Appropriations Update

On September 30, Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) to keep the federal government funded through December 3, 2010. The CR was necessary because Congress failed to pass any of the 12 appropriations bills before Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 ended on September 30, 2010. The CR funds most agencies at last year’s funding levels with the exception of a few, including the Census Bureau. The Bureau’s funding level was reduced from over $7 billion in FY 2010 to a rate equal to $964 million annually, the amount recommended for FY 2011.

At press time, Congress was reconvening on Monday, November 29 for a lame duck session. During this special session, Congress is expected to address the unfinished FY 2011 appropriations business by rolling all twelve appropriations bills into one omnibus appropriations bill. However, there is a possibility, particularly given opposition Senate Republicans expressed in November to an omnibus bill, that Congress will enact a long-term CR. PAA communicated its concerns about a long-term CR to congressional leaders in a recent letter, which is posted at: http://www.populationassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/letter-to-House-and-Senate-on-final-FY-2011-omnibus-10-101.pdf.

Election Results and Consequences

The mid-term elections affected the balance of power in the U.S. House of Representatives and narrowed the margin of control in the U.S. Senate. Republicans will be leading the House with a margin of 240 to 190 seats. As of mid-November, five seats remained undecided. On the Senate side, Republicans picked up six seats to narrow the Democratic margin from 53-46.

In the House of Representatives, 51 current members lost their re-election bids. Some of the most senior members who were not re-elected include Rep. John Spratt (D-SC), Chairman of the House Budget Committee and Rep. James Oberstar (D-MN), Conservative Democrat and Chairman of House Transportation Committee. In the Senate, four current members were defeated in the general election—most notably, Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI) and Senator Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.).

The shift in the House will bring new leaders to the chamber and new chairman to the committees and subcommittees. At press time, only House leaders had been chosen. The new Speaker of the House is Congressman John Boehner (R-OH), and outgoing Speaker, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, will be the House Minority Leader. Committee chairs will not be announced officially until after the new Congress convenes in late January 2011.

Since the Democrats retain control of the Senate, there will not be many changes to the committee or leadership positions. Senator Harry Reid (D-NV) won his re-election bid and is expected to remain Senate Majority Leader, while Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) expects to remain the Senate Minority Leader.
Research groups will be watching closely two new members of the U.S. Senate: Patrick Toomey (R-PA) and Mark Kirk (R-IL). In 2003, as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, Patrick Toomey introduced an amendment to the Labor-HHS appropriations bill to de-fund five NIH awarded grants. Mark Kirk is a former House member and served on the Board of the Population Resource Center.

Prior to the election, Speaker-Elect Boehner and the House Republicans released their agenda entitled “Pledge to America.” Among its provisions is a proposal to cut federal spending by $100 billion next year. To achieve this ambitious goal, spending for most federal programs in FY 2011 would have to be rolled back to FY 2008 levels. The American Association for the Advancement of Science has calculated this proposal would cost NSF $1 billion or 19 percent of its budget and the NIH $2.9 billion or nine percent of its budget. The PAA will be working with its coalitions and members to educate Congress and the Administration about the implications of such draconian cuts for our federal agencies of interest.

Agency News

White House

Office of Management and Budget
On November 18, the U.S. Senate confirmed the nomination of Jacob Lew to serve as Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Mr. Lew replaces Peter Orzag who left OMB on July 30, 2010.

Office of Science and Technology
On September 16, the U.S. Senate confirmed Nobel prize-winner Carl Wieman as Associate Director for Science in the White House’s Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). Dr. Wieman will report to the OSTP Director, Dr. John Holdren and, according to the AAAS, “..spearhead the administration’s push to improve science education, drawing upon his pioneering work at the University of Colorado, Boulder, to strengthen the undergraduate training of science and math teachers.”

National Institutes of Health

Dr. Rebecca Clark confirmed as Chief, NICHD DBSB – On September 20, Dr. Guttmacher announced to the Institute’s Advisory Council that Dr. Rebecca Clark had been hired as Chief of the Demographic, Behavioral, and Social Sciences Branch. Dr. Clark had been acting chief since 2008.

NICHD Vision Process – On September 20, Dr. Guttmacher announced the next step in the ongoing NICHD Vision Process, which the Institute initiated to frame its future research agenda. Most input will be garnered through a series of nine thematic workshops to be held early next year. Based on input from NICHD staff and a select group of outside stakeholders, including PAA, the members of all nine workshop-organizing groups have been selected. PAA members Linda Waite and Jeanne Brooks-
Gunn are among the elite group of participants selected to date. The organizers are holding preliminary planning discussions and finalizing workshop dates. NICHD will share draft Vision statement(s) with its Council in September 2011, after the conclusion of all workshops and the final conference, tentatively scheduled for late June. Information about the Vision process is posted at: http://www.nichd.nih.gov/vision/.

**NIH 2008-9 Biennial Report**—On September 22, NIH Director Dr. Collins announced the release of the Biennial Report of the Director, NIH, for fiscal years 2008 and 2009. The report provides an integrated portrait of NIH research activities, making it easy for Congress, advocates and patient groups and the general public to understand the many activities of the agency. It is the second report under the mandate in the NIH Reform Act, which reinvented the NIH Biennial as a consolidated report, replacing many disparate ones. Now on NIH’s website, at http://report.nih.gov/biennialreport/, the report will be available in print this fall. The report contains information about population research activities at NIA and NICHD and specifically mentions the Health and Retirement Study, Fragile Families, ADD Health, and the New Immigrant Study.

**National Science Foundation**

**Dr. Subra Suresh confirmed as new NSF Director**—On September 29, the U.S. Senate confirmed the nomination of Dr. Subra Suresh as the new director of the National Science Foundation. Dr. Suresh replaces Dr. Arden Bement, who left NSF at the end of May after serving as director since 2004. Director Suresh has a bachelor’s degree from the Indian Institute of Technology in Madras, an M.S. from Iowa State University, and a Sc.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

**PAA Submits white paper to NSF SBE Directorate**—On September 15, PAA submitted a paper to the National Science Foundation Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate in response to request from the agency. Specifically, the SBE Directorate asked interested individuals and organizations to submit recommendations for future SBE research directions. PAA President convened a working group of PAA members to help inform the organization’s response. The white paper is posted on the PAA home page at: http://www.populationassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/NSF2020SBEresearchdirections_WhitePaper-10-10.pdf.

**PAA in Washington DC**

**PAA Cosponsors World Statistics Day**—On October 20, PAA joined the American Statistical Association, and 24 other organizations, to sponsor an open house and briefing on Capitol Hill, commemorating World Statistics Day. The program featured presentations by Chief Statistician of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, Katherine Wallman, and Census Bureau Director, Dr. Robert Groves.

**PAA Participates in NIH OppNet conference**—On October 28 -29, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) OppNet, (NIH Basic Behavioral and Social Science Research Opportunity Network) held a two-day meeting, "OppNet: Expanding Opportunities in
Basic Behavioral and Social Science Research," to chart future directions for this large-scale, trans-NIH initiative. Meeting participants provided NIH with opinions on directions in the basic social and behavioral sciences. There was also an exploration of longer-range issues in the field. PAA President, Robert Mare, and PAA Vice President, Sandra Hofferth, participated in the conference.