

# Washington Insider

## Coalition Meetings and Advocacy Days

APSA took part in several events on Capitol Hill early this year to underscore the importance of funding for political science. In March, in anticipation of the FY 2018 appropriations process, APSA attended annual meetings and advocacy days sponsored by the Coalition for International Education, the National Humanities Alliance (NHA), and the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA). APSA is a member of all three organizations. The meetings and advocacy days provided an overview of recent legislative developments affecting federal funding for the social sciences and humanities and discussed how to carry out effective advocacy on Capitol Hill and at home. The Advocacy Days provided the opportunity for political scientists and APSA representatives to visit congressional offices, discuss the importance of political science research, and express support for strong funding for the discipline, as appropriations committees consider the funding for the remainder of FY 2017 and draft bills for FY 2018.

### COALITION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION ADVOCACY DAY

The Coalition for International Education (CIE) advocates on behalf of Department of Education programs that promote US global competence, including area studies and foreign language. In particular, the CIE is a key proponent of Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs. In March, APSA staff joined CIE for an advocacy day focused on protecting and increasing funding for those programs in light of new reports suggesting the new administration would likely recommend cuts to international programs. Specifically, CIE members requested \$70.5 million in Higher Education Act-Title VI funding for FY 2018, an increase of \$5.4 million from the FY 2016. CIE is also urging Congress to continue its historically bipartisan support for Title VI in the upcoming reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, and to set authorization levels that encourage future growth in funding. Advocates requested \$8 million for Fulbright-Hays, a nearly \$1 million increase for the program. APSA continues to engage with congressional staff throughout the budget and reauthorization processes for the 2018 fiscal year.

### NHA ANNUAL MEETING AND ADVOCACY DAY

The National Humanities Alliance (NHA) is a coalition of more than 140 organizations that promotes research, education, public programs, and preservation in the humanities. Each year in March, scholars and representatives from coalition organizations gather in Washington, DC for the NHA Annual Meeting and Humanities Advocacy Day.

This year's annual meeting, on March 13, featured speakers including Rush Holt, former member of Congress and chief executive officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Holt discussed the overlapping priorities of the humanities and scientific communities, and the potential for collaboration between the two in the face of challenges in the new Congress and administration. Panels included sessions examining the effective engagement between humanities departments and local communities, and the current state of the humanities major pipeline, respectively. In another panel, NHA staff detailed the state of play for federal support for the humanities and laid the foundation for an advocacy training session in the afternoon.

The advocacy training session featured mock-meetings with congressional staff and a review of the NHA's main talking points about the value

of the NEH, Title VI, and Fulbright-Hays funding in all states. The NHA provided detailed profiles of key congressional members for participants and tailored each "ask" for specific offices. NHA advocates requested Congress provide no less than \$155 million for the National Endowment for the Humanities, an increase from the \$147.9 million provided through the continuing resolution. Adjusting for inflation, NEH's funding has declined 21% since 2010 despite a \$2 million increase in from FY 2015 to 2016.

### COSSA SCIENCE POLICY CONFERENCE AND ADVOCACY DAY

COSSA—the Consortium of Social Science Associations—advocates for sustainable federal support for social and behavioral science research. COSSA works to communicate the value of social science to policymakers and to advance robust federal investment in social science research. The event was previously known as the COSSA Annual Meeting, but was organized this year as the COSSA Science Policy Conference to provide more practical tools for social science advocates in advance of COSSA's day on the Hill.

At the conference on March 29, panelists from universities, federal agencies, publishers, communications firms, and a variety of social science organizations discussed approaches to advocacy for the social sciences and how to better communicate the value of that research to non-academic audiences. Arlie R. Hochschild, a sociologist, delivered a keynote address that illustrated how social sciences can provide important insight into the cultural and political questions that followed the 2016 election. Hochschild is the author of *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*, which documents her investigation of the dominance of conservative politics in southern Louisiana.

Following the keynote address, a panel featuring Ron Haskins of the Brookings Institution, Kei Koizumi of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Kenneth Prewitt of Columbia University, Felice Levine of the American Educational Research Association, and COSSA executive director Wendy Naus addressed the challenges and opportunities for social science advocates in the new administration. Panelists acknowledged potential risks that could hinder the preservation, collection, and utilization of federal data and statistics, but expressed some optimism about the strong infrastructure the community has developed to resist attacks on social science research funding.

The afternoon included several breakout sessions covering how COSSA members can mobilize students as ambassadors for social science, promote their expertise in the media, understand the opportunities for social science experts in government service, and be effective advocates for continued funding from home. John Sides, an associate professor of political science at George Washington University and editor of the *Washington Post's* blog *The Monkey Cage*, spoke about the professional benefits for social scientists who discuss their work with mass audiences. APSA executive director Steven Rathgeb Smith facilitated a discussion session following the address.

On March 30, APSA staff participated in the third annual COSSA Advocacy Day. Along with social science advocates from other disciplines, APSA staff visited a range of Capitol Hill offices to communicate the benefits of social science research and to request robust funding for social science research. In particular, advocates requested \$8 billion in funding for the National Science Foundation. ■

Learn more about APSA's ongoing advocacy on behalf of the discipline, visit [www.apsanet.org/advocacy/issues](http://www.apsanet.org/advocacy/issues).