COSSA WASHINGTON UPDATE

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FEATURED NEWS

House and Senate Release Bipartisan Evidence-Based Policymaking Bill

On November 1, members of the House and Senate introduced the *Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act*, the "down-payment" legislation that would enact some of the less complicated (and less controversial) recommendations of the report from the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking (see COSSA's coverage and statement). The bill was introduced in the House by Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) as H.R. 4174 and cosponsored by Representatives Blake Farenthold (R-TX), Trey Gowdy (R-TX), and Derek Kilmer (D-WA), and in the Senate by Sen. Patty

Murray (D-WA) as S. 2046 and cosponsored by Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI). The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform unanimously approved the House version of the bill on November 2, and the bill is scheduled for consideration by the full chamber on Wednesday, November 15. While the Senate Committee with jurisdiction over the bill (Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs) has not yet scheduled a markup of the Senate's bill, Speaker Ryan is reportedly keen to see the legislation enacted by the end of the year, so the bill in the Senate could be attached to "must-pass" legislation, like an appropriations bill. COSSA has joined more than 100 organizations and leaders in a letter in support of the bill. Speaker Ryan and Sen. Murray had also pledged to introduce additional legislation to implement some of the more complex recommendations of the Commission, perhaps next year, although that likely depends on the success of the bill introduced this month.

Read on for details on the bill's proposals to enhance evidence-based policymaking.

COSSA IN ACTION

The American Sociological Association Answers "Why Social Science?

This week's *Why Social Science?* guest post comes from Jean Shin, Director of Minority and Student Affairs at the American Sociological Association, who writes about how insights from the social sciences both demonstrates the importance of diversity and help us identify ways build a more inclusive society. Read it here and subscribe.

CONGRESSIONAL NEWS

Rep. Lamar Smith, Sen. Jeff Flake Announce Retirement

Senator Jeff Flake (R-AZ), a prominent fiscal hawk and critic of President Trump, announced on October 24 that he would not be seeking reelection. In a passionate speech on the Senate floor, Flake criticized the disregard for truth and decency in political discourse. Flake has fought the expansion of the federal government during his tenure, which included issuing "waste books" that critiqued federal spending, including research grants. Flake joined the Senate in 2013 and will serve until January 2019.

Less ceremoniously, on November 2, Representative Lamar Smith (R-TX), Chair of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, announced his retirement. Smith has served in Congress since 1987 with stints as the Chair of the House Ethics Committee and Judiciary Committee. During his tenure as Chair of the Science Committee, Smith exercised oversight over the National Science Foundation (NSF), and science more broadly, including introducing a reauthorization of the *America COMPETES Act*, which contained targeted cuts and negative policies of consequence for the social science research community. COSSA worked hard in the intervening years to halt Smith's efforts targeting social science funding. House Republican rules allow members to serve as chairs of committees for only six years, which would have required Smith to relinquish his Science Committee gavel at the end of the term, even if he did not choose to retire. Smith will serve until January 2019.

GOP Tax Plan Could Hurt Students, NDD Programs

Several provisions contained in the tax plans rolled out by Republican leadership this month

have raised concerns for stakeholder groups that do not normally weigh in on tax policy. The House's plan, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R. 1) was approved by the Ways and Means Committee on November 9 and is expected to be debated on the House floor later this week. The Senate Finance Committee began its markup of the Senate plan on Monday and will continue its consideration of the bill today. There are significant differences between the two plans that would need to be worked out during the conference process, and the Senate plan will likely require additional changes in order to gain the support of 51 Republicans. However, Congressional Republicans are facing substantial political pressure to pass a tax plan, and GOP leadership has publicly stated that it hopes to have a plan passed by the end of the year.

Higher education groups have flagged a number of provisions in both proposals that could make undergraduate and graduate education harder to afford and affect colleges and universities' ability to offer assistance to their students. Of particular concern is a proposal in the House plan to tax graduate tuition waivers as income-meaning that some graduate students' taxes could increase by 100 percent or more while they earn the same (generally limited) income. The House bill would also eliminate the student loan interest deduction as well as several other tax credits for students. While these changes are absent from the Senate bill, the two proposals share other provisions that could affect colleges and universities' bottom lines, including reducing incentives for charitable giving, an excise tax on endowment earnings at private college and universities, and repealing or reducing the state and local tax deduction, potentially affecting state funding of higher education.

In addition to the impacts on students and higher education institutions, the budget proposals add an estimated $1.5 trillion over ten years to the federal deficit, likely leading to significant cuts to non-defense discretionary (NDD) programs down the road, which include research funding. Given that these programs have already seen disproportionate cuts to their budgets in recent years, this is a cause for concern among groups focused on science and research, as well as on other social issues.

COSSA has not issued its own action alert on the tax plan, however we have compiled a list of resources and information on how to take action prepared by partner organizations.

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS

NSF Seeking to Fill Two Top Social Science Posts

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has initiated a national search for Assistant Director for the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate. Dr. Fay Lomax Cook has served in this position since September 2014. The Assistant Director for SBE will oversee the directorate, which includes the Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences, the Division of Social and Economic Sciences, the SBE Office of Multidisciplinary Activities, and the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics.

The search committee is seeking candidates with outstanding leadership capabilities; a deep sense of scholarship; a grasp of the issues facing the social, behavioral, and economic science communities, especially in the areas of education and fundamental research; and expertise with the production, analysis and dissemination of public data and statistics. Details and contact information for the search committee can be found here.

Additionally, as previously reported, NSF is accepting applications for the position of Division Director of the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES), NSF's principal statistical agency housed within the SBE Directorate.

Alex Azar, Former Pharmaceutical Executive, Nominated to Lead HHS

President Trump has [nominated Alex Azar](#) to lead the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which would include oversight of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), among other federal agencies. Azar served as general counsel and deputy secretary to the Department under the George W. Bush administration and served as the president of Lilly Co., part of the pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly and Co., until earlier this year. Azar's nomination comes following former HHS Secretary Tom Price's resignation after news surfaced of improper use of private jets for government business. Azar must be confirmed by the Senate; no date for a confirmation hearing has been announced at this time.

Linda Capuano Nominated as Head of Energy Information Administration

Linda Capuano, energy technology fellow at the Baker Institute for Public Policy's Center for Energy Studies at Rice University, has been [nominated](#) to lead the [Energy Information Administration](#) (EIA), the principal statistical agency located within the U.S. Department of Energy. Prior to joining the Baker Institute, Capuano worked at Marathon Oil Corporation and Solectron Flextronics. She holds a Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering from Stanford University. EIA's most recent Administrator, Adam Sieminski, left the agency in January. John Conti, EIA's Deputy Administrator is currently serving as Acting Administrator. Capuano's nomination next goes to the Senate for a confirmation hearing and vote, although the hearing has not yet been scheduled.

OBSSR to Host Annual Research Festival on December 8

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR) is hosting the "[NIH Behavioral and Social Science Research Festival: Connecting People to Advance Health](#)" on Friday, December 8. The festival will bring together behavioral and social scientists from inside and outside NIH to network, collaborate, and share ideas. The agenda will include a keynote address from Dr. Eliseo Perez-Stable of the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities as well as plenary sessions on international research, behavioral neuroscience, and social factors and health. This event will not be webcast. More details and registration information can be found [here](#).

NIA Releases Request for Information on Challenge Prize for Alzheimer's Research

On November 2, the National Institute on Aging (NIA) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) released a [Request for Information](#) (RFI) to solicit feedback and ideas for a Challenge Prize on Alzheimer's and related dementias research. This Challenge Prize is being conducted as part of the implementation of the [21st Century Cures Act](#) and is the first Challenge Prize from the NIA. The institute is requesting suggestions for what prize goals should be established and other specific ideas for what should be considered in the Challenge Prize. Responses must be submitted by December 31.

PUBLICATIONS & COMMUNITY EVENTS

National Academies Calls for Better Integration of Social and Behavioral Science into Weather Enterprise

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) has released a new consensus report, [*Integrating Social and Behavioral Sciences Within the Weather Enterprise*](#). Sponsored by the National Weather Service and the Office of Weather and Air Quality within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Highway

Administration, the report acknowledges a "growing recognition that a host of social and behavioral factors determine how we prepare for, observe, predict, respond to, and are impacted by weather hazards" and that research and findings from the social and behavioral sciences must be better incorporated into the systems we use to predict and communicate information about the weather and hazards. The report proposes a framework for accomplishing this goal that includes ensuring the social sciences are represented in the leadership of weather organizations, building capacity to support social science research throughout the weather enterprise through sustained funding and professional support, and focusing on research to fill knowledge gaps, particularly system-level studies of the weather enterprise; risk assessment and responses; and message design, delivery, interpretation, and use. The complete report is available on the National Academies website.

National Academies Releases *Proactive Policing* Report

On November 11, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine released a report, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation, entitled Proactive Policing: Effects on Crime and Communities. The report evaluates the impact of proactive policing strategies on crime, communities, and racial disparities in policing. Proactive policing differs from traditional policing in that it targets the underlying causes of crime and disorder rather than reacting to crime after it occurs. The report concludes that sufficient scientific evidence supports the adoption of some proactive policing practices and that proactive policing is particularly effective in areas with high concentrations of crime and repeat offenders. Additionally, there was no evidence of adverse community receptiveness in those areas.

The report identifies a significant gap in knowledge surrounding long-term effects of proactive policing and calls for additional comprehensive research on whether police programs to enhance procedural justice improve perceptions of legitimacy and cooperation between communities and the police. During a webinar to mark the release of the report, David Weisburd, Chair of the authoring committee and Director of George Mason University's Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, commented on the "striking lack of social science evidence" available on violations of the law by police and the causes of racial disparities in police-citizen encounters. The report calls for a greater investment in researching what is "cost-effective, how such strategies can be maximized to improve the relationships between the police and the public, and how they can be applied in ways that do not lead to violations of the law by the public."

This article was contributed by COSSA's fall intern, Erin Buechele of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Academies Decadal Survey Seeking Social Science Research Ideas to Improve Intelligence Analysis

As part of the Decadal Survey of Social and Behavioral Science for Applications to National Security, the Committee for the Decadal Survey has opened a call for input from the scientific community to share innovative scientific approaches and research concepts. More specifically, the focus of this call for information is to identify cutting-edge research that might improve intelligence analysis within the next ten years. The Committee has created an IdeaBuzz website to allow the social and behavioral science research community to share ideas and engage in meaningful discussions about current and future trends in the social and behavioral sciences.

EVENTS CALENDAR

- A Forum and Reception for the National Center for Education Statistics, November 15, 2017, Washington, DC
- American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting, November 15-18, 2017, Philadelphia,

PA

- [National Council on Family Relations Annual Conference](), November 15-18, 2017, Oralndo, FL
- [National Communication Association Annual Convention](), November 16-19, 2017, Dallas, TX
- [Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Annual Convention](), November 16-19, 2017, San Diego, CA
- [African Studies Association Annual Meeting](), November 16-19, 2017, Chicago, IL
- [American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting](), November 29-December 3, 2017, Washington, DC
- [Annual NIH Behavioral and Social Sciences Research Festival](), December 8, 2017, Bethesda, MD
- [Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting](), January 3-6, 2018, San Diego, CA
- [Southern Political Science Association Annual Meeting](), January 4-7, 2018, New Orleans, LA
- [Linguistic Society of America Annual Meeting](), January 4-7, 2018, Salt Lake City, UT
- [American Historical Association Annual Meeting](), January 4-7, 2018, Washington, DC
- [American Economic Association Annual Meeting](), January 5-7, 2018, Philadelphia, PA
- [Society for Social Work and Research Annual Meeting](), January 10-14, 2018, Washington, DC

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

Governing Associations

American Anthropological Association
American Association for Public Opinion Research
American Economic Association
American Educational Research Association
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association
American Society of Criminology
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Association of American Law Schools
Law and Society Association
Linguistic Society of America
Midwest Political Science Association
National Communication Association
Population Association of America
Society for Personality and Social Psychology
Society for Research in Child Development

Membership Organizations

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences
African Studies Association
American Association of Geographers
American Council of Learned Societies
American Evaluation Association
American Historical Association
American Psychosomatic Society
Association for Asian Studies
Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management

Colleges and Universities

Arizona State University
Boston University
Brown University
Carnegie Mellon University
Columbia University
Cornell University
Duke University
Fielding Graduate University
Florida State University
George Mason University
George Washington Univeristy, The
Georgetown University
Harvard University
Howard University
Indiana University
John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY
Johns Hopkins University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Michigan State University
New York University
North Carolina State University
Northwestern University
Ohio State University, The
Pennsylvania State University
Princeton University
Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
Stanford University
Texas A&M University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Los Angeles

Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations
Association of Research Libraries
Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences
Council on Social Work Education
Economic History Association
History of Science Society
Midwest Sociological Society
National Association of Social Workers
National Council on Family Relations
North American Regional Science Council
Rural Sociological Society
Social Science History Association
Society for Prevention Research
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

University of California, Santa Barbara
University of Chicago
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of Georgia
University of Illinois
University of Iowa
University of Maryland
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Nebraska, Lincoln
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
University of Oklahoma
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Texas, Austin
University of Texas, San Antonio
University of Virginia
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Virginia Tech
West Virginia University
Yale University

Centers and Institutes

American Academy of Arts and Sciences
American Academy of Political and Social Science
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
NORC at the University of Chicago
Owens Institute for Behavioral Research, University of Georgia
RTI International
Social Science Research Council