAL LIBRARIES RESEARCH SPONSORED BY SIX AGENCIES

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Six agencies of the federal government have announced Phase 2 of the Digital Libraries Initiative. In Phase 2 the plans are to: selectively build on and extend research and testbed activities in promising digital libraries areas; accelerate development, management and accessibility of digital content and collections; create new capabilities and opportunities for digital libraries to serve existing and new user communities; and encourage the study of interactions between humans and digital libraries in various social and organizational contexts.

The purpose of the Initiative is to provide funding to research the development of the next generation of digital libraries, to advance the use and usability of globally distributed, networked information resources, and to encourage existing and new communities to focus on innovative applications areas. Since digital libraries can serve as intellectual infrastructure, this Initiative looks to stimulate partnering arrangements necessary to create next-generation operations systems in such areas as education, engineering and design, earth and space sciences, biosciences, geography, economics, and the arts and humanities. It will address the digital libraries life cycle from information creation, access and use, to archiving and preserving. Obtaining a better understanding of the

long term social, behavioral and economic implications of and effect of new digital libraries capabilities in research, education, commerce, defense, health services, and recreation is another important part of this initiative.

The research domain is focused on three areas: 1) Human-centered studies which seek further understanding of the impacts and potential of digital libraries to enhance human activities in creating, seeking, and using information and to promote technical research designed to achieve this; 2) Content and Collections based research that investigates topics such as: efficient data capture, representation, preservation and archiving; new economic and business models corresponding to new electronic media; and development and access to educational materials and approaches; and 3) Systems centered inquiries examining networking, communications, and systems evaluation and performance studies.

The *National Science Foundation* expects to fund both individual investigator awards of up to \$200,000 per year, for 1 to 3 years, and multidisciplinary group research projects funded at \$1.2 million per year, for 1 to 5 years.

Letters on intent are due to NSF on April 15, 1998. Full proposals are due July 15, 1998. Another competition is scheduled for early 1999. For more information about the NSF sponsored part of the initiative contact William Sims Bainbridge: 703-306-1741 or wbainbri@nsf.gov.

Other agencies involved in the project and their contact people are: *Defense Advanced Projects Agency*: Ronald Larsen, 703-696-2227, rlarsen@darpa.mil; *National Library of Medicine*: Milton Corn, 301-496-4621, corn@nim.nih.gov; *Library of Congress*: Laura Campbell, 202-707-3300, lcamp@loc.gov; *National Aeronautics and Space Administration*: Mark Leon, 415-604-6498, mleon@mail.arc.nasa.gov; *National Endowment for the Humanities*: George Farr, 202-606-8570, gfarr@neh.gov.

CHECK IT OUT: COSSA's ON THE WEB! *DH*

COSSA has joined the information revolution and now has a webpage. The webpage contains a wealth of information, including previous editions of the *COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE*, Annual Reports, Congressional testimony, and links to federal government agencies and our Members, Contributors, and Affiliates. The Webpage address is:

<http://members.aol.com/socscience/COSSAindex.htm>

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT *DH*

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.

SOROS JUSTICE FELLOWSHIP

The Center on Crime, Communities & Culture, a grantmaking and research program of the Open Society Institute — New York, invites U.S. and non-U.S. citizens to submit applications for the newly-established Soros Justice Fellowships.

The Postgraduate Fellowship is awarded to individuals to develop, in collaboration with existing criminal justice organizations in the U.S. or overseas, innovative and effective programs related to criminal justice. Applicants must secure the sponsorship of a nonprofit organization or government agency whose mission, goals or philosophy is related to the field of criminal justice. Eligible applicants will be in their final year of graduate school or will have graduated within the last six years from a graduate program. Fellowships will be awarded for a 12 month term and may be renewed for an additional year. The stipend for the fellowship will be up to \$32,500.

The Senior Fellowship is awarded to experienced, highly-qualified professionals in criminal justice or related fields to work independently on research, writing, program design, community development, or other appropriate projects in the U.S. or overseas. To apply, applicants should submit an application form and a description of the proposed project, book or research. Fellowships will be awarded for a 12 month term and may be renewed for an additional year. Finalists will be asked to provide information on their stipend needs.

Application deadlines for both fellowships is October 2, 1998. For applications and information, contact: The Center on Crime, Communities & Culture, Open Society Institute — New York, 400 West 59th Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10019. Telephone: 212-548-0146; Email: mporter@sorony.org.

NATIONAL INSTITUTES ON DRUG ABUSE**International Research on the Epidemiology of Drug Abuse**

The purpose of this program announcement is to stimulate international research on similarities and variations in drug abuse behaviors, factors influencing the initiation, progression, and cessation of drug abuse, and social and health consequences of drug abuse including HIV transmission. Areas of research interest include but are not limited to the influences of socioeconomic and political various factors on the availability of illicit drugs, on patterns of drug use, and differences by gender. Also of research interest are studies that examine the extent to which cultural factors such as attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, norms, and religion determine or influence drug use patterns, a description of these relationships and an analysis of these relationships by gender. For further information, contact Moira O'Brien, NIDA, Room 9A-53, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857, (301) 443-6637.

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