

ary, NAAEE also will launch its series of "Educators Resource Guides" that will contain summarized reviews of texts and other available materials.

Other reformers are setting their sights on the textbook industry. "Publishers have a responsibility to produce better materials," says Michael Glantz, a member of the Marshall Institute's commission and program director of the environmental and societal impacts group at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado. Indeed, the commission has decided to direct its suggestions to the textbook industry. The upcoming report will include recommendations for ensuring greater accuracy in texts

and perhaps for improving the scientific peer-review process, says Jeff Salmon, the Marshall Institute's executive director.

Some critics are calling for a parental rebellion against green education. Sanera and Jane Shaw of the libertarian Political Economy Research Center in Bozeman, Montana, recently published a book that encourages parents to challenge teachers, school boards, and state legislators to clean up green education. Marianne Moody Jennings has already taken that route: A year after she first saw her daughter's algebra text, she and other parents have convinced the Mesa Public School District to switch to more traditional math books for some classes

beginning in January.

But while debate can be healthy, many educators say a generalized revolt could do more harm than good. Harold Hungerford, president of the Center for Instruction Development and Evaluation at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, says it's important to take a critical look at what schoolchildren are learning, but "in the classrooms I've been in, kids are learning a lot about ecology and economics and how to make good decisions. I sure respect them."

—Karen F. Schmidt

*Karen F. Schmidt is a free-lance writer in Greenville, N.C.*

## BUDGET '98

### Gibbons Warns of Decline in R&D

Every year around Thanksgiving, White House budgeteers tell federal agency managers how much money the Administration intends to request from Congress for their programs in its upcoming budget. This year, the message was a real turkey for scientists:



Most agencies have been told to expect less in the 1998 fiscal year, which begins next October, than they received this fiscal year. And that's not all. Last week, Jack Gibbons, the president's science adviser, warned agency officials that their budgets through 2002 won't be keeping up with inflation, and that they would need to trim their staffs to avoid significant cuts to R&D programs. "We'll all have to practice some triage," he says.

That bleak picture dominated a press briefing by Gibbons on R&D in the second Clinton Administration. But the Administration hasn't forgotten about science; Gibbons also announced that his Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) was planning a series of meetings with state governors, industry managers, and members of Congress to explore the future of U.S. research and development. The idea, he says, is to build on the new spirit of cooperation between Democrats and Republicans following 2 years of bitter recriminations over the direction of government funding. It's also an attempt to shore up support for R&D in the face of a drive to erase the deficit by 2002 by trimming domestic discretionary spending, of which R&D is a small piece.

In the meantime, R&D is fighting for a bigger slice of the president's 1998 budget request, which is slated to go to Congress in February. *Science* has learned that the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) late last month told NASA, the Department of Energy's (DOE's) civilian re-

search program, and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to expect requests below the amounts appropriated by Congress in 1997. The National Science Foundation (NSF) fared slightly better, with a roughly level budget, according to government sources. NASA and DOE officials say they are disappointed with the overall OMB levels but can live within the constraints, while NIH seems likely to win a modest increase. NSF officials say they are especially concerned about the impact on the foundation of a mandated governmentwide 5% cut in personnel.

Gibbons declined to discuss the 1998 request in detail, but he says "it will show clear signs that the president is still very attentive to the need to protect the science budget" at a time when all government spending is under the knife. He acknowledged, however, that few agencies will win a level budget request, and those whose request matches the rate of inflation will be even rarer. Gibbons singled NIH out for praise, noting that its good fortune in the past 2 years—annual increases of nearly 6% and 7%—is due in large part to its success in explaining its work to the public. "The rest of the research community needs to understand the value of communication" in garnering support from lawmakers, he says.

Even so, that support did not prevent OMB from rejecting NIH's request for a 9% boost in the current \$12.75 billion budget, according to NIH-watchers on Capitol Hill. This was a smaller initial request than NIH has sought in recent years, but even so, sources say the White House response was harsh. One biomedical lobbyist says OMB instead has proposed a decrease of about \$200

million from the current level. Although Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala is expected to appeal to the president if OMB isn't more generous, she must compete with Clinton's repeated campaign promises to boost spending on education and help former welfare clients find work.

Negotiations between OMB and the agencies will be intense over the next few weeks, leading up to the Administration's budget submission to Congress on 3 February. That is also when the first of a series of meetings on R&D policy will take place, as congressional leaders and Clinton discuss how

NASA can reconcile a shrinking budget with a growing list of programs planned for the next decade. Later in February, Gibbons will talk with governors about greater collaboration between the federal and state governments.

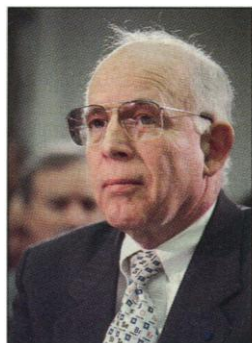
OSTP officials also are supportive of the nonprofit Council on Competitiveness (COC), which plans two regional R&D summits in February featuring industry, academia, and state and federal leaders. The group's annual meeting in Washington in March also could involve a

major discussion of R&D, says COC spokesperson Brenda Siler.

As for his own situation, Gibbons reiterated his desire to remain on the job, although he faces a continuing struggle between an OMB eager to restrict spending and science agencies desperate to win some measure of fiscal relief. And he told researchers to expect sympathy but no special treatment from the White House as the budget tourniquet tightens. "Everyone has to carry part of the load," he says.

—Andrew Lawler

*With additional reporting by Eliot Marshall.*



**Tough talk.** Gibbons tells U.S. researchers to expect less.