Congress Passes Two-Week Stopgap Funding Bill, Returns to Debate Spending and Taxes

Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) on the evening of December 7 to continue federal appropriations through December 22, averting a partial government shutdown. The extension of fiscal year (FY) 2017 funding levels through this CR will give Congress more time to finalize FY 2018 spending and come to agreement on raising spending caps set in place by the Budget Control Act. While the House of Representatives has finished work on all twelve of its spending bills, the Senate has yet to vote on any, referencing a lack of agreement on overall spending levels.

In addition to finalizing spending for the current fiscal year, House and Senate Republicans continue to negotiate differences on their proposed tax overhaul. Debate on taxes and annual appropriations will likely carry them to, if not past, their scheduled Christmas recess. Read more...
COSSA IN ACTION

Linguist Evan Bradley Answers "Why Social Science?"

This week's guest post comes from linguist Evan Bradley, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Penn State Brandywine, who writes about how linguistics research can enhance our understanding of how society functions and ways to improve it. Read it here and subscribe.

CONGRESSIONAL NEWS

House Education and Workforce Committee Introduces Reauthorization of Higher Education Act; Democrats Introduce Competing Title VI Proposal

On December 1, House Education and Workforce Committee Chair Virginia Foxx (R-NC) introduced the Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform (PROSPER) Act, a bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act (HEA). The HEA authorizes federal aid programs that support institutions of higher education and postsecondary students. The bill proposes large changes to graduate student loan programs, rolling back regulations on for-profit colleges, and changing the process for applying for federal student aid. Additionally, the bill proposes the elimination of several Title VI-International Education programs and reauthorizes the remaining programs below current levels.

Congress last authorized the Higher Education Act in 2008 and the Senate committee of jurisdiction—the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions—will likely introduce its own bill in the coming year. A summary of the bill, prepared by the American Council on Education, can be found here. The Coalition for International Education, of which COSSA is a member, sent a letter to leadership of the House Education and Workforce Committee sharing its concerns with the PROSPER Act.

Relatedly, Representatives David Price (D-NC) and Susan Davis (D-CA) introduced a bill on November 30 that would reauthorize only Title VI of the Higher Education Act. Their bill, known as the Advancing International and Foreign Language Education Act, would expand, streamline, and increase funding for existing foreign language and area studies programs and is a stark contrast to the provisions included in the PROSPER Act.

FEDERAL AGENCY & ADMINISTRATION NEWS

Trump Nominates Mark Schneider to Direct the Institute of Education Sciences

Mark Schneider, visiting scholar at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) and Vice President at the American Institutes for Research (AIR), has been nominated to lead the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). IES is the statistics, research, and evaluation arm of the U.S. Department of Education and includes the National Center for Education Evaluation and
Regional Assistance, the National Center for Education Research, the National Center for Education Statistics, and the National Center for Special Education Research. Prior to joining the AIR, Schneider served as Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics from 2005 to 2008 and as a professor of political science at SUNY Stony Brook. Schneider's nomination next goes to the Senate for a confirmation hearing and vote, although the hearing has not yet been scheduled.

**NSF Seeking New Assistant Director for Education and Human Resources Directorate**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has initiated a national search for Assistant Director for the Education and Human Resources (EHR) Directorate. Dr. Jim Lewis has served as Acting Assistant Director since January of 2016. The Assistant Director for EHR will oversee the directorate, which includes the Division of Graduate Education, the Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings, the Division of Undergraduate Education, and the Division on Human Resource Development.

The search committee is seeking candidates with outstanding leadership capabilities; a deep sense of scholarship; and a grasp of the issues facing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics research and education. Details and contact information for the search committee can be found here.

**BLS Technical Advisory Committee Accepting Nominations**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Technical Advisory Committee is accepting nominations to fill five upcoming vacancies. The Committee advises the Bureau on technical aspects of data collection and the formulation of economic measures and makes recommendations on areas of research. BLS is interested in candidates who have a strong familiarity with BLS data and economic statistics. Nominations should be submitted by January 5, 2018. More information is available in the Federal Register notice.

**COSSA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

**APA Seeking Congressional and Executive Branch Fellowship Applications**

The American Psychological Association (APA), a COSSA governing member, is accepting applications for its 2018-2019 Congressional and Executive Branch Fellowships. The APA Congressional Fellowship Program provides two psychologists each year with the opportunity to spend a year working as special legislative assistants in a Senate or House office. The APA Executive Branch Fellowship Program gives psychologists the opportunity to spend a year working within a federal agency working on issues related to science policy and research administration. More information about both programs is available on the APA website. Applications for both fellowships are due by January 5, 2018.

**AERA Offering Congressional Fellowship Opportunity**

The American Educational Research Association (AERA), a COSSA governing member, is inviting education researchers to apply for its 2018 Congressional Fellowship Program. The program offers doctoral scientist from any field of education research the opportunity to spend as year as a resident scholar within a Congressional office. More information is available on the AERA website. Applications are due by December 15, 2017.

**EVENTS CALENDAR**
• **Friends of the Social and Behavioral Sciences Happy Hour**, December 13, 2017, Washington, DC
• **The Lunch @ DC: Trust, Engagement, and Governance: Democracy from the Bottom-Up**, December 14, 2017, Washington, DC
• **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
• **Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Annual Meeting**, February 13-17, 2018, New Orleans, LA

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.

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**Editor’s Note**

This is the last issue of COSSA Washington Update of the year. We will resume our ongoing coverage of policy developments affecting the social and behavioral sciences on January 9. The COSSA staff wishes all of our readers a happy and healthy holiday season. See you in 2018!

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**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

**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 University, 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

**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
The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to promote sustainable federal funding for and widespread use of social and behavioral science research and federal policies that positively impact the conduct of research. COSSA serves as a united voice for a broad, diverse network of organizations, institutions, communities, and stakeholders who care about a successful and vibrant social science research enterprise. The COSSA membership includes professional and disciplinary associations, scientific societies, research centers and institutes, and U.S. colleges and universities.