

CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

# COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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## BUDGET RESOLUTION CLEARED; SUBCOMMITTEE ALLOCATIONS NEXT

Working quickly following the bipartisan budget agreement ironed out by Congress and the Bush administration, the House (on May 17) and the Senate (on May 18) adopted the FY 1990 budget resolution. The resolution, which does not require the President's signature, sets the parameters for the various function categories for government spending in the next fiscal year. Unfortunately, the function categories are not congruent with the appropriations subcommittees' jurisdictions, and therefore necessitate a 302(b) allocation process and a crosswalking of budget functions into subcommittee agency responsibilities. (The 302[b] allocation process divides the budget among the 13 appropriations subcommittees.)

For general science, space, and technology (function 250), the budget resolution recommends \$14.4 billion in new budget authority (authorized spending that can cover more than one year) and \$14.1 billion in outlays (spending in FY 1990). This recommendation is about \$1.1 billion below the administration's request for this function, which includes the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and energy research. The report which accompanied the House version of the budget resolution assumed a

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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.

Raymond E. Wolfinger, President

Howard J. Silver, Executive Director

\$200 million increase for NSF's research and education programs over FY 1989. NSF had requested a \$333 million increase for these programs.

For NSF, the 302(b) allocation process will be crucial. The chairs of the House and Senate appropriations subcommittees with jurisdiction over NSF (Rep. Robert Traxler [D-MI] and Sen. Barbara Mikulski [D-MD]) have argued that they need about \$7 billion more than last year's allocation to accommodate the increases proposed for the agencies they fund. In addition to NSF, these agencies include the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Veterans Affairs, NASA, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other, smaller independent agencies.

Like Traxler and Mikulski, the chairs of the other appropriations subcommittees will be making arguments on behalf of the agencies under their jurisdiction. Although, technically, the 302(b) process should follow the budget resolution, it is oftentimes the forcefulness and political acumen of the subcommittee chairs and their relationships with the full committee chairmen, Sen. Robert Byrd (D-WV) and Rep. Jamie Whitten (D-MS), that are the keys to sought-after allocations.

Once the allocations are made among the subcommittees -- a process expected to occur over the next week or so -- the decision-making focus will shift to the competing needs of agencies under the jurisdiction of each subcommittee. For Traxler's and Mikulski's subcommittees, those decisions may come quickly, perhaps within the first two weeks of June on the House side and a week or so later on the Senate side.

All of these decisions will be taken in the context of the bipartisan budget agreement, which allows for \$3.6 billion in additional funding above inflation (assumed at 3.5% in the budget resolution) for domestic discretionary spending. The budget resolution and the bipartisan agreement also assume that \$5.3 billion will be raised from changes in tax laws and \$0.5 billion from an IRS tax compliance initiative.<<

#### SCIENCE EDUCATION HEARINGS HIGHLIGHT WATKINS; CAVAZOS ABSENT

The House Science, Space and Technology Committee, chaired by Rep. Robert Roe (D-NJ), addressed the issue of science education on May 24 with the help of high-level officials from a number of federal agencies. Conspicuously absent from the hearings was Secretary Lauro Cavazos -- or any other representative -- from the Department of Education. This absence produced a stream of angry remarks from Committee members on both sides of the aisle and spurred Chairman Roe to suggest that Cavazos felt the hearings were not "important enough" to warrant his presence.

On the brighter side, members appeared unanimous in their approval of and respect for James Watkins, newly installed

Secretary of the Department of Energy (DOE) and star witness at the hearings. Watkins, who noted in his testimony that "America's leadership in world technology is eroding," said he is positioning DOE to do all it can in strengthening this country's commitment to science and mathematics education.

In addition to DOE, other agencies represented at the hearings included the National Science Foundation, the Department of Agriculture, the National Institutes of Health, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Department of Defense.<<

#### 'PROJECT 2061' AND THE SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES DISCUSSED

As the previous story illustrates, science education seems to be on many Washington agendas these days, and COSSA'S agenda is no exception. At its May 24 meeting, the COSSA Executive Committee met with F. James Rutherford, project director for Project 2061 -- a long-term effort by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to radically alter and improve pre-college education in science, mathematics, and technology.

The bottom-line goal of Project 2061 -- whose title is derived from the year Halley's Comet returns -- is science literacy for all Americans. According to Rutherford, past efforts to address science literacy have been too short-ranged and narrowly construed, aimed at ameliorating symptoms rather than causes. Further, these efforts have lacked goals, comprehensive strategies, or national leadership, he said. Project 2061, in contrast, bypasses minor modification, aiming instead for system overhaul.

In its first three years, the project concentrated on preparing a report, Science for All Americans. This report offers a "conceptual base" for what constitutes science literacy, outlining cumulative knowledge and skills that all students should acquire from the entire K-12 experience. The report draws its recommendations from papers written by five scientific panels, including the Social and Behavioral Sciences Panel, chaired by a psychologist, Mortimer Appley, President Emeritus of Clark University.

The report and the accompanying disciplinary papers make several key assumptions. First, instead of concentrating on the needs of would-be scientists, the learning needs of all students should be considered. Second, only essential information and skills should be identified so that schools can focus on teaching less material more effectively. AAAS further assumed a "clean slate," giving no consideration to current constraints on curricula, books, teacher qualifications, or exams. Finally, this beginning phase was not viewed as an effort to devise a curriculum, but rather "to identify and recommend content."

The eight-member Social and Behavioral Sciences Panel was charged with covering fields such as developmental and social psychology, sociology, economics, statistics, mathematics, political science, public opinion polling, cultural anthropology, archeology, linguistics, speech and language, psychiatry, psychoneurology, cognitive science, history of science, ethics, and science journalism.

The panel started with the premise that unlike other sciences, the social and behavioral sciences have been poorly represented in pre-college education and that the separation of "social studies" in most curricula suggests that schools have not been addressing these topics from a scientific perspective. As a result, in addition to specific content, the panel also included information on how the scientific method is applied generally in these disciplines.

Responding to concerns that the social science panel was not representative, Rutherford defended AAAS' approach, explaining that the five disciplinary panels were not necessarily selected to be representative of their respective fields. Rather, the panels were convened primarily to facilitate interaction. Panel members tended to be drawn from one geographic region so that frequent meetings were possible.

The next phase of the project will link six school-based teams of educators with academic scientists over the course of four years. Their task is to "transform" the conceptual base set out in the report and papers into "alternative curriculum models" and other statements that will provide descriptions and intellectual tools for future development of actual materials.

To kick-off this phase, AAAS will be bringing participants together on July 1 for four weeks in Boulder, Colorado. Emphasis will be placed on developing "team" skills. The group process will be modeled on what is known about how people learn best, in an effort to expose educators to these concepts.

Rutherford views this phase, slated to last four years, as the "85% solution." Actual implementation of a curriculum likely will take decades and an additional 15% worth of effort from the local school system.

The Executive Committee and Rutherford discussed concrete ways in which COSSA could be helpful, particularly in light of recent involvement of many of COSSA's Member associations in related projects.<<

#### SUBCOMMITTEE FOCUSES ON QUALITY OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

In a hearing held May 15, the Senate Subcommittee on Government Information and Regulation explored whether the government's information system is well-managed and whether it

asks the right questions about public policy issues. Several concerns were raised in the course of the hearing, as well as several possible solutions to existing problems.

Subcommittee Chairman Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) contended that the United States has been cutting back on its federal statistical system "in the name of 'burden' to government without considering the 'benefit' of information in policy-making to the public." And Michael Boskin, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, told the Subcommittee that as an economic researcher he is deeply concerned about the quality of the government's economic statistics.

In his testimony, Boskin described the newly formed White House Economic Policy Council's Working Group on economic statistics, which he chairs. Now attempting to determine priority areas for improvement, the group's work has been spurred on by two recent reports: The State of Economic Statistics: Current and Prospective Quality, Policy Needs, and Resources, prepared by the American Economic Association; and the Report of the Statistics Committee of the NABE, prepared by the National Association of Business Economists.

Unfortunately, given budget constraints, the working group's focus will be on intermediate-run improvements that can be accomplished inexpensively. Specific areas to be examined include: trade data, measurements of productivity, data on foreign investment in the United States, and plant utilization statistics. The working group will issue a preliminary report, which will not be made public, by the end of July. The Council will then determine the necessary next steps.

Vincent Barabba, president-elect of the American Statistical Association and executive director of market research and planning at General Motors, argued before the Subcommittee for the appointment of a chief information officer in the Executive Office of the President. This person would have the authority and responsibility to bring together the providers and users of government statistical information. Barabba, a former director of the Census Bureau, suggested that this position is necessary to provide greater coordination of information collection, as "we live in an era in which the allowable margin for error in both public and private decision-making is narrower than ever before."

These hearings are setting the stage for the reauthorization of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1980, which extended the authority of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) over information collection and dissemination by the federal government. The role of OMB and its Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in determining information policy for the federal agencies is also the subject of a forthcoming General Accounting Office report.<<

**NIH PLANS AGENDA FOR AIDS PREVENTION, SEXUAL BEHAVIOR CHANGE**

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), through its Office of Disease Prevention in the Office of the Director, recently sponsored a two-day workshop on AIDS prevention and sexual behavior change. The May 18-19 meeting brought together key researchers, strongly representative of the social and behavioral sciences, to assess current knowledge, methodological problems, and future research needs. COSSA Board Member June Osborn, dean of the University of Michigan's School of Public Health, chaired the meeting.

Workshop participants stressed that the dearth of information on sexual behavior within the general population is a major obstacle to moving forward on AIDS prevention efforts. Participants focused particular attention on studying sexual behavior in its "social context," giving consideration to such issues as culture, ethnicity, and gender. They also considered the relationship between sexual behavior and drug use.

Recommendations from the workshop will serve as the basis for establishing a research agenda for sexual behavior studies.<<

**COSSA TESTIFIES IN SUPPORT OF INCREASED NSF FUNDING**

At a recent Senate appropriations subcommittee hearing, COSSA Executive Director Howard Silver joined other public witnesses in supporting increased funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF) for FY 1990 and a continued commitment to double the agency's budget by FY 1993.

Speaking on May 12 before the Senate Veterans Affairs-Housing and Urban Development-Independent Agencies Subcommittee, chaired by Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), most speakers focused on the need to increase spending for science and engineering education. This was an issue very much on the mind of Sen. Robert Kerrey (D-NE), who chaired the hearing in Mikulski's absence. COSSA joined the American Psychological Association and the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological and Cognitive Sciences in recommending increased funding for social and behavioral science research at NSF. The trio also urged the Subcommittee to support increases for science education.

Reiterating the message he gave to the corresponding House appropriations subcommittee (see Update May 12, 1989), Silver stressed the importance of social and behavioral science to the scientific enterprise, the policy-making process, and the economic and national security of the nation. He also argued for augmented funding for research in the core disciplines of social and behavioral science, citing testimony provided to the House Science, Research and Technology Subcommittee earlier this year by Herbert Simon, Charles Schultze, and William Gorham (see Update March 17, 1989).<<

**SOURCES OF RESEARCH SUPPORT: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

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.

**National Institutes of Health**

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Institute of Mental Health, and the National Institute on Drug Abuse are soliciting applications for developmental research on knowledge, attitudes, and feelings of 6- to 12-year-old children regarding HIV infection and transmission, AIDS as an illness and its health consequences, human sexuality, and drug abuse. The results of this research are intended to direct AIDS-related educational programs.

The institutes seek an examination of relationships among cognitive development, physiological development, and AIDS-relevant knowledge. Further, research is needed to explore how developmental/maturational variables interact with knowledge about sexuality and substance abuse. Proposed research designs may employ both cross-sectional and longitudinal methods. Applicants are invited to develop new methods and tasks, and are encouraged to address a subset of research problems relevant to the request.

**Application Procedure:** Further information should be requested in writing from one of the contacts listed below. Inquiries should include a self-addressed mailing label.

**Budget:** It is anticipated that up to nine applications will be funded; funding levels have not yet been set.

**Review Process:** Peer review.

**Deadline:** July 31, 1989

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The Institute of Management Sciences

## CONTRIBUTORS

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University of California, San Diego  
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