



CONSORTIUM *of* SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

# Federal Social Science Funding & Policy

WENDY NAUS, CONSORTIUM OF SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

ESCAP SOCIAL SCIENCES SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING ■ FEBRUARY 4, 2016



- ▶ COSSA represents the shared policy interests of all fields of social & behavioral science research
- ▶ We seek to reach 4 main audiences:
  - ▶ Congress (both sides of the aisle)
  - ▶ Executive Branch Agencies & the White House
  - ▶ Scientific & Higher Ed communities
  - ▶ General public



Promoting the Practice and Profession of Statistics®

Population Association of America



Association of American Law Schools



# Social Science & Federal Policy

- ▶ Challenges to SBS fall generally into 3 buckets:
  1. Funding
  2. Policy
  3. Don't get no respect





# Challenge #1: Federal Funding of SBS Research

- ▶ Efforts to:
  - ▶ Cut funding for agencies that support SBS
  - ▶ Defund specific fields of research (e.g. political science in 2013)
  - ▶ Pick winners and losers among the sciences (e.g. increase computer science funding at the expense of social science)
- ▶ Funding for ALL DISCRETIONARY programs viewed as a zero-sum game – flat funding in this environment is a win
- ▶ Translation: Winners & Losers



# Competing Interests

FY 2016

▶ Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Bill:

- ▶ National Science Foundation
- ▶ NASA
- ▶ Department of Justice
- ▶ Department of Commerce

|                                      |      |
|--------------------------------------|------|
| <b>National Science Foundation</b>   | 1.6% |
| <b>Bureau of Justice Statistics</b>  | 0.0% |
| <b>National Institute of Justice</b> | 0.0% |
| <b>NASA</b>                          | 7.1% |


▶ Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Bill:

- ▶ National Institutes of Health
- ▶ Department of Education/Institute of Education Sciences
- ▶ Department of Labor
- ▶ Department of Health and Human Services

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| <b>National Institutes of Health</b>              | 6.6%  |
| <b>Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality</b> | -8.2% |
| <b>Bureau of Labor Statistics</b>                 | 2.8%  |
| <b>International Ed</b>                           | 0.0%  |

# Real Story is in the Details

- ▶ NSF – Social, behavioral and economic sciences flat funded
  - ▶ House wanted to cut SBE to increase other sciences
- ▶ NIH – \$2 billion increase but at the expense of other accounts
  - ▶ AHRQ was zeroed-out in House bill, deep cuts in Senate bill
- ▶ NIJ/BJA – Flat funded
  - ▶ House wanted to eliminate direct appropriations
- ▶ Census – American Community Survey maintained
  - ▶ House voted to make the ACS voluntary



## Challenge #2: Federal Policy & SBS Research

- ▶ “Authorization” bills are used to “authorize” funding for federal agencies/programs and to set programmatic priorities (i.e. direct an agency to take a specific action)
  - ▶ These bills often include funding GUIDELINES, but DO NOT appropriate funds
  - ▶ Several authorization bills were introduced in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress (1<sup>st</sup> Session) that would impact SBS and peer review...

# America COMPETES Act

| (in millions of dollars)                            | 2015   | COMPETES FY<br>2016-17 | COMPETES vs.<br>FY 2015 |
|---|--------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>National Science Foundation</b>                  | 7344.2 | 7597.1                 | 3.4%                    |
| Biological Sciences                                 | 731.0  | 834.8                  | 14.2%                   |
| Computer and Information Science and<br>Engineering | 921.7  | 1050.0                 | 13.9%                   |
| Engineering   | 892.3  | 1034.0                 | 15.9%                   |
| Geosciences   | 1304.4 | 1200.0                 | -8.0%                   |
| Mathematical and Physical Sciences                  | 1336.7 | 1500.0                 | 12.2%                   |
| Social, Behavioral, and Economic<br>Sciences        | 272.2  | 150.0                  | -44.9%                  |





# Scientific Research in the National Interest Act

- ▶ Seeks to set a definition of “national interest” for NSF funded research – intent is to suggest that SBS and other research is not in the “national interest”
- ▶ Passed Committee in October; no companion in Senate
- ▶ Broad scientific community objection



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

June 1, 2015  
(House Rules)

## STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

**H.R. 2578 — Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies  
Appropriations Act, 2016**  
(Rep. Rogers, R-KY)

The Administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 2578, making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2016, and for other purposes. The bill drastically underfunds critical investments in research and development that are key to advancing U.S. economic competitiveness and reducing taxpayer costs for securing essential weather satellite data and conducting an effective 2020 census. It also severely underfunds State and local criminal justice assistance that helps ensure the safety and well-being of individuals and communities, and underfunds programs that would increase the use of body-worn cameras by law enforcement, expand training, provide much-needed police department reform, and multiply the number of cities where the Department of Justice facilitates community and local law enforcement engagement. It also cuts support for NASA's Commercial Crew Program that will help end our reliance on Russia for transporting astronauts, critical space technology investments that will help pave the path to reaching Mars, and earth science research that is helping us understand how our climate is changing and how to respond to earthquakes, droughts, and severe weather events. Furthermore, the legislation includes highly objectionable provisions, including provisions that continue unwarranted restrictions regarding detainees held at Guantanamo Bay that will undermine our national security, severely inhibit efforts to combat illegal gun trafficking, and put in place non-germane foreign policy restrictions related to Cuba. If the President were presented with H.R. 2578, his senior advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.

Enacting H.R. 2578 and adhering to the congressional Republican budget's overall spending limits for fiscal year (FY) 2016 would hurt our economy and shortchange investments in middle-class priorities. Sequestration was never intended to take effect: rather, it was supposed to threaten such drastic cuts to both defense and non-defense funding that policymakers would be motivated to come to the table and reduce the deficit through smart, balanced reforms. The Republican framework would bring base discretionary funding for both non-defense and defense for FY 2016 to the lowest real levels in a decade. Compared to the President's Budget, the cuts would result in tens of thousands of the Nation's most vulnerable children losing access to Head Start, more than two million fewer workers receiving job training and employment services, and thousands fewer scientific and medical research awards and grants, along with other impacts that would hurt the economy, the middle class, and Americans working hard to reach the middle class.

Sequestration funding levels would also put our national security at unnecessary risk, not only through pressures on defense spending, but also through pressures on State, USAID, Homeland Security, and other non-defense programs that help keep us safe. More broadly, the strength of



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OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

May 18, 2015  
(House Rules)

## STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

**H.R. 1806 — America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2015**  
(Rep. Smith, R-Texas, and 10 cosponsors)

The Administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 1806, the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2015, which would undermine critical investments in science, technology, and research. The Administration believes that H.R. 1806 would be damaging to the Administration's actions to move American competitiveness, innovation, and job growth forward through a world-leading science, technology, and innovation enterprise.

The Administration strongly opposes the bill's appropriation authorizations for the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) that would establish maximum funding levels significantly below those provided in the President's FY 2016 Budget. For example, H.R. 1806 would weaken investments in critical clean energy research and development and grid modernization by providing authorization levels at less than half of the funding levels proposed in the President's Budget for DOE's Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, and Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability. Additionally, the legislation would shortchange efforts to support fundamental research to address diverse and critical global challenges by providing an authorization level for the DOE Office of Science biological and environmental research program far short of the funding levels proposed in the President's Budget. The America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2015 would also establish NSF authorization levels for geosciences, education and human resources, international and integrative activities, and administrative activities well below the funding levels proposed in the President's Budget, as well as an NSF authorization for social, behavioral, and economic sciences research that is 58 percent below the President's Budget. Additionally, the legislation would undermine efforts to implement sound science and technology policies by providing an authorization level for OSTP nearly 20 percent below the President's Budget.

In addition to its strong opposition to the authorized funding levels in H.R. 1806, the Administration has serious concerns with several other provisions in the bill and looks forward to working with the Congress to address its concerns. For example, the Administration opposes barring Federal regulatory authorities from relying on the results of certain Federally-supported research and development. This provision would set an extremely harmful precedent of political interference in the scientific integrity of the regulation process, which would undermine the value of the Federal research and development enterprise as a whole. The Administration also objects to the increased administrative burdens that the bill imposes on NSF and its awardees without commensurate benefit. In addition, the Administration opposes reducing oversight at the DOE National Laboratories, which would increase the exposure of the Federal Government to risk and liabilities while also conflicting with the execution of the DOE mission.

in Development



## Challenge #3: Don't Get No Respect

Public statements devaluing social science and/or specific grants

- ▶ “Common sense” problem
- ▶ Focus on clever titles and project abstracts as “proof” of wasteful spending
- ▶ “Investigations” into agency grant-making practices
- ▶ Picking on individual grants



“I think NSF should focus more on the **pure sciences**, on the fundamentals, and be careful to **avoid funding research projects that would damage its sterling reputation in the eyes of the public**. I’d encourage them to avoid funding studies like shrimps on a treadmill – I hope we never see anything like that again – or alcoholism among prostitutes in Thailand. **If the private sector is interested in funding obscure or obtuse social science questions, then let them. But NSF needs to be keenly aware of how these grants would look on the front page of the local newspaper. They are just not a productive use of our tax dollars.**”

--Rep. John Culberson,  
January 2015





LAMAR S. SMITH, Texas  
CHAIRMAN

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY  
2321 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6301  
(202) 225-6371  
www.house.gov

Dr. Cora B. Marrett  
Acting Director  
National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Blvd  
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Dr. Marrett,

Last week, the House Science, Space and Technology Committee reviewed the President's budget request for science and technology. Testifying at the hearing was Dr. Marrett. During the course of the hearing, you discussed the NSF's funding for social, behavioral and political sciences (NSF), and how we can better prioritize research that there is "room for improvement" in the potential value to the national interest.

Based on my review of NSF-funded research, I am pleased to see how close to the mark the Foundation and how close to the mark NSF makes decisions to obtain detailed information on specific research.

According to NSF procurement guidelines, each grant proposal requires a scientific/technical review of each grant proposal.



EDGE BERNICE JOHNSON, Texas  
RANKING MEMBER

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
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www.house.gov

April 7, 2014

The Honorable France Cordova  
Director, National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Blvd  
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Dr. Cordova,

Congress' authority to obtain information from federal agencies is broad. The established that such broad power is necessary for the legislative function, including investigations. In *McGrain v. Dougherty*, the Supreme Court stated that the "scope of the power is as broad as the power to enact and appropriate legislation."

I request paper copies of the following public records: every e-mail, text message, all peer reviews considered for selection and recommendation to the National Science Foundation (NSF), or document of any kind that would be used in the selection and approval of the grants listed below, including any approval.

3/4/13 Award #1010974, The Great Immensity, Awarded Amount \$697,111. NSF Program: Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings

8/25/2010 Award #1247824, Picturing Animals in National Geographic, 1888-2008. Awarded Amount \$227,437. NSF Program: Division of Social and Economic Science

11/22/14 Award #1154738, Culture, Change and Chronic Stress in Lowland Bolivia, Awarded Amount \$19,684. NSF Program: Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Science

8/16/2009 Award # 0917732, Collaborative Research: the Kalavassos and Maroni Built Environments Project. Investigating Social Transformation in Late Bronze Age Cyprus, Awarded Amount \$107,570. NSF Program: Archeology

LAMAR S. SMITH, Texas  
CHAIRMAN

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House of Representatives  
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www.house.gov

September 11, 2014

The Honorable France Cordova  
Director, National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Blvd  
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Dr. Cordova,

I request paper copies of the following public text message, all peer reviews considered for to the National Science Foundation (NSF), or consideration and approval of the grants listed below:

- Comparative Histories of Scientific C and Amazonian South America
- Regulating Accountability and Transparency in Community-Based Rangeland Ecosystems to Climate Change in Mongolia
- Izaapa Regional Settlement Project
- CAREER: A Political Approach to Rural Life History Transitions among the Toltec and Ancient Mayan Wooden Architecture
- Bronze Age Village Life and Landscape
- Ecosystem Resilience to Human Impact in New Zealand
- How Marginalized Populations Self-Organize in Africa and China
- Metallurgical Practice, Technology and Age in the Southern Urals, Russia
- Kinship, Women's Labor and China's Ethnic Boundaries and Cultural Change
- Oppression and Mental Health in Nepal
- A History of the Impact of Euro-American Infrastructure
- An Ethnoarcheological and Archeological Investigation of the Operation of and Reactivity

LAMAR S. SMITH, Texas  
CHAIRMAN

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2321 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6301  
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www.house.gov

February 10, 2015

The Honorable France A. Cordova  
Director  
National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22230

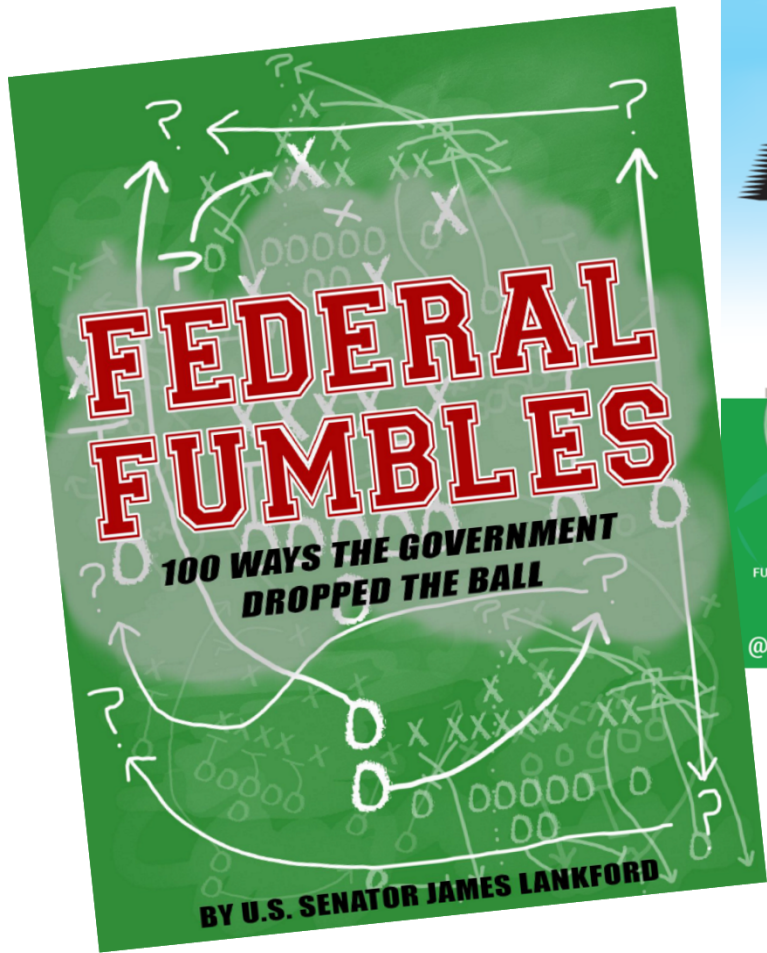
Dear Dr. Cordova,

The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology is continuing its oversight of the National Science Foundation (NSF). As part of this oversight, I have previously requested copies of documents and information related to the NSF grant consideration and approval process. To date, the NSF has not complied with these requests. Although the Committee is availing itself of the limited access to documents that you have provided, I still have questions regarding the grant process.

The Committee requests that the NSF produce all documents including, but not limited to, every e-mail, letter, memorandum, record, note, text message, peer views considered for selection and recommendations made by the research panel to the NSF referring or relating to the NSF's consideration and approval for the grants listed below, including any approved amendments to the following grants, in electronic format:

1. "GeoInformatics: Leveraging the Paleobiology Database for Research, Education, Mentorship, and Interoperability." (Award #0949416)
2. "Bringing Dioramas to Life Through Community Voices." (Award #0915778)
3. "Trial Network to Bring Music to the Study of Biology." (Award #0956196)
4. "Enhancing Diversity in Environmental Biology." (Award #0829236)
5. "Preparing to Prepare the 21st Century Biology Student: Using Scientific Societies as Change Agents for the Introductory Biology Experience." (Award #0840911)
6. "Biogeochemical Modification of Seawater CO2 Chemistry in Near-Shore Environments: Effect of Ocean Acidification." (Award #1255042)
7. "Atmospheric Mixed Phase Chemistry for Improved Climate Predictions: Field Measurements and Modelling of the Southern Oxidant and Aerosol Study." (Award #1242258)
8. "Synoptic Geospace Systems Analysis Utilizing Instrumentation from South Pole and McMurdo Stations." (Award #1248062)
9. "Random, Stochastic, and Self-similar Equations." (Award #1106982)

EDGE BERNICE JOHNSON, Texas  
RANKING MEMBER



# FEDERAL DIETS

## QUICK STATS

- ✘ CONFERENCE: Spending
- ✘ TEAM: National Institutes of Health
- FUMBLE: \$2,658,929 weight-loss program for truck drivers
- RECOVERY: Congress should develop clearer expectations for areas of research for NIH

The American economy is powered in no small part by the thousands of trucks on the road

This extended program was designed to determine whether those who successfully

## Weight-loss program for truck drivers

*“NIH should have thought twice before funding programs when private funding of research studies is a better avenue. Congress, in consultation with NIH and other research institutes, can better assess areas of federal research.”*

individuals who completed motivational interviewing sessions and computer-based training were better able to make healthy living decisions. Those who engaged in the challenging six-month study were then given the chance to participate in a 30-month study.<sup>37</sup>

for American taxpayers of \$2.6 billion over four years.<sup>41</sup> NIH should have thought twice before funding programs when private funding of research studies is a better avenue. Congress, in consultation with NIH and other research institutes, can better assess areas of federal research.

[For more information, please visit:](#)

[NIH RePORT: Project Information](#)

[US National Library of Medicine. NIH: Weight Loss Maintenance Among SHIFT Pilot Study Participants 30-Months Post-Intervention](#)





## LOVE AT FIRST SWIPE

### Love at First Swipe

*“Uncle Sam wants you to swipe right and is spending nearly \$1 million to learn how those looking for love online decide to pursue a romantic relationship.”*

the action taken on the popular dating app, Tinder, which allows users to peruse other singles in their area. When Tinder users view profiles, which contain photos, a brief bio, and shared interests on social media, they can either “swipe right” to indicate interest, or “swipe left” to move onto the next profile. When two users swipe right on each other, an official match is

### NSF’s Rebuttal

*“The researchers used the context of online dating to address core questions facing society today. Those include how basic social psychological and judgmental processes change in a situation where the algorithms built into apps and social media sites play a part in communications and people receive information solely through computers, without the social cues provided in person-to-person contact.”*



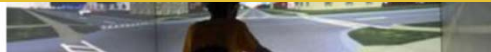
# WANTED BY THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER

\$872,164 TO STUDY HOW CHILDREN CROSS THE STREET

Most children learn all they need to know about safely crossing the street from their parents who teach them simple but important safety tips such as looking both ways before crossing the street.

## Study How Children Cross the Street

*“Ultimately, the NSF grant spent close to a million dollars to tell us that children take greater risks when crossing the street than adults—something generations of American parents already know.”*

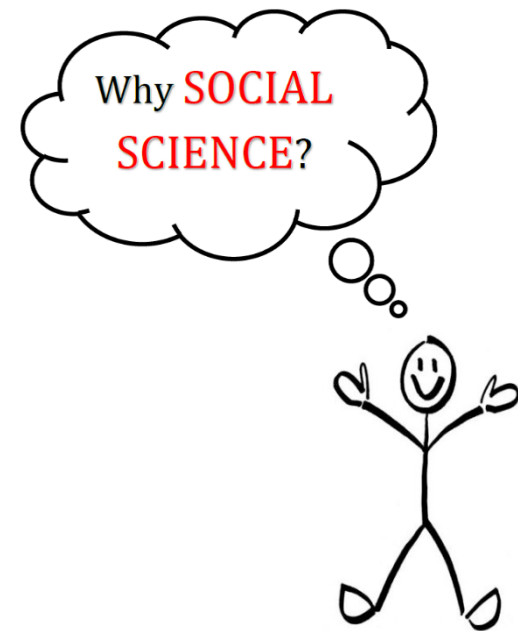


## NSF's Rebuttal

*“The grant is focused on better understanding perception, judgement, and decision-making – by examining children’s use of visual information to guide selection and timing of motor behaviors.”*

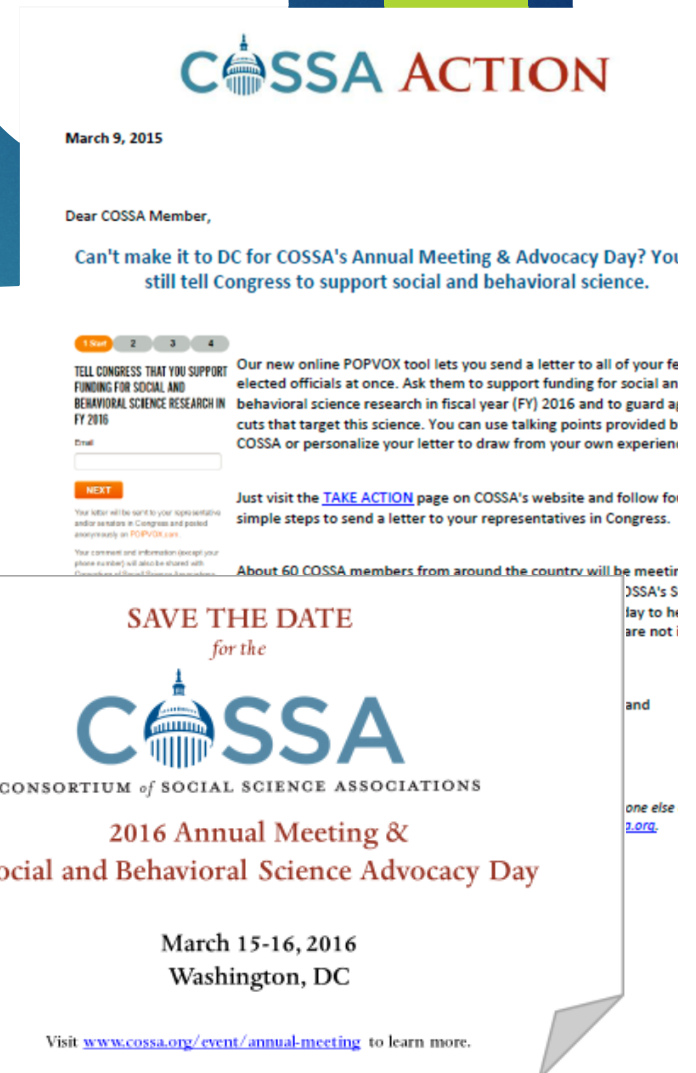


- ▶ Attacks force us to constantly play defense.
  - ▶ Once attack surfaces, already too late.
- ▶ Try to stay on offense – enter you!



# What can you do?

- ▶ **JOIN US** in Washington on March 15-16, 2016:  
<http://www.cossa.org/event/2016-annual-meeting>
- ▶ **SIGN UP** for our newsletter and alerts:  
<http://www.cossa.org/category/update>
- ▶ **TAKE ACTION** by responding to COSSA alerts:  
<http://www.cossa.org/advocacy/take-action>
- ▶ **SHARE YOUR STORIES** of social science success: <http://www.cossa.org/share-your-stories>
- ▶ **PROVIDE FEEDBACK**



The image shows a screenshot of the COSSA ACTION website and a flyer. The website header features the COSSA ACTION logo, with 'COSSA' in blue and 'ACTION' in red. Below the logo, the date 'March 9, 2015' is displayed. A greeting 'Dear COSSA Member,' is followed by the text: 'Can't make it to DC for COSSA's Annual Meeting & Advocacy Day? You still tell Congress to support social and behavioral science.' A progress indicator shows steps 1, 2, 3, and 4, with step 1 highlighted. Step 1 is titled 'TELL CONGRESS THAT YOU SUPPORT FUNDING FOR SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE RESEARCH IN FY 2016' and includes a 'Draft' label and a text input field. Step 2 is titled 'NEXT' and includes a 'NEXT' button. To the right of the progress indicator, there is a paragraph explaining the POPVOX tool: 'Our new online POPVOX tool lets you send a letter to all of your elected officials at once. Ask them to support funding for social and behavioral science research in fiscal year (FY) 2016 and to guard against cuts that target this science. You can use talking points provided by COSSA or personalize your letter to draw from your own experience.' Below this, there is a 'NEXT' button and a paragraph: 'Just visit the TAKE ACTION page on COSSA's website and follow for simple steps to send a letter to your representatives in Congress.' At the bottom of the website screenshot, there is a line of text: 'About 60 COSSA members from around the country will be meeting in Washington, DC on March 15-16, 2016. COSSA's S... lay to h... are not i... and... one else... .org.' The flyer below is titled 'SAVE THE DATE for the COSSA CONSORTIUM of SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS 2016 Annual Meeting & Social and Behavioral Science Advocacy Day March 15-16, 2016 Washington, DC'. It includes the COSSA logo and a URL: 'Visit [www.cossa.org/event/annual-meeting](http://www.cossa.org/event/annual-meeting) to learn more.'



Wendy Naus, Executive Director

Email: [wnaus@coffa.org](mailto:wnaus@coffa.org)

Web: [www.coffa.org](http://www.coffa.org)

@COSSADC • #WhySocialScience