



WASHINGTON UPDATE

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House Advances Bills to Cut Social Science Funding

As we have been reporting over the last several weeks, the U.S. House of Representatives has been busy considering legislation to reauthorize the *America COMPETES Act*, landmark legislation first enacted in 2007 to reignite U.S. investment in scientific research. It serves as authorizing legislation for the National Science Foundation (NSF), among other agencies. The House version of COMPETES reauthorization is a major departure from earlier versions, garnering deep [opposition](#) from the broader scientific community, including from [COSSA](#). Among the many problematic provisions in the bill is language to cut NSF's Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) directorate by half. Despite widespread opposition, the House passed the [***America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2015 \(H.R. 1806\)***](#) on May 20 by a narrow margin (217-205). The COMPETES bill now heads to the Senate, where we don't expect to see any action until later in the summer or fall.

Also on May 20, the House Appropriations Committee [passed](#) the **FY 2016 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) Appropriations bill (H.R. 2578)**. This is annual legislation to *appropriate* funding to NSF, the Census Bureau, and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), among other federal agencies. COSSA's analysis is available [here](#). Despite efforts by Democratic appropriators to increase funding for NSF and the Census Bureau and otherwise improve the bill, it passed by voice vote. If enacted, this bill would further signal bad news for social science funding at NSF, Census, and NIJ. Regarding NSF, the cut to SBE could be potentially worse than the cuts

proposed in the COMPETES bill. Instead of placing a spending cap on SBE funding like COMPETES seeks to do, the CJS bill would prioritize funding to non-SBE sciences, leaving very limited funds for SBE (and the geosciences). The CJS bill is being considered on the House floor this week and is likely to pass. COSSA issued a [statement in opposition](#) last week.

On June 1, the White House issued a [Statement of Administration Policy](#), recommending that the President veto the bill. In its section on NSF, the statement highlights the cuts to SBE and the geosciences: "Especially hard hit by this reduction would be the geosciences and social, behavioral, and economic sciences, which would be reduced by 20 percent. The Committee's allocation of resources to specific disciplines would interfere with NSF's ability to respond to scientific opportunity." The Senate may begin consideration of its CJS spending bill next week; we expect the Senate bill to take a different approach from the House bill.

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS

Census Bureau Outlines Content Changes to American Community Survey

The Census Bureau issued a [Federal Register Notice](#) on May 29 outlining its proposal for updating the content and methodologies of the American Community Survey (ACS). As [previously reported](#) the Census Bureau proposes to retain the field of degree and marriage questions originally slated for elimination from the ACS beginning in 2016. In addition, the proposal plans to remove a couple of other questions that have been deemed of no or low benefit. The Notice states these changes are an "initial step in a multi-faceted approach to reducing respondent burden."

Public comment on the proposal is due by June 28; the proposal will be submitted to the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance.

NIH Requests Comment on Precision Medicine Cohort, Strategies to Address Community Engagement and Health Disparities

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is seeking feedback ([NOT-OD-15-107](#)) to help it in creating a national research cohort of one million or more Americans as part of the President's proposed Precision Medicine Initiative (PMI) (see [Update, May 19, 2015](#)). The agency is specifically interested in feedback relating to the development and implementation of effective community engagement strategies for the cohort, and the ability to conduct transformative research to address health disparities. The aim is to assemble a "cohort reflective of the rich diversity of the U.S. population."

[Read on](#) for more details.

PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS

"Marshmallow Test" Researchers Named First 2015 Golden Goose Award Recipients

The first of the 2015 [Golden Goose Awards](#), which recognize federally funded research that has had unanticipated societal and economic benefits, will go to three psychologists, Walter Mischel, Philip

Peake, Yuichi Shoda, for their work related to self-control in children. In the late 1960s, Mischel developed the "marshmallow test" as a simple way to measure children's ability to delay gratification. However, follow-up studies revealed an unexpected correlation between ability to exert self-control at a young age and success later in life. The work has had an enormous impact on our understanding of human behavior and changed the way we approach a whole host of topics from early childhood education to retirement planning. More information on the research is available on the [Golden Goose website](#).

The researchers, along with the other still-unnamed Golden Goose Award recipients, will be honored at a ceremony in September. COSSA is a sponsor of the awards.

The Census Project Sheds Light on the American Community Survey

The Census Project held an informational briefing, [The Census Bureau's American Community Survey: Ten Years of Delivering Data for Smart Decision-Making](#), on May 27 that focused on the wide use of data from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and the reasons to support keeping the survey mandatory. COSSA was one of the cosponsors of this event. [Read on](#) for details.

NRC Board on Children, Youth, and Families Seeks Director

The [Board on Children, Youth, and Families](#) (BCYF) at the National Research Council is inviting applications for a new Board Director. The Director is responsible for overseeing activities of the Board, which "brings a multidisciplinary and evidence-based perspective to bear on the development of policies and programs for children, youth, and families, drawing upon the collective knowledge and analytic tools of the behavioral, health and social sciences." More information and application instructions are available [here](#).

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

NIH Opportunities:

- [The Health of Sexual and Gender Minority Populations \(PA-15-261\)](#)
- [Advancing Health Disparities Interventions Through Community-Based Participatory Research \(RFA-MD-15-010/RFA-MD- 12-006\)](#)
- [Building Population Health Research Capacity in the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands \(RFA-MD-15-011\)](#)

EVENTS CALENDAR

[Making Changes: Learning from Social Science Research to Drive Behavior Change](#), Washington, DC, June 18, 2015

[OBSSR 20th Anniversary Celebration](#), Bethesda, MD, June 23-25, 2015

[OBSSR Capitol Hill Exhibition & Reception](#), Washington, DC, June 24, 2015

[American Psychological Association Annual Convention](#), Toronto, Canada, August 6-9, 2015

[Rural Sociological Society Annual Meeting](#), Madison, WI, August 6-9, 2015

[American Statistical Association Joint Statistical Meetings](#), Seattle, WA, August 8-13, 2015

[American Sociological Association Annual Meeting](#), Chicago, IL, August 22-25, 2015

A list of COSSA members' annual meetings and other events can be found on the COSSA [webpage](#).

COSSA members who have an upcoming event they would like to see listed in the Events Calendar and on our website should send an email to jmilton@cossa.org.

Consortium of Social Science Associations Members

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American Anthropological Association
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American Economic Association
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Association of Research Libraries
Council on Social Work Education
Economic History Association
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Justice Research and Statistics Association
Midwest Sociological Society
National Association of Social Workers
North American Regional Science Council
Rural Sociological Society
Social Science History Association
Society for Research on Adolescence
Society for Social Work and Research
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues
Society of Behavioral Medicine
Southern Political Science Association
Southern Sociological Society
Southwestern Social Science Association

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American Academy of Political and Social Science
American Council of Learned Societies
American Institutes for Research
The Brookings Institution
Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences
Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research
Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan
Institute for Social Science Research,
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Institute for Women's Policy Research
NORC at the University of Chicago
Owens Institute for Behavioral Research, University of Georgia
Population Reference Bureau
RTI International
Social Science Research Council
Vera Institute of Justice

University of Wisconsin, Madison
West Virginia University
Yale University

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The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to promote sustainable federal funding for social and behavioral science research and federal policies that positively impact the conduct of research.

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