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NSF APPROPRIATIONS PASS SENATE: CONFERENCE PROBLEMS LOOM

On October 15 the Senate passed the HUD-Independent Agencies Appropriations bill (which includes funding for the National Science Foundation [NSF] in FY 1988) by a vote of 86-12. No amendments were adopted affecting NSF, so the dollar figures from the Senate Appropriations Committee markup stood. The table below indicates the NSF funding situation so far (some totals may not add up due to rounding).

	FY1987	FY 1988 BUDGET REQUEST	HOUSE	SENATE
RESEARCH	\$1406M	\$1635M	\$1505M	\$1635M
SCIENCE EDUCATION	99M	115M	145M	115M
ANTARCTIC PROGRAM	117M	143M	143M	117M
TOTAL, NSF	\$1623M	\$1893M	\$1793M	\$1867M

The House-Senate conference committee to resolve the differences between the two versions of the HUD-Independent Agencies appropriations bill will probably convene the week of October 26. According to congressional staffers there are three major problems facing the conference: veterans' medical care, the space station, and NSF. The chairman of the House HUD-Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, Rep. Edward

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The Consortium represents more than 185,000 American scientists across the full range of the social and behavioral sciences, functioning as a bridge between the research world and the Washington community.

Victor G. Rosenblum, *President*

David Jenness, *Executive Director*

Boland (D-MA), and his fellow House conferees will insist on more funds for veterans' medical care and NASA's space station. The place to find some of the funds for these programs, the House conferees believe, is in the Senate's inflated increase for NSF research. On the other hand, the House will insist on its 46% increase for Science and Engineering Education.

Senator William Proxmire (D-WI), Boland's counterpart in the Senate, has demonstrated throughout this appropriations season a willingness to oppose large budget increases--and, as some have pointed out, the increase for NSF is relatively large. How committed the Senate remains to its NSF numbers may well depend on the persuasive powers of the other conferees from the Senate --Sens. Garn(R-UT), Stennis (D-MS), D'Amato (R-NY), Leahy (D-VT), Domenici (R-NM), Johnston (D-LA), Grassley (R-IA), Lautenberg (D-NJ), Nickles (R-OK), Mikulski (D-MD), Hatfield (R-OR), and Inouye (D-HI). Getting as large a number for NSF out of the appropriations conference is important given the uncertainty of the denouement of this year's appropriations process (see related story, this issue).

Note: During Senate debate on the HUD-Independent Agencies Appropriations bill, Sen. Paul Sarbanes (D-MD) successfully added \$200,000 to the \$17 million funding for the Office of Policy Development and Research at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The extra funds will allow the planning and testing of two housing surveys in connection with the 1990 decennial census: the survey of residential finance and the components of inventory change in housing. Sarbanes, who took a lead role in questioning OMB's revisions of the 1990 census questionnaire (see Update, September 25, 1987), noted in defense of his amendment that "the fundamental importance of the statistical infrastructure is often overlooked" and that "there has been widespread and growing concern in recent years over the quality of Federal statistics programs." These funds are not in the House version of the bill. Another issue for the conference.

CRASHING INTO REALITY: BUDGET GAMES TURN SERIOUS

On October 19, the Dow Jones Industrial Average on the New York Stock Exchange dropped over 500 points. On October 20 President Reagan issued the initial sequestration order required under Gramm-Rudman-Hollings (GRH). Later in the day, over the whir of helicopter engines, he also announced that he was ordering his aides to begin negotiations with Congress to reach a compromise on reducing the deficit, including a willingness to consider tax increases. Thus, the barrier between the White House and Congress that has obstructed the budget process for over nine months came crashing down--maybe!

Until the events on Wall Street brought some urgency to the situation, both the President and Congress were heading towards a confrontation. The battle lines were drawn between a President in the twilight of his final term, perceived as weakened by the

Iran-Contra scandal and a looming defeat on a Supreme Court nominee, facing a Congress whose leadership was in the hands of the opposition party and whose members were reasserting the legislative prerogative on policy making. Congress, for its part, passed appropriation bills (albeit many of them after the beginning of the 1988 fiscal year, thus necessitating the resort to a continuing resolution yet again), but withheld them from the White House for fear of presidential vetoes. In addition, congressional committees devised packages of revenue enhancers despite clear threats from the administration to veto any tax increases.

Further complicating matters was a revised GRH formula with a sequestration procedure requiring \$23 billion in budget reductions. The calendar of GRH required estimates of the FY 1988 budget deficit by mid-October and the presidential order on sequestration on October 20. Congress and the President then had until November 20 to devise their own budget deficit reduction plans or else the automatic cuts would go into effect. The Office of Management and Budget declared that reductions of 10.5% were necessary in the defense budget and 8.5% in those domestic programs covered by sequestration in order to meet the \$23 billion requirement. (Entitlements and a number of domestic programs for the poor are not covered by sequestration.) If sequestration became reality, and until October 20 it looked very good, NSF would have lost \$124.8 million from the Research budget and \$8.8 million from the Science and Engineering Education budget. The Bureau of Labor Statistics faced reductions of \$15.7 million, the National Endowment for the Humanities \$12.7 million, and the National Institute on Aging \$15.8 million. President Reagan's pronouncement on his administration's willingness to negotiate with Congress suggests a combination of revenue raisers and spending reductions may be the endpoint of all this. Stay tuned.

'NEW' PLAN OFFERED FOR RESTRUCTURING JUSTICE AGENCIES

The U.S. Justice Department has offered a "tentative" idea for an administrative restructuring of the agencies now operating under the Justice Assistance Act. The plan was outlined by Deputy Associate Attorney General William J. Landers during testimony on the reauthorization of the Office of Justice Programs before the House Subcommittee on Crime on September 30. It calls for a more "unified" system under which all research, grant-making, and personnel authority would be assigned to an Assistant Attorney General. This action would remove the structural independence of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS).

The plan has a familiar ring to it: Landers conceded that the idea is similar to an administration-backed proposal rejected by Congress in 1983 and 1984 that would have made the Directors of NIJ and BJS appointees of the Attorney General. That plan would have moved grant- and contract-making authority from NIJ

and BJS to the Assistant Attorney General of the Office of Justice Assistance. At the time, COSSA lobbied strongly for the preservation of the independence and integrity of the two agencies.

Landers cited several reasons for adopting the Justice Department's restructuring plan, including a need for more coordination among the agencies authorized under the Justice Assistance Act and a desire to prevent any "duplication of effort" which he believes may occur under the current administrative structure. He added that the success of the agencies' work is due to the individuals now in charge rather than to the structure itself.

However, Subcommittee Chairman William Hughes (D-NJ), who sponsored a 1983 House-passed bill preserving the independence of NIJ and BJS, noted the similarity between Landers' proposal and the plan considered and rejected by the Subcommittee four years ago. "We have spent a lot of time" devising the structure now in place, he said, adding that he believes it was the intent of Congress to give NIJ and BJS general authority independent of the Office of the Attorney General.

The Directors of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, NIJ, and BJS declined public comment on the matter at the time of the Subcommittee hearing, though each noted a healthy level of interaction among the agencies under the current structure. During the September 30th Subcommittee hearing and another held September 23rd, most of the criminal justice experts who testified urged reauthorization of the agencies with the current administrative structure intact. Many made direct reference to the relative independence of the agency Directors and urged that Congress preserve this independence.

COSSA SEMINAR TAKES CLOSER LOOK AT U.S. PRODUCTIVITY

The United States' "productivity problem" was the focus of the latest in a series of COSSA-sponsored Congressional breakfast seminars intended to heighten federal policymakers' awareness of current social science research. Entitled "Perspectives on Productivity: Some Under-Examined Aspects," the seminar offered a review of the reputed contemporary lag in U.S. productivity from historical and comparative perspectives, the causes of this lag and some possible solutions, and an assessment of the trend toward collaboration among some U.S. manufacturing firms and foreign enterprises.

The Institute of Management Sciences (TIMS), a COSSA affiliate, co-sponsored the seminar, held October 22 on Capitol Hill. Congressional auspices were provided by Reps. Claudine Schneider (R-RI), Co-Chair of the Congressional Competitiveness Caucus, and James Moody (D-WI). The three invited speakers were William J. Baumol, professor of economics at Princeton and New York universities; Martin Neil Baily, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution; and David C. Mowery, associate professor

of economics and social sciences, Carnegie Mellon University, who is currently on leave as study director of the National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council Panel on Technology and Employment. COSSA executive director David Jenness and TIMS president Alfred Blumstein served as moderators at the seminar, which attracted Members and staff from Congress, representatives from various federal agencies, and journalists.

Professor Baumol argued that, rather than entering an extreme and disastrous economic decline set off by an unprecedented downward trend in productivity, the United States is actually experiencing a more moderate--even predictable--change in its standing among other industrial countries.

By examining the growth rate of per-capita gross domestic productivity (GDP) in several industrial countries over the span of more than a century, Baumol outlined a gradual convergence in productivity levels and living standards across these countries. In this examination he showed how the rate of productivity growth can slow as industrial economies mature, in effect creating this convergence. Data demonstrate that the smaller an industrialized country's per capita GDP in 1870, the farther its productivity rate has climbed in the years since. This phenomenon, Baumol suggested, can be seen as a process by which "laggards" close the gap in productivity levels, in part because they have been able to absorb many of the benefits (in terms of ideas and innovations) first realized by the economic "leaders."

However, Baumol acknowledged that the slow rate of recent productivity growth in the U.S. is still cause for concern, and suggested that a key to its improvement may lie in fostering entrepreneurial activities by making the U.S. economy attractive to entrepreneurs. Introducing a theme running throughout the seminar, Baumol noted that the United States must work to boost the quality of its education. "The real threat that faces us is the educational performance of the minority groups," he said, pointing out that they represent the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population.

Differing slightly in emphasis from Baumol was Martin Baily, who views the United States' lag in productivity growth since the early 1970s as a serious problem. This slowdown is especially true, he said, when one looks beyond the manufacturing industries. He added that despite a relatively strong showing in manufacturing in recent years, much of this growth can be traced to a single industry: computers. Moreover, the purchase of computers has apparently not helped the service industries improve their market situation or their own productivity.

Dr. Baily, who concurred with Baumol on what he termed the "catching-up phenomenon" of convergence of productivity growth-rate levels among industrial nations, offered several causes for the relatively recent lag in the U.S. growth-rate level. He suggested that one stumbling block has been labor, especially in terms of deteriorating worker skills. In addition, part of the problem may involve capital formation. Capital, Baily said, may

not have been invested wisely in recent years, and this is something U.S. management should take into consideration.

Baily also noted that although the majority of post-World War II innovations have been made on U.S. soil, the United States appears to have problems in building on them. Americans are successful innovators; "What we're not so good at," he said, "is getting the money out of this stuff." Again, Baily suggested that the role of management is crucial, and recommended that U.S. managers put more effort into reaping the benefits of innovation. Baily did not rule out that at least some of the lag may be a statistical aberration created by measurement problems, since output measurement includes many products and services whose characteristics may change over time. He added that current techniques used to measure productivity growth are geared more toward goods than services, and this may exacerbate the problem.

Professor Mowery introduced the subject of collaborative ventures between U.S. firms and foreign enterprises, a phenomenon which, though not new in itself, has nevertheless grown and taken on new forms. Many such ventures, for instance, have come to span or incorporate new activities, such as research, product development, and marketing. Another relatively new aspect of these ventures has been the aim to manufacture for a global market, rather than a domestic one.

Mowery does not doubt that U.S. dominance in technology is eroding. This erosion has worked to change the face of U.S.-foreign collaborative ventures as firms in the U.S. tap into foreign technology that is now equal to or more advanced than their own. In essence, says Mowery, technology transfer in U.S.-foreign collaborative efforts has become a two-way street.

What all this means in terms of America's future competitiveness and productivity relative to other nations is yet to be seen, though initial evidence suggests a modest impact, according to Mowery. He observed that for those U.S. industries (including auto, steel, and biotechnology) most heavily involved in collaborative ventures with foreign enterprises, participation has been a result of the lag in U.S. productivity, rather than a cause. He also observed that such ventures are likely to remain a significant aspect of the world economy, and noted--using Great Britain as an example--that government attempts to control technology transfer do not seem to work.

Introducing general discussion, Alfred Blumstein underlined the important role management must play in any attempt to address the slowdown in U.S. productivity, a point made by all three speakers. He added that it is important to recognize that research in the management sciences must be ongoing, as codified management experience does not always apply to new technological situations. Likewise, work experience does not hold the same value in the labor force as it has in past years; with a constantly evolving job market, continuing education and training take on added value.

SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

COSSA provides this information as a service, and encourages readers to contact the agency rather than COSSA for further information and application materials. A comprehensive listing of federal funding sources is contained in COSSA's Guide to Federal Funding for Social Scientists.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

The Demographic and Behavioral Sciences Branch (DBSB) of the Center for Population Research at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development is currently requesting applications for research projects on the relationship between sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), and fertility related behavior. The context for this Request for Applications (RFA 87-HD-10) is the fact that there is no known cure for AIDS, lending urgency to the need for the research community to focus on understanding behavior influencing the transmission of AIDS and other STDs.

The proposed research should address the need to understand fertility related behavior and its relationship to STDs. There are indications that fear of STDs, especially genital herpes simplex and AIDS, is influencing sexual, childbearing, and contraceptive behavior. Fertility decisions of persons with STDs should be addressed; other variables affecting fertility-related behavior, including such factors as age, sexual preference, occupation, and education, should be taken into consideration as much as possible.

Eligibility: Applications will be judged on the basis of scientific merit. An important additional criterion will be the responsiveness of the proposed research to this RFA.

Restriction: This RFA is designed to fund research aimed at understanding behavior, not generating population estimates of the prevalence of various types of behavior.

Review Process: Peer Review.

Mechanism of Support: Approximately eight grants will be made, contingent upon the availability of funds.

Deadline: December 11, 1987, for completed applications.

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