



# COSSA Washington Update

Consortium of Social  
Science Associations

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## WASHINGTON RETURNS TO WORK IN THE AFTERMATH OF KATRINA

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Four years ago, following the 9/11 tragedy, we wrote in *UPDATE* that “Congress has pledged to cooperate with the President in a bipartisan manner and to move quickly...Democratic and Republican leadership, previously quite chilly in their relationships with each other, are now working together with a sense of purpose.”

As we now confront another terrible human tragedy following Hurricane Katrina’s destruction of the Gulf Coast and the city of New Orleans, we again mourn the loss of life and the shattering and uprooting of people’s existence. We ask anew how the leadership of this country will confront a major catastrophe. Congress has passed more than \$62 billion in supplemental appropriations for disaster relief and more will come. The “blame game” as well as Congressional and independent investigations are afoot. Yet, will this significantly change the way Washington does business? The bipartisan rallying of 9/11 does not appear in evidence thus far.

Congress and the President had expected to return from their vacations to continue moving appropriations bills for the Fiscal Year 2006, which begins on October 1. The Senate was prepared to spend September examining John Roberts’ qualifications to be an Associate Justice on the Supreme Court. However, Katrina will force some re-thinking on the former and Chief Justice Rehnquist’s death will change the focus of the latter. One criticism in the aftermath of Katrina has been the recent explosion in the Congressional practice of earmarking for specific projects; not always for things necessary to protect Americans from natural disasters. Whether Congress will re-examine some of these decisions remains to be seen.

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## HIGHER EDUCATION BILL EMERGES FROM SENATE PANEL

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On September 8, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, chaired by Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), reported out by unanimous vote the “Higher Education Amendments of 2005,” its version of the Higher Education Act reauthorization bill (S. 1614). The House Education and Workforce Committee reported its bill on July 22 on a 27-20 party line vote (see *UPDATE*, August 8, 2005).

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## **KATRINA (Continued from Page 1)**

The Senate returned on September sixth and began to consider the FY 2006, Commerce, Justice, and Science appropriations bill. This legislation includes funding recommendations for agencies such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Census Bureau, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). As reported out of committee, the bill limits NSF's increase to one percent and would create significant difficulties for the Census Bureau's 2010 planning process as well as its implementation of the American Community Survey (see *UPDATE*, June 25, 2005). As the full Senate began discussing the bill, it was clear that most amendments were related to helping the victims of Katrina above all else. In addition, the emergency spending in the supplemental legislation will continue to swell the deficit, making it more difficult to provide funding for other items.

With regard to research, as they did following 9/11, both the NSF and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), have announced that grants for research on the hurricane and the people it affected will be available. NSF will use its Small Grants for Exploratory Research mechanism under the Human and Social Dynamics priority area. For more information, go to: <http://www.nsf.gov/dir/index.jsp?org=sbe>. For information about the NIMH see page 5 in this issue.

## **HIGHER EDUCATION (Continued from Page 1)**

As in the House, most of the Senate bill deals with financial aid to students and institutions of higher education. Of particular interest to social science graduate students is the Jacob Javits Fellowship program. Like the House, the Senate Committee reauthorized the program, which provides support for graduate students in the social sciences, humanities, and arts.

Unlike the House Appropriations Committee, who have thus far recommended zero funding for FY 2006, the Senate panel joined its House counterpart to authorize continued funding for the Thurgood Marshall Legal Educational Opportunity Program, which awards fellowships to prepare students for study at accredited law schools. It will be up to the Senate appropriators and the conference committee to see if this program actually receives funds next year.

## **SOCIAL SCIENCE COMMUNITY STILL RELEVANT IN RISK AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION**

COSSA would like to remind *UPDATE* readers about the importance of risk and crisis communication in light of the recent devastation from Hurricane Katrina. Social and behavioral scientists from across the nation continue to research and publish valuable information about this subject. Last year, COSSA held a heavily-attended Congressional Briefing on Capitol Hill entitled, *Risk and Crisis Communication: Building Trust and Explaining Complexities When Emergencies Arise*. COSSA invited three distinguished social scientists to discuss their research results in this arena.

H. Dan O'Hair of the University of Oklahoma spoke about the future of evaluating crisis communication, as well as the cognitive responses that the public exhibits when faced with an emergency. Havidan Rodriguez of the University of Delaware spoke extensively about the role of science, media, and technology in risk communication and emergency warnings. Finally, Katherine Rowan of George Mason University addressed the issue of public trust when it comes to risk communication.

Edited transcripts of this briefing are still available, but limited. Please contact our office at (202)842-3525 or email [cossa@cossa.org](mailto:cossa@cossa.org) to request copies.

With regard to the Title VI international education and foreign language programs, the Senate renewed most of them without much fuss. New language has been added to emphasize outreach to K-12 education for the National Resources Centers. The Senate panel, unlike the House, reinstated Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowships for undergraduate students. It also provided for undergraduate education opportunities abroad for foreign language and cultural study. The Senate committee also included discretionary funding of up to one percent for evaluation, national outreach, and information dissemination.

For the International Institute for Public Policy, which helps prepare students in Minority Serving Institutions for Foreign Service careers, the Senate

panel improved attempts at institutional capacity building, expanded support to help students in Ph.D. programs, and provided for summer stipends as well as a Ralph Bunche scholarship program for the fellows.

### **No Advisory Board for Title VI, But Oversight Provisions**

Unlike the House, the Senate did not create a national advisory board to oversee the Title VI programs. However, the bill contains a number of provisions to deal with the complaints lodged against these programs regarding “balance.”

The institutional grant recipient will now need to explain how the activities funded by the grant “will reflect diverse perspectives and a wide range of views” and, in some programs, “generate debate on world regions and international affairs.” The institutional applicant must also describe how it will address disputes regarding diversity and balance of activities. Furthermore, the bill includes language that states: “Nothing in this title shall be construed to authorize the Secretary to mandate, direct or control an institution of higher education’s specific instructional content, curriculum, or program of instruction.” Despite this caveat, David Ward, President of the American Council on Education, spoke for a number of higher education associations when he expressed concern about the “diverse and balanced perspectives” requirement in a letter to the Committee.

In addition, before distributing applications, the Secretary of Education must consult with numerous federal agencies regarding their needs for expertise in foreign languages and world regions. The agencies will also need to provide the Secretary with information about how they utilize services provided by Title VI grantees. The Secretary must use this information when requesting funding requests for potential grantees.

The Senate panel also wants Title VI grantees to keep track of their graduates. The awardees will be required to survey students who have participated in the programs to ascertain their post-participation placement. How well the grantees encourage and place the students in public service is also important in the application process.

The legislation also includes a provision for three-year competitive grants to establish or strengthen programs in “traditional American

history,” “the history and nature of, and threats to free institutions,” and “the history and achievements of Western civilization.” Finally, the bill asks for a study of the “cost factors associated with the cost of tuition at institutions of higher education.”

### **SYMPOSIUM DISCUSSES POSSIBLE RETURN OF “IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY”**

On August 31, the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies (CCPS) at American University and the Center for American Progress (CAP) co-sponsored a symposium entitled *Checks and Balances, Perspectives on American Democracy*. Two key issues framed the conference: First, is there a new “imperial presidency” and second, has Congress abdicated its constitutional role as a co-equal branch of government?

Following welcoming remarks from William Leogrande, dean of American University’s School of Public Affairs, and John Podesta, former Chief of Staff to President Clinton and now president of the CAP, James Thurber, director of the CCPS, laid out a case arguing that Congress has not met its responsibilities during the current Administration. He claimed that President Bush and the Republican-controlled Congress appear to act more as if they were a parliamentary party. At the same time, according to Thurber, when Congress “gives away” its power as he argues it has, the President takes it and recreates an “imperial presidency.”

Andrew Rudalevige of Dickinson College and Beth Nolan, former counsel to President Clinton, both made the case that this Administration has restored the “imperial presidency.” President George W. Bush, as President Ronald Reagan did before, has reasserted claims to the inherent powers within the presidency, Rudalevige argued, and Presidential assertiveness combined with congressional acquiescence has given Bush enormous advantages. The resurgence of what many see as excessive secrecy, blank checks, late appropriations, and the use of omnibus spending bills all work to Bush’s advantage, he further explained. This president, Rudalevige contended, does not try persuasion or building coalitions; he simply asserts and works with his party’s leadership to get Congress to fall in line.

C. Boyden Gray presented an interesting dissent to the group. Gray, who served as counsel in George

H.W. Bush's administration and who has recently been a major critic of the "imperial judiciary," claimed that Congress has abdicated power not to the White House, but to independent regulatory agencies such as the Federal Communications Commission, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the Food and Drug Administration. This means, Gray argued, that the President has no direct control over key parts of America's role in the global economy, which is further exacerbated by the fact that monetary policy is made by the independent Federal Reserve Board. "Energy policy is run by the Environmental Protection Agency, not the Department of Energy," Gray asserted. Congress is too fragmented (the overlapping of committee's jurisdictions as an example), to maintain control of important policies, he said.

Two former members of Congress agreed that their institution has been much more submissive during the past few years. Rep. Martin Frost, a Democrat from Texas, who was bounced from his seat by the Texas redistricting process in 2004, and Rep. Mickey Edwards from Oklahoma, who left voluntarily many years ago and has enjoyed a post-Congress career at the Kennedy School of Government as well as the Aspen Institute, both agreed that Congress needs to be more aggressive with its own agenda and develop some "backbone."

Thurber, Nelson Polsby of the University of California, Berkeley, Barbara Sinclair of the University of California, Los Angeles, and Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute traced the changing political environment and the apparent decline in Congressional power throughout recent years. Polsby, reflecting some historical observations in his latest book, *How Congress Evolves*, noted that the introduction of air conditioning was an important factor in the evolution of the composition of Congress, attracting Northerners to the South by making it livable and changing the politics of that region by catalyzing a transformation of the once-solid Democratic South into a now-solid Republican South. Thurber and Sinclair attributed what they termed Congressional "decline" to: the close presidential elections of recent years, unified government, the restructuring and centralized leadership control of the committee system, more restrictive rules, the breakdown of the budget process, the Senate's becoming more like the House, an enormous increase in earmarks, and conference committees that seem to exclude the minority.

Ornstein, reflecting on his 36 years in Washington, appeared frustrated and angry about what

he sees as negative developments on Capitol Hill. The recent partisan rivalry has created disincentives to work across party lines, he stated. He also argued that institutionalized districts, a decline in moderates, and a decline in Members with institutional identity are other phenomena that have created the current situation. Ornstein bemoaned the loss of career staff professionals, some of whom appeared on an earlier panel, namely House Appropriations Staff Director Jim Dyer and Representative David Obey's former key aide, Scott Lilly.

Further exacerbating the problem, Ornstein concluded, is a decline in the deliberative process. He contended that there are "no real debates" anymore, only seriatim speeches that very few may pay attention to. Furthermore, he said, there is less respect for "regular order," including questionable manipulations of the rules (e.g. holding votes open for three hours in order to ensure enough votes for victory on a given bill). Ornstein that the result of all of these perceived changes is simply, "lousy policy."

## DEMOCRACY AT RISK, ACCORDING TO NEW APSA-SPONSORED BOOK

The American Political Science Association (APSA) has dipped its hands into prescribing remedies for the American body politic, one that is not doing very well according to its new book, *Democracy at Risk: How Political Choices Undermine Citizen Participation and What Can Be Done About It*.

The APSA sponsored the volume through its Committee on Civic Education and Engagement. The team of scholars contributing chapters was led by Stephen Macedo, the Laurence S. Rockefeller Professor of Politics and director of the Center for Human Values at Princeton University.

On September 7, the Brookings Institution celebrated the book's publication with a session hosted by syndicated columnist and Brookings Scholar, E.J. Dionne.

Macedo stressed that political institutions and processes have an important impact on the civic participation of American citizens. "Citizen incapacity is the result of poor institutional design," he argued, and went on to say that these institutions have depressed participation. This has consequences, Macedo contended, as "some people exercise power over other people." The former are usually the educated and

wealthy who participate in civic life, and the latter are the poor and uneducated population that generally do not. The resulting public policies, he argued, are then skewed more in favor of the elites.

The evidence is familiar, Macedo pointed out: low turnout for presidential elections; even lower turnout for state and local elections; lack of involvement with public issues; participation in few other political activities, such as writing letters to the editor, participating in rallies and demonstrations, and volunteering in campaigns. “Why has this happened?” he asked. According to the study, a presidential primary process that is too lengthy, non-competitive congressional elections, excessively nasty partisan politics, and at the local level, too many strata of government as well as segregated housing that creates increasing economic and educational disparities are all reasons for the change. In addition, there has been a two-thirds decline in civics course in public schools, he explained.

Solutions were proposed in three areas: reforming the electoral process, changing the American metropolis, and increasing the critical role of nonprofit organizations and voluntary associations.

### **Reforming the Electoral Process**

In the area of reforming the electoral process, William Galston of the University of Maryland presented a laundry list of proposals, many of them familiar. These included: making Election Day a national holiday; permitting Election Day voter registration; sending voters election information and sample ballots before Election Day; redrawing congressional and legislative districts by nonpartisan commissions; compressing the presidential primary season; restoring voting rights to felons upon their release; and allocating electoral college votes by congressional district after giving two votes to the statewide winner. Galston noted that this last recommendation drew the most criticism during a panel on the book at the recent APSA convention.

With regard to the American metropolis, Todd Swanstrom of St. Louis University and Yvette Alex-Assensoh of Indiana University asserted the need to enforce fair housing and anti-discrimination laws, revitalize local politics, and end the isolation of the poor. Rob Reich of Stanford discussed how nonprofit organizations and voluntary associations can play a larger role if they are pushed to understand that they can play a part in advocating for citizen education.

### **Reviving Civic Education**

Most importantly, all the speakers declared that the nation needs to encourage its young people to participate. They should do so not just through volunteering or service learning programs, but through active participation in political life. Civics education needs revision, they argued, and went on to say that there should be a return to teaching students about their civic responsibility, not simply focusing on analysis of what’s wrong with our political institutions. The “first vote” at age 18 should be made “a significant rite of passage,” Galston stated. In addition, the book recommends a link between higher education funding and efforts by universities to register their students as voters as well as a connection between receiving student aid and performing public service.

Macedo and Dionne both noted that in 1950, APSA published a volume calling for a more responsible two-party system. The authors of the earlier report stressed the importance of strong party discipline taking precedence over individual legislator activity. Some would consider current American politics to be a successful application of those earlier recommendations (see previous story). On the other hand, some now complain about what this has wrought – intense partisanship and nastiness.

### **NIMH REISSUES REQUEST FOR ‘RAPID’ GRANT APPLICATIONS**

The National Institutes of Mental Health (NIMH) reissued its program announcement (PAR-02-133), for “Rapid Assessment Post-Impact of Disaster (RAPID)” grants. The announcement will remain active until a revision is issued later in 2005.

The RAPID program announcement is designed to provide an expedited funding mechanism for research on the post-impact of disasters in order to permit access to a disaster area in the immediate aftermath of the event. The applications will be handled on an expedited external peer review and award basis to meet the goals of the program. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Farris Tuma in the Institute’s Division of Adult Translational Research and Treatment Development before submitting an application to determine whether or not the proposed work meets the guidelines of this program, whether requested RAPID funding is likely to be available, and whether the idea should be considered for initial submission as a fully developed application.

Inquires not meeting the RAPID guidelines will be guided toward other grant opportunities and program contacts to discuss alternatives. Again, contact Farris Tuma for more information at (301) 443-3648 or via email at [ftuma@nih.gov](mailto:ftuma@nih.gov), or see: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-02-133.html>

## NSF SEEKS NEW DIVISION DIRECTORS FOR SBE

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has posted two job openings for new leaders of the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate's Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences (BCS) as well as the Division of Social and Economic Sciences (SES). Both Peg Barratt and Richard Lempert have reached the end of their tenures.

The BCS position seeks candidates who are interested in an appointment as a Senior Executive Service on a career or limited term basis, or those who might be interested in an Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) assignment. Initial assignments under the IPA mechanism may be made for a period of up to two years.

The SES position is for a one-to-three year, limited term appointment. Positions are also announced on a career basis and on an Intergovernmental Personnel Act assignment basis.

The closing deadline for receipt of applications is October 14, 2005. For further information go to: <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2005/s20050127/s20050127ipa.pdf>; or <http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2005/s20050128/s20050128ltd.pdf>

## SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the sponsoring agency for further information. Additional application guidelines and restrictions may apply.

### **National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)**

The NIAAA and NIMH request research on the effectiveness of structural interventions that reduce the risk of HIV/AIDS transmission by changing the environment of alcohol use. They are particularly

interested in research that extends such efforts into the realm of HIV/AIDS risk reduction. Applicants are especially encouraged to examine the ramifications of HIV/AIDS risk from "naturally occurring" or already announced changes in alcohol-related laws, regulations, programs, and policies. Since the nature and scope of the proposed research will vary from application to application, the size and duration of each award will also vary. The standard National Institutes of Health (NIH) postmark and submission dates for competing applications apply. See: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/submissionschedule.htm> for more details. This request for application (RFA) expires on October 2, 2008. The complete RFA can be found at <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-05-146.html>

### **National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA)**

The goal of the request for applications is to encourage research on all aspects of inhalant abuse (i.e. epidemiology; prevention; treatment and service delivery; antecedents, consequences, and neurobiological mechanisms). NIDA is interested in grant applications aimed at improving their understanding of inhalant abuse, particularly among pre-adolescent and adolescent populations. The total amount awarded depends on the scientific merit of applications and the funds available in NIDA's general funding pool. There is no limit on the number of awards. This RFA expires on July 2, 2008 and the standard NIH postmark and submission dates for competing applications apply (see source directly above for web address). See <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/pa-files/PA-05-099.html> for the entire RFA.

### **NIDA and NIMH**

NIDA and NIMH have issued a program announcement (PA) intended to support public mental health and/or substance abuse services research in rapidly evolving areas (e.g. changes in service systems, health care financing, policy, etc.) where opportunities for empirical study are only available through expedited award of support. For a study to be eligible for an award: 1) the study's feasibility and scientific value must be clear; 2) rapid review and funding are required for scientific question to be answered and for the research design to be carried out; and 3) the knowledge gained from the study cannot be obtained through the regular NIH cycle of review and reward.

This PA expires on August 10, 2008. Because the nature and scope of the proposed research will vary from

application to application, it is anticipated that the size and duration of the award will vary. NIH standard submission dates apply (see first source for web address) and the entire announcement can be viewed at <http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-05-150.html>.

## AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES 100<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

Meeting in Philadelphia from August 13-16, the American Sociological Association (ASA) celebrated its centennial. ASA President Troy Duster of New York University and a member of the COSSA Board of Directors, opened the meeting with a session that examined the Social Implications of the Tsunami disaster, little knowing that less than a month later, a similar catastrophe would strike the U.S.

During the session, Imam Budi Prasodjo of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Indonesia presented a film showing the devastation in the province of Aceh in the Northwest part of the country. For those who have been watching recent scenes of New Orleans and Mississippi, the pictures were quite familiar. Prasodjo did indicate that with the help of the government, a recent agreement ending many years of guerilla warfare, and many volunteers from non-governmental agencies, Aceh was on the road to recovery.

Two other plenary panels focused on the shifting political terrain in America. Thomas Frank, author of *What's the Matter with Kansas*, law professors Lani Guinier of the University of Pennsylvania and Gerald Torres of the University of Texas, Austin, historian Dan Carter of the University of South Carolina, Patricia Hill Collins of the University of Cincinnati, Arlie Hochschild of the University of California, Berkeley, and political commentator Kevin Phillips all dissected the "rightward turn" in American politics. Credit for the shift was given to: George Wallace's presidential campaign, the paucity of liberal ideas, the organizational strength of the Republicans, the rise of the evangelical churches, moral values overriding economic self-interest, and fear of terrorism.

To celebrate its 100 years, the ASA will publish a centennial history, edited by Craig Calhoun, president of the Social Science Research Council. The book will examine how historical changes have shaped with distinguished scholars looking at the historical moments and processes in which they participated including the 1960s, the feminist revolution, criminal justice, education, and race. The book is forthcoming from the University of Chicago press.

### CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS (COSSA)

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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.

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## PRIVACY TRANSCRIPTS NOW AVAILABLE

Edited transcripts from COSSA's June Congressional Briefing entitled "Protecting Privacy: How Much Are We Willing to Give Up?" are now available. Please contact our office at (202)842-3525 or email [cosa@cosa.org](mailto:cosa@cosa.org) to request copies.

## NEW COSSA MEMBER

COSSA is proud to announce the return of Kansas State University as a member. We look forward to working with them.