
CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

Volume III, Number 15
August 10, 1984

This Week . . .

Congressional Study of Science Policy May Exclude
Social Sciences
Commerce, State, Justice and Related Agencies Appropriation
Reported
COSSA Conducts Congressional Seminar on Career Criminals
New Affiliate, Contributor Join COSSA
GAO Assesses Impact of Budget Cuts on Statistical Agencies
Science Education Bill Sent to President
Senate Subcommittee Probes OJJDP Grants
Sources of Research Support: Department of Defense

* * *

CONGRESSIONAL STUDY OF SCIENCE POLICY MAY EXCLUDE SOCIAL SCIENCES

During the 99th Congress commencing in January 1985 the House Science and Technology Committee will conduct a comprehensive study of U.S. science policy. The study will review in-depth the policies governing the expenditure of \$18 billion by the federal government to support basic and applied scientific research. It is unclear at this time whether the study will include the social and behavioral sciences.

Committee Chairman Don Fuqua (D-FL) appointed an 18-member task force consisting of current members of the Science and Technology Committee to identify those issues, policies and practices which will form the agenda for the study. The Task Force held its first meeting on August 2 and expects to meet again in early September. Although Chairman Fuqua's statement of background and goals for the Task Force includes the social and behavioral sciences as part of the study, committee staff have indicated that there is sentiment on the part of some of members to exclude social and behavioral science research in the interest of narrowing the focus of the study.

COSSA Washington Update is a biweekly publication of the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Suite 520, Washington, D.C. 20036 (202/887-6166). Individual subscriptions are available from COSSA for \$25.00; institutional subscriptions, \$90.00; overseas airmail, \$40.00. COSSA Members, Affiliates, and Contributors are listed on the back.

Dell H. Hymes, *President*

Since four broad categories are expected to be on the agenda of the study -- the institutional framework for the support and conduct of scientific research; the training and education of young scientists; research funding methods; and overall funding levels for science -- the omission of the social and behavioral sciences would make this a less than comprehensive study and neglect an important area of scientific research.

The Science and Technology Committee plans to hold a series of hearings during the 99th Congress in conjunction with the study and issue a report of their findings in the spring of 1986.

COMMERCE, STATE, JUSTICE AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATION REPORTED

A conference committee of the House and Senate has reached agreement on the FY 1985 appropriations bill for the Departments of Commerce, State and Justice and various related agencies. This bill includes the following appropriations of interest to social and behavioral scientists.

Department of Commerce: For salaries and expenses necessary for collecting, compiling, analyzing, preparing and publishing statistics by the Bureau of the Census \$85.5 million will be appropriated, a 10% increase over FY 1984. The committee directed that part of the increase should be used to improve data collection for the Quarterly Financial Report. It did not include the increase sought by the Bureau for increasing its international data base. The account for periodic censuses was increased by 4% over FY 1984 to \$81 million. The Bureau of Economic and Statistical Analysis received \$31.1 million, a decrease of 19% from the FY 1984 level. Research and evaluation in the Economic Development Administration (EDA) will be funded at \$2 million, the same as last year.

Department of Justice: The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) will receive \$19.5 million, a slight 4% increase over FY 1984, but \$300,000 less than the administration's FY 1985 budget request. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) appropriation will be \$17.6 million. Included in this amount are funds for improving the Uniform Crime Survey data. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) will receive \$70.2 million, a slight increase over FY 1984.

United States Information Agency (USIA): The Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs, which include the Fulbright-Hays, International Visitor, Humphrey and Congress-Bundestag programs, are given an increase of 21% over the FY 1984 appropriation to \$121.4 million. The Committee expects the USIA to increase Central American academic and international visitor exchange programs in response to concerns raised by the National Bi-Partisan Commission on Central America (Kissinger Commission).

COSSA CONDUCTS CONGRESSIONAL SEMINAR ON CAREER CRIMINALS

Over 50 congressional staff, federal officials and criminal justice researchers attended an August 1 seminar on "Career Criminals and Criminal Careers." The seminar was sponsored by COSSA as part of its continuing effort to inform policymakers about recent research in the social and behavioral sciences. Alfred Blumstein, a professor in the School of Urban and Public Affairs at Carnegie-Mellon University, spoke to the group about research which could help to identify high-rate offenders who are the career criminals of greatest concern. Professor Blumstein is currently Chairman of the National Academy of Sciences Panel on Research on Criminal Careers and also chairs the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

The seminar was co-sponsored by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Congressional Crime Caucus. Opening remarks were made by NIJ Director James K. Stewart, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Director Steven Schlesinger, and Otto Larsen, Senior Associate for Social and Behavioral Sciences at the National Science Foundation. Hayden Gregory, Chief Counsel of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, addressed the group on behalf of Rep. William Hughes (D-NJ), co-chairman of the Congressional Crime Caucus.

Professor Blumstein discussed general characteristics of criminal populations and stressed the importance of distinguishing between individual criminal career patterns and aggregate statistics on crime when considering the effectiveness of incarceration on different criminals. For example, sentencing policy has been influenced by the phenomenon of crime rates peaking among teenagers and falling off sharply among those in their twenties. The aggregate statistics suggest that a 30-year old will stop committing crimes. However, research on individual criminal career patterns shows that the residual career length increases through the twenties; an individual who is still committing crimes at age 30 is likely to continue to do so, and this should be taken into account at sentencing. "The research is starting to identify which variables are useful as predictors and which are not," said Professor Blumstein. "It's clear that judges, parole officers, probation officers, magistrates setting bail, are all making predictions in the process of making the kinds of decisions they do. The research is now starting to emerge that is going to get them off some of the wrong tacks they've been on, and starting to put them on some of the right tacks."

NEW AFFILIATE, CONTRIBUTOR JOIN COSSA

We are pleased to announce that the National Council for the Social Studies has become a COSSA Affiliate and Carnegie-Mellon University has become a COSSA Contributor. For information on becoming an Affiliate or Contributor contact the COSSA office, 1200 Seventeenth Street, NW, Suite 520, Washington, DC, 20036; 202/887-6166.

8/10/84

GAO ASSESSES IMPACT OF BUDGET CUTS ON STATISTICAL AGENCIES

A recent study by the General Accounting Office (GAO) suggests that recent budget cuts in federal statistical agencies have not jeopardized most major surveys but have changed the nature of many studies and forced cutbacks in research. The study, undertaken in response to the concern of data users over the impact of federal budget cuts, assessed the impact of such cuts from September 1980 through September 1984 on the nine major statistical agencies. The agencies studied include the Bureau of the Census, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Statistical Reporting Service in the Department of Agriculture, the National Center for Health Statistics, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Center for Education Statistics, the Bureau of Economic Analysis in the Department of Commerce, the Statistics and Income Division of the Internal Revenue Service, and the Office of Research and Statistics of the Social Security Administration.

The GAO review focused on the changes made to the statistical programs and activities of these nine agencies, the rationale for such changes, and the effect of the changes. In general the study concludes that statistical agencies protected their core programs and were able to maintain national level data, in many cases because Congress restored their budgets. The attempt to protect core programs, however, resulted in the elimination of many smaller surveys, reduced the frequency and sample size of others, and led to a re-evaluation of how surveys should be financed.

In the nine agencies studied, more than 60 surveys had major components deleted or were eliminated entirely. The largest number of cuts were found in the Bureau of the Census, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and the Statistical Reporting Service (SRS). Among the programs eliminated at the Census Bureau was the congressionally-mandated mid-decade census which would have provided data for determining the allocation of congressional seats, political districts, general revenue sharing, and community development block grants. Although \$450,000 was authorized for planning the mid-decade census in FY 1980, the project was scrapped in 1981 since the cost of the census had, in the administration's view, become prohibitive.

The GAO found 36 surveys which were curtailed by decreasing their frequency or reducing the sample size. These cutbacks coupled with the elimination of many surveys have created data gaps in some areas and reduced the reliability of local level data. Budget reductions also resulted in a cut in statistical research and planned improvements to existing surveys. This is most apparent in the Bureau of Labor Statistics which reduced research contracts for investigating weaknesses in estimating methodology and alternative approaches to improving state and local area labor force and unemployment estimates.

The methods of financing some statistical activities were changed in the early 1980's as a result of budget reductions. The GAO concluded that if statistical data were critically needed, funds were found. In other cases, government users were required to reimburse other government agencies who had formerly processed the data for free. The most disturbing case is that of private sector users of federal data. Many associations, private companies, and state and local governments now pay for data which they previously received free of charge and some finance federal data collection and reports previously scheduled for elimination. One example of this occurred when a group of commercial firms agreed to finance a report by the Census Bureau using 1980 census data. In return for underwriting the project, these firms will be entitled to certain proprietary rights to the data for a specified time period. In cases where the collector and processor of the data do not use the data or consider it a high priority, market demand and the ability to pay may play a significant role in determining the activities and products of statistical agencies.

The GAO concluded that the long-term impact of budget cuts in statistical agencies on users is difficult to measure. Because considerable time elapses between the collection of data and their publication, many government and private-sector users have yet to feel any significant impact. The report raises significant questions, however, on how priorities of federal statistical agencies will be determined in the absence of adequate funding.

Copies of the report, "Status of the Statistical Community After Sustaining Budget Reductions," may be obtained by calling the GAO at 202/275-6241.

SCIENCE EDUCATION BILL SENT TO PRESIDENT

The Education for Economic Security Act (H.R. 1310), better known as the Math-Science Education bill, has passed both the House and Senate and has been sent to the President for his signature. The Act establishes new programs at the National Science Foundation (NSF) for teacher institutes, materials development, teaching awards and congressional merit scholarships. The bill also authorizes the Department of Education (ED) to make financial assistance available to local and state educational agencies and institutions of higher education to improve teaching skills in mathematics, science, computer learning and foreign languages. Although \$680 million has been authorized for FY 1985, at this point it is unclear how much money will actually be appropriated to NSF and ED for these initiatives.

The passage of this legislation is illustrative of the vagaries of the congressional process that often frustrate those seeking to pass new legislation. Although the House passed its version of the Math-Science bill in March 1983, the legislation was stalled in the Senate for over a year because of attempts to

include indirectly related provisions. On June 27, 1984 the Senate passed its version of the legislation, but not before adding a provision that would allow student religious groups "equal access" to public school facilities for extracurricular activities. This "equal access" provision threatened to derail the bill when House Speaker Thomas O'Neill (D-MA) refused to go to conference with the Senate and sent the bill to an inhospitable subcommittee for review. However, a separate bill on "equal access" was subsequently passed by the House. Once this had occurred, the House then voted to accept the Senate version of the Math-Science bill, thus clearing it for presidential signature.

SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE PROBES OJJDP GRANTS

On August 1 the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Justice held oversight hearings that probed the grant and contract practices of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA), Chairman of the Subcommittee, and Senator Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) expressed concern about OJJDP's practice of awarding most of their grants and contracts on a non-competitive basis and without sufficient peer review.

In earlier hearings held by the House Subcommittee on Human Resources (see COSSA Washington Update, April 20, 1984) it was noted that 80% of the awards made by OJJDP during the tenure of present administrator, Alfred Regnery, were made without competition. At the Senate hearing Regnery claimed those numbers were wrong, or at least out-of-date. According to his recent calculations, 70 of 131 awards amounting to 57% of total funds were awarded non-competitively. Chairman Specter suggested that 80% of the awards should be competitive.

The hearings scrutinized two awards made by Regnery. He strongly defended a \$4 million grant to Pepperdine University for a National School Safety Center against attacks that there was little peer review of the project and no serious attempt to solicit alternatives to the Pepperdine proposal. Dr. Judith Reisman defended the \$800,000 she received to direct a study at American University on the impact of pornography on child sexual abuse and juvenile delinquency. The senators were skeptical of her credentials, the cost of the study, and how she obtained her appointment at American University. Senator Specter questioned why there was no competition for this project nor a systematic peer review of Dr. Reisman's proposal.

As reported in the May 18 issue of the Update, these two awards so angered Chairman Ike Andrews (D-NC) of the House Human Resources Subcommittee that the research function of OJJDP was removed when the House passed the agency's reauthorization bill. The Senate reauthorization remains entangled in the administration's attempt to create an Office of Justice Assistance that would include a Bureau of Justice Programs, the National Institute of Justice, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and the OJJDP.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

COSSA provides this information as a service and encourages readers to contact the agency rather than COSSA for more information.

Office of Naval Research
Statistics and Probability Group

The Contract Research and Technology Program of the Office of Naval Research (ONR) funds both basic and applied research in the social and behavioral sciences through various programs within four directorates: mathematical and physical sciences; environmental sciences; engineering sciences; and life sciences. Contracts for research are usually awarded in response to unsolicited proposals. The Statistics and Probability Group, part of the Mathematical Sciences Directorate, emphasizes research in mathematical statistics, computational statistics, statistical signal analysis and quality assurance.

Purpose of Program: To develop new and improved statistical and probabilistic models, algorithms and methodologies that may be applied to the solution of important Navy problems.

FY 1984 Funds Available: Approximately \$2.95 million

Funding Mechanisms: Mostly contracts, some grants

Review Process: Internal review

Disciplines Supported: Mathematical statistics and probability, statistical signal analysis and quality assurance and logistics

Restrictions on Awards: Contracts normally are not written for more than three years and they are usually funded annually.

Success Ratio: Approximately 30%

Deadlines: Research proposals may be submitted at any time. To be considered for FY 1985 funding, proposals should be submitted by September 30, 1984.

Contact: Dr. Douglas J. DePriest
Mathematical Sciences Division
Office of Naval Research
800 North Quincy Street
Arlington, VA 22217
202/696-4961

CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

MEMBERS

American Anthropological Association
American Economic Association
American Historical Association
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Association of American Geographers
Association of American Law Schools
Linguistic Society of America

AFFILIATES

American Association for Public Opinion
Research
American Educational Research
Association
American Society of Criminology
Association for Asian Studies
Eastern Sociological Society
Economic History Association
Evaluation Network
Evaluation Research Society
History of Science Society
International Communication
Association
International Studies Association
Law and Society Association

National Council on Family Relations
North Central Sociological Association
Northeastern Anthropological Association
Population Association of America
Regional Science Association
Rural Sociological Society
Social Science History Association
Society for American Archaeology
Society for the History of Technology
Society for Research in Child
Development
Society for the Scientific Study
of Religion
Society for Social Studies of Science
Southwestern Social Science Association

CONTRIBUTORS

University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Los Angeles
Center for Advanced Study in the
Behavioral Sciences
Center for International Studies,
Duke University
University of Colorado
Columbia University
Cornell Institute for Social and
Economic Research

Cornell University
Florida State University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Harvard University
University of Illinois
Indiana University
Institute for Social Research,
University of Michigan
University of Iowa
The Johns Hopkins University
University of Michigan
University of Missouri
University of Nebraska
New York University
Ohio State University
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
Princeton University
Social Science Research Council
University of Southern California
Stanford University
State University of New York at
Stony Brook
Texas A & M University
Tulane University
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

1200 SEVENTEENTH STREET, N.W., SUITE 520, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036
