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CJS Spending Bill Emerges from Appropriations Panel; Timing of House Floor Action Uncertain

On July 13, the full House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Rep. Harold Rogers (R-KY), gave its approval to the FY 2012 Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) spending bill that had emerged from the CJS Subcommittee on July 7 (see Update, [July 11, 2011](#)).

Despite concern about a possible amendment to defund the Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) directorate at the National Science Foundation (NSF), none materialized at the full committee mark up. An attempt by Rep. Jeff Flake (R-AZ) to reduce FY 2012 funding for NSF by \$43 million was on the roster of amendments handed to observers before the markup began, but the Congressman never offered it.

The NSF as well as almost all the other agencies in the bill lost 0.1 percent in funds through an amendment by Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA) to increase funding for NOAA's Operations and Research account by \$48 million. For NSF the reduction came to almost \$6.9 million from its recommended FY 2012 funding of close to \$6.9 billion.

In the Committee report accompanying the bill, the panel directs NSF to prioritize its new activities "towards cybersecurity and cyberinfrastructure improvements; advanced manufacturing; materials research; and disciplinary and interdisciplinary research in the natural and physical sciences, math and engineering."

The Census Bureau, which had been significantly reduced by the Subcommittee to \$855.3 million, lost another \$850,000. Census director Robert Groves, in his blog, laid out the possible consequences to the Bureau if this number is not increased. He noted that: "Our ability to provide high quality and comprehensive statistical data will be severely diminished if we sustain such a large budget cut and we will be forced to cancel major programs that provide critical benchmark measures."

Despite the reductions to the Census budget the Committee report encourages the Bureau "to ensure that reliable information about small population groups is collected and published and directs the Bureau to report back to the Committee within 90 days of enactment of this Act describing the steps it will take to ensure the availability and accuracy of these data." It also asks the Bureau "to share its best practices and methods for outreach to hard-to-count communities with other Federal agencies and State and local governments that may benefit from this expertise."

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) also lost 0.1 percent of their recommended budgets. The Economics and Statistics Administration, of which BEA is a part, had come out of the Subcommittee level funded at the FY 2011 number of \$97.1 million. NIJ and BJS both were reduced significantly from their FY 2011 levels.

With regard to the NIJ, the Committee report praises the agency for its commitment to utilize a portion of its resources "to address the issue of domestic radicalization, a national security challenge that must be confronted."

During the course of the full committee markup a number of amendments to restore funding to the COPS program, the Webb Telescope, and the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program were all defeated, saving other programs in the bill from further across-the-board cuts. However,

Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA) told his colleagues that he would work as the bill made its way through the appropriations process to secure funding for these programs.

The current plan is to possibly move the CJS bill to the House floor during the week of August 1. However, consideration of any legislation attached to raising the debt ceiling could push such floor consideration until after the August recess and Congress' return after Labor Day.

There is still a significant concern that an amendment might be offered on the House floor to defund SBE. COSSA continues to work with its members and its allies in the science and higher education to prevent this from occurring.

Public Comment Sought on Proposed Changes to Common Rule Governing Research with Human Subjects

The Department of Health and Human Services has begun the process of revising the Common Rule (45 CFR 46) that governs the protection of human subjects in research. Through its Office of Human Research Protection (OHRP), on July 22, the Department issued an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule Making (ANPRM) and seeks public comment. It is requesting these comments, including answers to 70 questions regarding the proposal, by September 22, 2011.

Assistant Secretary of Health Howard Koh noted that it was time to consider revising the Common Rule because the human subject research landscape has changed dramatically since the early 1980s when the current regulations were first formulated.

Among the changes he cited was "the increase in social sciences research." According to the document, "research has also increased, evolved, and diversified in other areas, such as national security, crime and crime prevention, economics, education, and the environment, using a wide array of methodologies in the social sciences and multidisciplinary studies. The application of technologies such as functional magnetic resonance imaging in neuroscience has led to substantial advances in the understanding of human physiology, cognition, and behavior. The advent of sophisticated computer software programs, the internet, and mobile technology have created new areas of research activity, particularly within the social and behavioral sciences, exponentially increasing the amount of information available to researchers, while providing the means to access and analyze that information. In many areas of society, researchers are being called upon to provide evidence to more effectively guide social policy and practices."

These changes, Koh suggested, have "highlighted various issues regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the current regulatory framework." To improve efficiency and enhance protection, OHRP is proposing to reexamine the rules to:

1. Revise the existing risk-based framework to more accurately calibrate the level of review to the level of risk; a complaint social and behavioral scientists have made for years;
2. Use a single Institutional Review Board for reviewing all domestic sites of multi-site studies;
3. Update the forms and processes used for informed consent;
4. Establish mandatory data security and information protection standards for all studies involving identifiable or potentially identifiable data;

5. Implement a systematic approach to the collection and analysis of data on unanticipated problems and adverse events across all trials;
6. Extend federal regulatory protection to apply to all research conducted at U.S. institutions receiving funds from Common Rule agencies; and
7. Provide uniform guidance on federal regulation.

With regard to number one above, the OHRP is considering changing the "Exempt" category to a new "Excused" category. The current category two exemption would now include all studies involving educational tests, surveys, interviews, and similar procedures so long as the subjects are competent adults, without any further qualifications. The new rules would expand the current category four exemption (regarding the collection or study of existing data, documents, records and biospecimens) to include all secondary research use of identifiable data and biospecimens that have been collected for purposes other than the currently proposed research. However, both would still have to comply with new data security and information protection standards.

The proposal includes a number of items with regard to minimal risk and expedited review. The new rules would update the minimal risk list from the HHS Secretary and use "appropriate data about risks." Research eligible for expedited review would not require "continuing review," unless the single IRB assessor determines and documents why it would be necessary. Studies eligible for expedited review would be considered "minimal risk," unless the reviewer documents why it is not.

The new data security standards regarding the collection and use of identifiable data, as well as data in limited data set form would be modeled on the HIPAA Security Rule. In addition, to strengthen the enforcement mechanisms under the Common Rule, OHRP is considering providing for periodic random retrospective audits, and additional enforcement tools.

With regard to informed consent, OHRP wants comments on a number of modifications to the regulations, including: 1) prescribing appropriate content that must be included in consent forms, with greater specificity than is provided in the current regulations; 2) restricting content that would be *inappropriate* to include in consent forms; 3) limiting the acceptable length of various sections of a consent form; 4) prescribing how information should be presented in consent forms, such as information that should be included at the very beginning of the consent form, or types of information that should be included in appendices and not in the main body of the consent form; 5) reducing institutional "boilerplate" in consent forms (that is, standard language that does little to genuinely inform subjects, and often is intended to primarily protect institutions from lawsuits); and 6) making available standardized consent form templates, the use of which could satisfy applicable regulatory provisions.

The full ANPRM and accompanying documents can be accessed at: www.hhs.gov/ohrp.

For further information contact: Jerry Menikoff, Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP), 240-453-6900 or 1-866-447-4777; or jerry.menikoff@hhs.gov.

Comments may be submitted identified by docket ID number HHSOPHS-2011-0005, by one of the following methods:

Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Enter the above docket ID number in the "Enter Keyword or ID" field and click on "Search." On the next web page, click on "Submit a

Comment" action and follow the instructions; or

Mail/Hand delivery/Courier [For paper, disk, or CD-ROM submissions] to: Jerry Menikoff, M.D., J.D., OHRP, 1101 Wootton Parkway, Suite 200, Rockville, MD

Following the receipt and publication of the comments a Notice of Proposed Rule Making will be issued for further public comment before the actual imposition of the new Common Rule.

Juvenile Justice Council Hears About Study of School Disciplinary Actions

Last week the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center, in partnership with the Public Policy Research Institute at the Texas A&M University, released the study *Breaking Schools' Rules: A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice Involvement*. The study involved nearly one million public secondary school students who were followed for more than six years.

The results of the report were highlighted and discussed at the July 21 meeting of the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Responding to the report, Attorney General Eric Holder told the Coordinating Council that "school discipline exclusionary tactics contribute to the school to prison pipeline."

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, also at the meeting, told the council that adults, specifically school administrators, need to help stop the chaos. "When we push our kids out of schools and towards the juvenile justice system we are condemning them to poverty and social failure," said Duncan.

The Attorney General and the Secretary also announced the launch of the Supportive School Discipline Initiative, a collaborative project between the Departments of Justice and Education that will address the "school-to-prison pipeline" and the disciplinary policies and practices that can push students out of school and into the justice system. The initiative aims to support good discipline practices to foster safe and productive learning environments in every classroom. The Initiative, Holder said, would bring "together government, law enforcement, academic, and community leaders, I'm confident that we can make certain that school discipline policies are enforced fairly and do not become obstacles to future growth, progress, and achievement."

The study results are surprising and a window into states and districts embracing zero tolerance discipline tactics. The study found that nearly 60 percent of the public school students studied were suspended or expelled at least once between their seventh and twelfth grade school years; 15 percent of the students were suspended or expelled 11 times or more; and nearly half of these students with 11 or more disciplinary actions became involved in the juvenile justice system.

About 54 percent of students who were suspended received in-school suspensions, which could be as brief as one class period or last as long as several consecutive days. Thirty one percent of students experienced out-of-school suspension, which averaged two days per incident.

Despite the high rate of suspensions only three percent of the disciplinary actions were for conduct in which state law mandated suspensions and expulsions; the rest were made at the discretion of school officials primarily in response to violations of local schools' conduct codes.

Not surprisingly minority students bore the brunt of these disciplinary actions.

Researchers found that Black students had a 31 percent higher chance of facing discretionary suspensions, compared to otherwise identical white and Hispanic students. Eighty-three percent of Black male students had at least one discretionary violation, compared to 74 percent for Hispanic male students, and 59 percent for white male students. The pattern also held true for female students, 70 percent of Black female pupils had at least one discretionary violation, compared to 58 percent of Hispanic female pupils and 37 percent of white female pupils.

The study shows that repeated suspensions and expulsions often predict poor academic outcomes for students. Students who were suspended and/or expelled, particularly those who were repeatedly disciplined, were more likely to be held back a grade or to drop out school than students not involved in the disciplinary system. Ten percent of students suspended or expelled between seventh and twelfth grade dropped out of school, and only 40 percent of students disciplined 11 or more times graduated from high school during the six year study period. Thirty one percent of the students who were disciplined one or more times repeated their grade at least once, in contrast, only five percent of students with no disciplinary involvement were held back.

Furthermore, the report indicated that when a school suspended or expelled a student, the likelihood of his/her involvement in the juvenile justice system the subsequent year increased significantly. More than one in seven students had contact with the juvenile justice system at least once between seventh and twelfth grade. That rose to more than half if the students had disciplinary action 11 or more times. This contrasted with only two percent of the students without school disciplinary actions who came into contact with the juvenile justice system.

For the full *Breaking Schools' Rules* report go to:

<http://www.justicecenter.csg.org/resources/juveniles>

Jobs in Rural America Focus of Senate Hearing

On July 14, the Senate Agriculture Committee held a hearing on "Growing Jobs in Rural America." This hearing comes as the Committee prepares to craft the 2012 Farm Bill, a piece of legislation referred to by Chairman Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) as a "jobs bill." Stabenow noted at the outset of the hearing that Agriculture employs nearly 16 million Americans and continued to grow even through the last difficult decade, and that manufacturing accounts for a quarter of rural private sector earning and one in 10 rural jobs. She called these two industries "the lifeblood" of rural America, and the hearing proceeded to focus on them.

The first of the two panels scheduled for the day focused on developing a rural energy savings program that would enable rural energy co-ops to assist customers in making home improvements that enhance energy efficiency. A proposal of this kind enjoys strong bipartisan support on the Committee-Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) noted that energy savings programs were supported by both parties in his opening remarks. Stabenow highlighted that this type of program is important since rural residents are more likely to live in older and less efficient homes, spending up to \$400 more a year on energy than urban counterparts. Fixing this issue would lower costs for consumers, and create jobs. The panelists spent their time emphasizing the impressive savings that could be gleaned by making buildings more energy efficient, that the industry has the capacity to employ many people if it grows, and that customers need to have the liquid funds available to them in order to make improvements and, thus, support the industry. The Committee overwhelmingly supported the concept of providing government loans that would be paid back in full with the money saved on energy bills.

The second panel focused on the link between agriculture and manufacturing by looking at bio-based-products often manufactured in rural areas. Panelists discussed how increasing the use of agricultural products to make plastics instead of using oil imported from overseas could not only create jobs in the bio-plastics industry and the agriculture industry, but also reduce dependence on this foreign oil. Senators' questions focused on how the products worked and the best ways to convince companies to move into the sector.

Senator John Thune (R-SD) made the only reference of the debt debate of the day, bringing images of the looming August 2nd deadline into the room. Although he did not oppose the usefulness of the industry, he asked how fewer federal dollars could be utilized by rural residents to reduce spending on foreign oil. Should we change tax policies to support the industry, he inquired. One panelist noted that a production tax credit could help start-ups in competition against traditional products.

Stabenow closed the hearing by asking the panel what the government could do to help move the industry forward and increase its popularity. Multiple panelists responded that the biggest help would be a government sanctioned bio-preferred label.

For more information on this hearing, including a full video of the proceedings, visit the Committee's website [here](#).

A Little Bit of Good News in the NAEP Geography Assessment

On July 19 the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released the latest National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) data on geography. The geography assessment was administered in 2010, and covers grades 4, 8, and 12, approximately 7,000 4th graders, 9,500 8th graders and 10,000 12th graders took the assessment.

In comparison to earlier geography assessments in 1994 and 2001, the average score in 2010 was higher than the scores in both years at grade 4, and the scores for the lowest performing students were 23 points higher than on the 1994 test. Fourth graders scored on average 213 which is an all time high since NAEP started administering the test in 1994. Students at the basic level of proficiency increased to 58 percent for fourth graders compared to 52 percent in 2001 and 48 percent in 1994. The overall score increase for minority students has been especially dramatic. Since 1994 Black students have shown a 26 point increase and for Hispanic students there was a 19 point increase, both of which are significantly larger than the six point increase for White students. However, despite those increases the achievement gap still persists.

Although the overall average scores at grades 8 and 12 have not increased, scores for the lowest-performing students were higher in 2010 than in 1994 at all three grades. In comparison to 1994, the score for the lowest performing students at the 10th percentile were 7 points higher at grade eight, and three points higher at grade twelve. The average score for eighth graders, 282, was not significantly different than the scores in previous assessment years, with 26 percent performing below basic, 44 percent performing at basic, 27 percent performing at proficient, 3 percent at advanced. The 12 point increase in the average score for Black students from 1994 to 2010 contributed to a narrowing of the achievement gap to 31 points in 2010 from 37 in 2001 and 40 in 1994.

The 12th grade average scores have dropped from 285 in 1994 and 2001 to 282 in 2010. However, there have been changes in the level of proficiency. In 2010, only 20 percent scored at proficient level compared to 27 percent in 1994. This is another example of how the longer American students stay in school, the worse they seem to do on these assessments.

The latest numbers are an indicator to many that geography needs to become a central part of education and integrated into the other subjects. "What we're starting to do is draw attention to the fact that this is a strategically important issue," said Daniel Edelson, the vice president of education at the Washington-based National Geographic Society.

For the full report on NAEP's Geography assessment go to:

<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pubs/main2010/2011467.asp>.

Well-Being of Children Focus of Interagency Statistics Report

The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, a working group of 22 federal agencies, recently released the report, *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being*. The report uses federal statistics to measure the conditions affecting children 0-17, and includes measures on family and social environment, economic circumstances, health care, physical environment and safety, behavior, education, and health.

According to the 2010 census children 0-17 comprised 24 percent, 74.2 million, of the U.S. population, a 1.9 million increase over the 2000 census number, and this population is projected to increase to 87.8 million by 2030. The *America's Children* report shows the racial and ethnic diversity of the population has changed dramatically in the last three decades. By 2050, 39 percent of U.S. children are projected to be Hispanic up from 23 percent in 2010, while 38 percent of children are projected to be White significantly down from 54 percent in 2010.

The report also includes several family and social environment indicators. It noted that the birth rate among adolescents continues to decline. For the second consecutive year the rate went down: in 2009, it was 20.1 per 1,000 adolescents ages 15-17, lower than the 2008 rate of 21.7 and the 2007 rate of 22.1 per 1,000.

There has also been a decrease in the rate of substantiated reports of child maltreatment. In 2009, the rate of reports was 10 per 1,000 children for children age 0-17. This represents a decrease since 2007, when the rate was approximately 11 reports per 1,000 children ages 0-17. Unfortunately, younger children are still more frequently victims of child maltreatment. In 2009, there were 21 substantiated child maltreatment reports per 1,000 children under age 1, compared with 12 for children ages 1-3, 11 for children ages 4-7, nine for children ages 8-11, eight for children ages 12-15, and six for adolescents ages 16-17.

With the current increase in poverty levels there has also been an increase of children living in food insecure households. In 2009, 17.2 million or 23 percent of children lived in food insecure households. Although this percentage was essentially unchanged from 2008, it was higher than the 17 percent observed in 2007. In 2009, the proportions of children living in food insecure households were substantially above the national average of 23 percent for the following groups: those living in poverty at 51 percent; Blacks and Hispanics at 35 percent each; those whose parents or guardians lacked a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) certificate 43

percent; and those living with a single mother 38 percent.

As would be expected with the recent economic downturn in 2009, 21 percent of all children ages 0-17, 15.5 million, lived in poverty, an increase from 16 percent from 2000 and 2001. Minorities are among the hardest hit with the poverty rate three times higher for Black children at 36 percent, and nearly three times higher for Hispanic children at 33 percent compared with 12 percent for White children. The 2009 numbers represent an increase from the 2007 numbers of 35 percent, 29 percent, and 10 percent, respectively.

To find the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics full report on *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being* please go to <http://childstats.gov>.

Briefing Highlights Role of Demographic Research in Disaster Recovery

On July 18, the Population Association of America, with support from other organizations including COSSA, held a briefing, *The Demography of Disasters: Informing Recovery Decisions*. The event featured Elizabeth Frankenberg, Associate Professor in the Department of Public Policy Studies at Duke University, Mark VanLandingham, Professor of International Health and Development at Tulane University, and Russ Paulsen, American Red Cross. These speakers discussed what we know about the affected individuals, families and communities during recovery efforts that often drag on for years, and examined the effectiveness of various assistance programs. By examining the behavior of people who survive disasters-both those who have the easiest time with recovery and those who struggle through it-we can better understand how to help individuals and expedite the recovery process.

Paulsen noted at the start that disasters of any kind or size have a lot in common, but that big disasters are different than small ones in that everything that makes a community is lost and recovery becomes much harder. When a single family loses their home, they can still rely on the same people and institutions they have known to help support them through recovery. In a large disaster those people and institutions are often gone, Paulsen said. The typical reaction for individuals, he indicated, was that immediately after surviving such an event people report feeling lucky or blessed. However, in the ensuing years a large mental toll affects the survivors. Frankenberg and VanLandingham both discussed how this played out in the two disasters they respectively studied.

Frankenberg, who holds her Ph.D. in Demography and Sociology from the University of Pennsylvania, focuses her research specifically on health care, mortality, developing economies, decision-making within families, and Southeast Asia. Recently she has carefully tracked the population of Aceh, Indonesia in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. Roughly five percent of Aceh's population died in that disaster, an estimated \$4.5 billion in property was destroyed, and over 700,000 survivors were displaced. Much stood to be learned in Indonesia since data existed from the area just before the tsunami and longitudinal studies dated back years. By surveying survivors about aspects of life scientists could discern what was different and the speed at which things got back to normal, if indeed they ever would. One key lesson learned was that recovery takes years not months, and expecting rapid progress is unrealistic. Another is that people's emotions and vulnerability after a disaster are multidimensional and dynamic-the initial euphoria Paulsen referred to fades into a myriad of other emotions and causes different behaviors. Finally, her research indicated that effective targeting of assistance could improve the pace and extent of recovery.

VanLandingham focused his discussion on tracking New Orleans' recovery post-Katrina looking at early results, major challenges, and the need for federal leadership. A key finding was how local politics could actually prove problematic for recovery efforts in certain situations. After Katrina, local authorities appealed to the Census Bureau to raise its population estimates for the area so as to ensure adequate relief funds. This was done, but in the end the number proved too high which led to serious issues, such as artificially low murder and violent crime rates and, thus, less federal funding for these areas. Ultimately, he asserted, accuracy is the best policy when it comes to post-disaster population estimations. He argued that federal agencies responsible for developing numbers should be insulated from politics.

VanLandingham also spoke in support of National Science Foundation (NSF) RAPID grants. He noted that while federal research's careful review process before approval is an asset allowing research to be more thoughtful and worthwhile, it also makes studying unpredictable phenomena that requires haste, such as disasters, nearly impossible. Federal RAPID grants are the only resource for situations that call for the kind of speed to study the aftermath that Katrina did, he declared.

Science and Human Rights Coalition Holds Meeting

On July 14 and 15 the AAAS-organized and led [Science and Human Right Coalition](#) held a meeting at its Washington, DC headquarters. The focus of the meeting was the consideration of the benefits of scientific progress and its applications as human rights. This was first universally recognized in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Basic tenets of the right include: ensuring equitable access to the benefits of scientific progress, with particular focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups, investing in research and development and creating incentives for innovation to address forms of suffering experienced by these groups; ensuring the freedom of scientists to engage in scientific inquiry while also conducting their work responsibly; and fostering international cooperation in science.

This meeting comes from AAAS's 2010 vow to:

- Bring to the attention of its affiliates and members the importance of engaging in discussions concerning the human right to benefit from scientific progress and its applications;
- Engage the domestic and global scientific communities in defining the content of the right and determining its application to a diverse range of scientific disciplines and issues of concern to the scientific community;
- Coordinate the efforts of the AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition to conceptualize the right and pursue strategies for integrating this right into the work of the Coalition members; and
- Building on these activities, engage the US government and other key actors in dialogue on the right to benefit from science and its implications for relevant policies.

Using Science for Exonerating Wrongfully Convicted Persons

The public section of the event began on the evening of the 14th with a screening of the film *After Innocence* which chronicles the stories of eight wrongfully convicted and imprisoned individuals who were later exonerated, most through the testing of DNA evidence and one following the reexamination of eyewitness testimony. The film emphasized the expanding role science and

scientific methodologies play in the administration of justice. Following the film a panel of three experts discussed the role of science in the criminal justice system. Speaking were: Joe S. Cecil, Federal Judicial Center Division of Research; Sarah Chu, The Innocence Project; and Kenneth Melson, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The discussion involved several topics brought up by the film, but special attention fell to whether the right to compensation and the right to expungement are human rights after wrongful imprisonment. All panelists agreed that giving people these small tokens seems the only logical behavior following the unfair loss of their liberty and could go far in improving the mental state of individuals released after losing part of their lives in the prison system. The panel also discussed the need to understand the limitations of eyewitness testimony by reforming lineups and educating jurors about fallibility, and the need to ensure that suspects are not frightened into false confessions by threats during questioning.

Day two of the meeting began with a progress report from Mark S. Frankel and Jessica M. Wyndham, of the AAAS Scientific Responsibility, Human Rights and Law Program. Wyndham discussed the many activities of various involved groups revolving around human rights. She also discussed the five working groups that make up the coalition: Welfare of Scientists, Science Ethics and Human Rights, Service to the Scientific Community, Service to the Community, Education and Information Resources. All of the working groups would meet later in the day to discuss the projects they were each pursuing.

The same day, Felice Levine, Executive Director of the American Education Research Association, led a session on "STEM Education: Diversity, Human Rights and New Curricula." It explored disparities in access to education experienced by diverse groups in the United States generally, and the need to broaden access to an adequate STEM education in particular.

Speakers pointed out that early education is the first social institution outside of the family where children learn to engage in civic responsibility and to respect the human rights of others. In this context, since research has shown that learning and working in diversity produces better outcomes, diversity is a human right. The panel also delved into the value of incorporating human rights concepts into STEM training as a means to attract and retain students through the application of science to issues of broad social significance. Finally, they explored inequality in the U.S. education system, asserting that the black-white achievement gap is a human rights' failure perpetuated by a legacy of slavery and inequity. Further work is necessary to close this gap and create a fair education system, the panel concluded.

The next meeting of the Science and Human Rights Coalition will be held on January 23, 2012.

National Academies Release Framework for K-12 Science Education: SBE Sciences Still Missing

On July 19th, the National Research Council (NRC), of the National Academies held a public briefing to announce the release of *A Framework for K-12 Science Education*. The framework is the creation of an 18-member committee under the auspices of the NRC's Board on Science Education (BOSE), that included experts in education and scientists from many disciplines. A draft was publicly released in the summer of 2010 for comment and feedback (see Update, [July 26, 2010](#)). This final framework is meant to identify key scientific ideas and practices all students should learn by the end of high school. While change is expected to occur slowly, it is designed to serve as the foundation for new K-12 sciences education standards and replace those issued more than a decade ago.

While the framework does include specific areas of knowledge students should gain mastery of by certain ages, the overarching goal of the framework, the Committee said, is to ensure that by the end of the 12th grade, all students have some appreciation of the "beauty of science," the capacity to discuss and think critically about science-related issues, and the skills to pursue careers in science or engineering, if they so choose. The Committee also noted that existing educational approaches are ill-equipped to achieve such goals. The inclusion of education experts-people who understand how learning actually works-was key in developing a system that not only laid out what students should know, but how that goal could be achieved.

While the framework provides a roadmap for effective reform, one section is notably missing from the document: the social, behavioral, and economic (SBE) sciences. Out of the large tome, these sciences were only mentioned on two pages in a section titled "Limitations of This Framework." The Committee noted in these pages that its original charge did not include these disciplines. They also asserted that these fields have different methods, theories, relationships to other disciplines of science and representation in K-12 curriculum, with many of them not even represented in K-12 curriculums at all. Further, the Committee noted that many of the documents it based its framework on, including the *National Science Education Standards (NSES)*, did not include these disciplines. Finally the Committee stated that understanding how to integrate the SBE sciences into standards is especially complex given how they're currently organized in the K-12 system, noting that many topics related to these sciences are incorporated into curricula identified as social studies and may be taught from a humanities perspective.

The Committee took care to state that it strongly believes that the SBE sciences are vital and need their own framework for defining core concepts to be learned at the K-12 level and that learning (the development of understanding of content and practices) in the physical, life, earth and space sciences and engineering "should be strongly linked with parallel learning in the SBE sciences."

To further this the NRC plans to convene a workshop to begin exploring a definition of what core ideas in the SBE sciences would be appropriate to teach at the K-12 level and at what grade levels to introduce them. The workshop is scheduled for November 18-19, 2011.

In 2004, the National Science Foundation sponsored a committee led by Felice Levine, now Executive Director of the American Educational Research Association, that produced a report *Education and Training in the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences: A Plan of Action*. This report laid out a framework for the incorporation of the SBE sciences into K-20 education. Most of its recommendations have been ignored. So here we are seven years later about to reinvent the wheel.

For a copy of the new BOSE report, please look [here](#).

PCORI Seeks Input on Definition of 'Patient-Centered Outcomes Research'

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) is currently seeking feedback on its Working Definition of 'Patient-Centered Outcomes Research.' PCORI was established by Congress through the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act but is by law an independent, non-profit organization. It is governed by a 21-member Board of Governors. PCORI was created to conduct research to provide information about the best available evidence to help patients and their health care providers make more informed decisions. The Institute's research is intended to give patients a better understanding of the prevention, treatment and care options available, and

the science that supports those options.

According to PCORI, "Patient-centered outcomes research" is the type of research that will be the focus of the Institute's work. However, there are different opinions about what this research includes. PCORI has created a working definition, and is seeking input to make sure the definition is appropriate:

Patient Centered Outcomes Research (PCOR) helps people make informed health care decisions and allows their voice to be heard in assessing the value of health care options. This research answers patient-focused questions:

1. "Given my personal characteristics, conditions and preferences, what should I expect will happen to me?"
2. "What are my options and what are the benefits and harms of those options?"
3. "What can I do to improve the outcomes that are most important to me?"
4. "How can the health care system improve my chances of achieving the outcomes I prefer?"

To answer these questions, patient-centered outcome research:

- Assesses the benefits and harms of preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic, or health delivery system interventions to inform decision making, highlighting comparisons and outcomes that matter to people;
- Is inclusive of an individual's preferences, autonomy and needs, focusing on outcomes that people notice and care about such as survival, function, symptoms, and health-related quality of life;
- Incorporates a wide variety of settings and diversity of participants to address individual differences and barriers to implementation and dissemination; and
- Investigates (or may investigate) optimizing outcomes while addressing burden to individuals, resources, and other stakeholder perspectives.

Input will be accepted by PCORI until September 2, 2011. For more information and/or to provide input, see: <http://www.pcori.org/pcorinput.html>

NIH OppNet – Sleep and Social Environment: Basic Biopsychosocial Processes

Sleep is a complex biological phenomenon that is essential to normal behavioral and social functioning, as well as optimal health. The mechanisms by which social environment factors affect sleep behavior patterns have not been studied systematically, especially within the context of individual vulnerabilities, according to the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Thus, there is a need for greater understanding of the dynamic relationship between behavioral and social environment factors and the basic mechanisms of sleep-wake and circadian regulation and function. To address this need, the NIH Basic Behavioral and Social Sciences Research Opportunity Network (OppNet) seeks research applications designed to investigate the reciprocal interactions of the processes of sleep and circadian regulation and function with behavioral and social environment processes.

This OppNet Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA), *Sleep and Social Environment: Basic Biopsychosocial Processes* ([RFA-HD-12-204](https://www.fda.gov/oc/foia/2011-0001)), provides an opportunity to link social environment

factors that shape sleep behaviors with the direct neurobehavioral and circadian biology effects of sleep processes on individuals in the context of their social milieu. The research gap that needs addressing lies between the understanding of the behavioral choices of individuals and social units, such as families and work groups, that determine sleep and circadian regulation and individual susceptibility to decrements in neurobehavioral and social functioning arising from phenotypic, genotypic, and gene-by-environment interactions.

The FOA encourages applicants to develop theoretical models that capture social and behavioral interactions associated with sleep disturbance in social environments, including residential, employment, and school settings, while at the same time incorporating biobehavioral markers of high and low susceptibility to sleep debt. According to the FOA, this initiative is naturally suited to the emerging area of multilevel systems science approaches. Researchers are also encouraged to a developmental and gendered approach by considering variation across age and the life span and by sex/gender.

Letters of intent are due August 30, 2011. Applications are due September 30, 2011.

For more information and/or to apply, see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-hd-12-204.html>

Ethical Legal and Social Implications (ELSI) Of Genomic Research

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is seeking grant applications that propose to study the ethical, legal, and social implications (ELSI) of human genome research. Participating institutes and centers include the: Cancer, Aging, Child Health and Human Development, Deafness and Other Communication Disorder, Environmental Health Sciences, and Neurological Disorders and Stroke, and the Human Genome Research.

The Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs), Ethical, Legal, and Social (ELSI) Implications of Genomic Research ([PA-11-250](#), [PA-11-251](#), and [PA-11-249](#)) encourages multidisciplinary research applications that identify, examine and address the ELSI of advances in genomic research and technology for individuals, families, communities and society more broadly.

The National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI) has identified four broad research priorities: 1) genomic research; 2) genomic health care; 3) broader societal issues; and 4) legal, regulatory and public policy issues.

Examples of topics related to genomic research in which further ELSI research is needed include:

- recruitment issues (including diversity in research participation);
- perceptions of risks and benefits by the public, research participants, researchers, and IRBs;
- issues in informed consent in genomic research (including unexpected results or results in which there are no interventions to offer)
- return of individual research findings (including incidental findings);
- privacy and identifiability of genomic information;
- data sharing and data security;
- governance structures for genomic repositories (including treatment of archived samples, such as newborn bloodspots);
- compensation to sample and data providers;

- fair distribution of benefits from research;
- third-party benefits and risks of genomic research (including effects on family members and broader communities);
- use of tissue and health data from deceased individuals in genomic research;
- role of community consultation and engagement; and
- the relationship between ancestral biomarkers and self-identified race and ethnicity and incorporation of these variables in genomic research.

Examples of topics related to genomic health care in which further ELSI research is needed include:

- fairness in the distribution of genomic and genetic services;
- assessment and evaluation of personalized genomic-based health care in terms of general effectiveness and comparative cost-effectiveness;
- issues in informed consent as related to genomically-based health care;
- issues surrounding the potential inclusion of genomic information in Electronic Health Records and Personal Health Records;
- communication of genomic information and test results in clinical settings;
- issues surrounding the use of pharmacogenomics and other genomics-based therapies, including reimbursement;
- issues in preimplantation and prenatal genomic diagnosis and other genomically-based reproductive technologies;
- understanding the contribution of genomic, psychosocial and cultural factors that may have a role in health disparities;
- communication of the relationship between ancestral biomarkers and self-identified race and ethnicity to individuals and families receiving genomically-based clinical test results.

Examples of topics related to the broader societal issues in which further ELSI research is needed include:

- normative factors underlying concepts of risk and benefit in genomic research and health care;
- ethical implications of the blurring of the distinction between genomic research and genomics-based health care;
- ethical issues relevant to genomic research and genomic health care involving special populations;
- implications of increasing genomic knowledge for how health and disease are conceptualized by individuals, health care providers and the health care industry;
- implications of genomic variation research (and of genetic ancestry testing) for understanding identity, race and ethnicity, and relationships within and among human populations;
- implications of learning more about epigenomics and the human microbiome for concepts of human identity, personhood, health and disease;
- implications of comparative genomic research and evidence of natural selection among human populations for understanding the relationships among humans, and between humans and non-humans, and the intersection of genomic knowledge with existing beliefs about evolution and human origins;
- implications of manifestations of genetic determinism, reductionism, essentialism, and

- exceptionalism in public attitudes and in public policy; and
- implications of genomic information for understandings of free will and individual responsibility.

Some specific examples of topics in this area in which further ELSI research is needed include:

- intellectual property issues;
- appropriate regulation of genetic testing, pharmacogenomics and genomics-based therapies;
- ownership and liability issues surrounding the secondary use of biobanked samples;
- genetic discrimination and stigmatization (including the impact of the Genetic Information Non-Discrimination Act); and
- non-medical uses of genomics in non-health care settings (e.g., criminal and civil courts; employment; schools; the military).

Proposals for Research on Research Integrity Sought

The National Institute of Environmental Health Science (NIEHS) and the Office of Research Integrity (ORI) seek grant applications for research that will improve the understanding of the basic mechanisms of research integrity by bridging work in the laboratory and the field.

The exploratory/developmental grant program is designed to foster research on research integrity in areas that have little published data. The sponsoring agencies are chiefly interested in research focused on integrity in research that will provide clear evidence of problem areas in community standards, self-regulation, practice norms, and non-adherence to accepted codes of conducts. Applications must address the societal, organizational, group, or individual factors that affect integrity in research, both positively and negatively. Additionally, applications must also have relevance to health sciences research including, for example, those biomedical, behavioral health sciences, or health services research areas having particular positive or negative research integrity issues. An experimental approach is preferred over descriptive research.

The FOA's primary areas of interest include: research integrity and the public trust, research integrity and bias, research integrity in community-based research, and research integrity and factors affecting researchers' behavior. Topics related to these areas include but are not limited to:

Public Trust

- What is the overall level of public trust in scientific research?
- Are some fields of research regarded as more trustworthy than others? Why or why not?
- What does the public expect of scientific researchers?
- In what ways do ethical problems or concerns, such as synthetic biology, nanotechnology, dual use research and maintenance of long term data and sample archives affect the public's trust in science?
- How do issues of trust affect the relationship between research subjects and researchers?
- Are policies that promote the responsible conduct of research successful and do they have a positive effect on public trust? How is success defined and/or measured?
- Is public trust different for clinical research compared with other types of research, such as

behavioral or bench research?

- Does public trust influence the level of trust between human research subjects and investigators?
- Does the media play a role in the public's attitudes toward science and if so, how? Does expert testimony by researchers play a role in the public's attitudes' and if so, how?

Bias

- Discovering and controlling for bias.
- Sampling bias, in which some data are more likely to be included than others.
- Errors in choosing the individuals or groups to take part in a scientific study.
- Excessive favoring (or disfavoring) the prevalent scientific opinion, for example, during the peer review process.
- Over- or under-estimating the sensitivity and specificity of a test including the use of statistical tests that favor a particular conclusion.
- Interpreting and judging phenomena in terms particular to one's own culture.
- Bias for personal gain (conflicts of interest or conflicts of commitment for financial gain or self- promotion). Does bias influence researchers' expert witness testimony?
- Government or political influence, including overt and covert censorship.
- Gender, cultural or ethnic bias in mentoring, collaborating, data sharing, peer-reviewing, publishing and authorship.

Community-Based Participatory Research

- *Roles*: What are the roles of each partner assigned? What role does the community play in setting the research agenda? How are community needs balanced with the needs of the research partner? What social responsibility do researchers have to the ongoing needs of the community after the research project has been completed? What research integrity issues are raised when communities strive to recruit more research in order to get their ongoing needs met? How are the cultural and social characteristics as identified by the community considered/incorporated into the plan? How will the community be engaged? How will resources be shared?
- *Mentoring*: How will the community partner learn about the research process? Data acquisition? Research ethics? Animal and human subjects training? Conflicts of interest? How does the partnership foster the reciprocal exchange of skills, knowledge and capacity among all partners?
- *Rewards*: How will rewards of research be shared (e.g. authorship, intellectual property rights, data ownership)?
- *Dissemination of results*: How will data results be shared with the community members? Sharing of individual results? Public? Media?
- *What are the levels of risk to responsible conduct of research in CBPR?*

Factors Affecting Researchers' Behavior

- What motivates researchers to behave with integrity?
- What motivates researchers to stray from accepted norms?

- What factors, incentives, or obstacles affect researchers' integrity, motivation, judgment or decision making?
- What objective measures or empirical methods can be utilized to assess research integrity?
- What recommendations can be derived from this research for institutions, professional associations, and regulators?

NIEHS and ORI are also interested in the: 1) Factors that enhance or undermine integrity, 2) Standards for responsible conduct, 3) Self-regulation, and 4) Economic, policy, and scientific impacts.

Relevant research perspectives and health-related disciplines include: anthropology, applied philosophy, behavioral economics, biomedical informatics, business, economics, education, information studies, law, organizational studies, health services, political science, psychology, public health, sociology, and survey and evaluation research, plus the physical, biomedical, and clinical sciences. Approaches from the social, behavioral, cognitive and affective neurosciences; and neuroeconomics also are encouraged.

Letters of intent are due on October 17, 2011. Applications are due on December 1, 2011.

For information and/or to apply, see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/rfa-files/RFA-es-11-009.html>.

Social and Behavioral Research on the Elderly in Disasters: Applications Wanted

The National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the National Institute on Nursing Research (NINR) have issued a funding opportunity announcement (FOA) designed to stimulate research in the behavioral and social sciences on the consequences of natural and man-made disasters for the health and well-being of the elderly. The ultimate goal of the FOA is to prevent and mitigate the harmful consequences of disasters. These include severe weather-related events, including heat waves, earthquakes, tsunamis, large-scale attacks on civilian populations; technological catastrophes; and influenza pandemics.

The FOA, Social and Behavioral Research on the Elderly in Disasters ([PA-11-263](#)) and two companion FOAs ([PA-11-264](#) and [PA-11-265](#)), are in recognition of the vulnerability and resiliency of older people. Research in the social and behavioral sciences can be useful both for the practical work of helping future efforts prepare for or mitigate disasters and for the scientific understanding of aging, health, and well-being. The institutes are interested in health outcomes in the areas of mortality, disability, severe distress and clinically significant morbidity, and economic hardship sufficient to harm health.

Research topics and methods of interest to NINR and NIA include:

- Characteristics of public health systems, acute care, rehabilitation and long-term care institutions affecting survival, successful evacuation or referral, and continuity of care for the frail elderly, disabled or chronically ill persons.
- Behavioral and social factors that affect preparation for disasters; response to disasters,

including mortality and evacuation; and the long-term health impact after disasters, including post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD), health problems, loss of social resources, and morbidity.

- The impact of neighborhood, household and family characteristics, including the built environment, social cohesion and social networks, on survival, successful evacuation and resettlement or relocation of the elderly.
- Disruption and adaptation of health-systems and caregiver relationships. Of particular concern is the rise of an aging population of urban residents who live alone, with limited social networks, and who become disabled and homebound. Socially isolated elderly may be especially vulnerable to disaster-related morbidity and mortality.
- Social, economic, and racial/ethnic disparities affecting access to vaccines and other preventive services; or affecting the survival, evacuation, resettlement or relocation of the elderly.
- The economic impact on health of disasters, using existing studies with high-quality pre-disaster assessments of income and assets.
- Cognitive and other factors affecting risk perceptions and communication, preparedness, and evacuation, relocation and resettlement decisions.
- Long-term health impacts of stressful events and factors affecting resiliency and recovery, with particular concern for those managing chronic conditions and the disabled elderly.
- Health risks and tradeoffs implicated in the decision to evacuate nursing homes or other congregate housing.
- The role of new media and new forms of communication in preventing harms and facilitating recovery efforts.
- Use of agent-based modeling or other simulation methods with age-structured populations to investigate prevention, mitigation, and resilience.
- Cross-national comparative research, or research comparing subnational jurisdictions, designed to elucidate factors affecting vulnerability, resilience and recovery from disasters by investigating disasters in a range of social, economic, physical and policy environments.
- Creation of data resources, including self-report data from affected families and persons, emergency responders, health and long-term care providers, and administrative data from medical and other organizations, to improve the infrastructure for behavioral, social and services research on the health impacts of disasters. Enhancement of existing NIA-funded cohort studies to allow long-term studies of disaster impacts is especially encouraged.

The FOA notes that while the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is not participating in the solicitation, it shares an interest in this area of research.

European Union Offers Grants for US-EU Research

The Delegation of the European Union (EU) in Washington, DC invites proposals from think tanks, public policy research centers, and other non-profit and non-governmental organizations based in the United States for activities that encourage policy research and debate about EU-US relations.

According to the announcement, these activities should encourage reflection and discussion on the EU-US relationship. Activities should address a growing transatlantic agenda for globalization and take a fresh look at existing EU-US and international institutional frameworks, focusing in particular on future challenges and directions of transatlantic relations. They should increase awareness of issues on which the EU and US can further their cooperation, develop new ideas for reinvigorating EU-US relations, and result in concrete recommendations on how to develop further the

transatlantic relationship. Project results should be disseminated widely to the EU and US policy communities.

Key issues could include energy and climate security and environment policy, the preservation of civil liberties and human rights, global economic and financial stability, innovation and job creation, the creation of a transatlantic market, and EU-US cooperation in addressing global challenges.

Cooperation between US and EU-based institutions is encouraged. For applications featuring such cooperation, a US-based institution must take the lead in the proposal submission process, with any EU-based institutions involved acting as project partners.

Activities may target broad audiences or specific groups. They may include:

- conferences, seminars and workshops;
- policy research, briefing and working papers;
- briefing sessions and fellowships targeting opinion-makers; and
- other activities that facilitate greater understanding of the EU and EU-US relations and productive dialogue across the Atlantic amongst policymakers and analysts.

Examples of projects financed under earlier Calls for Proposals can be found on the following website:

<http://www.eurunion.org/eu/Washington-Delegation-Grant-Programs.html>.

Institutions selected will receive funding in the form of a subsidy towards approved costs between **January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2013**. The EU will provide an estimated 6-8 grants of **up to €150,000** each will be awarded. Applicants may vary the level of project expense during the grant period but should strike a good balance of activities across the two years covered, with no more than 60% of project costs budgeted for either year. Applicants must provide a minimum cost share of at least **25%** of eligible project costs. The European Commission is allocating up to €1 million to this program.

Applications must be received by 5:00pm (US Eastern Standard Time) on September 19, 2011.

AAPSS Seeks Executive Director

The American Academy of Political and Social Science (AAPSS), a COSSA member, seeks a new Executive Director. The mission of the Academy is to promote the progress of the social sciences, and the Executive Director, working with the board, is responsible for the design and implementation of new programs that achieve that end. The Academy is based in Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Executive Director is responsible for the conduct of the AAPSS' programs and serves as the Executive Editor of the Academy's bimonthly journal, *The Annals*. These programs include the annual election of distinguished social scientists as Academy Fellows and the annual awarding of the Daniel Patrick Moynihan Prize to a social scientist or public official whose work has consistently used the findings of social science research to improve public policy.

The Executive Director works with the President and Chairman of the Board to conduct biannual

board meetings and committee meetings. The Executive Director prepares and oversees the Academy's annual budget in collaboration with the Finance Committee. Working with Managing Editor, the Executive Director identifies topics and special editors for each volume of *The Annals* and ensures its quality and timely publication by working with Sage Publications, Inc. The Executive Director is also responsible for maintaining relationships with other organizations and associations in the social sciences to help to improve the quality of human life and to advance the public good, often collaborating in the planning and execution of academic conferences.

A Ph.D. in a social science discipline and 5-7 years of experience working in the field is preferred. The successful candidate should be broadly knowledgeable about the theories and methods of the social sciences, about the internal and external dynamics of social science and public policy, and about the marketing of social science research and publications. The successful candidate should be able to develop and implement a clear vision for the advancement of the social sciences. Administrative and editorial skills, as well as a rich network of colleagues across various social science disciplines, are also highly desirable.

For more information and to apply go to: <http://jobs.hr.upenn.edu/applicants/Central?quickFind=193731>

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