

THE INDEPENDENT COLLEGES OFFICE

Memorandum Number 47

February 3, 1977

TO: ICO and GLCA Science and Social Science Department Chairmen

FROM: Ida Wallace, Director

SUBJECT: Request for Assistance to Make our Case for National Science Foundation Education Programs

President Wenzlau of Ohio Wesleyan will be testifying on the National Science Foundation Education Directorate budget for Fiscal 1978 on February 16. He will be speaking for GLCA and also the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities before Congressional Committees. We are requesting to appear in March and April also.

This is to let you know some of the things happening at the National Science Foundation:

- + The Science Education budget request for FY 1978 is presently \$75.7 million, including \$12.4 million for Graduate Fellowships and Minority Graduate Traineeships -- a little better than the past five years in actual dollars but no better in real dollars.
- + The Undergraduate Research Participation (URP) program is being cut back by \$400,000 to a total of \$2.1 million. In Fiscal 1966, URP's budget was a high of \$6.8 million. The rationale for the reduction this year is that the number of scientists is becoming too great; therefore, this program, which stimulates the production of scientists must be cut back.

In the past, our scientists and social scientists have ranked URP as their favorite NSF program. Please write the Independent Colleges Office of your experiences with this program and your arguments to support it (or not) to incorporate into our testimony. Send me rough drafts or handwritten letters but do please send your responses soon if you feel strongly about this program.

- + Several plans for a new cabinet-level Department of Education would affect NSF Education programs. One bill, introduced by Senator Humphrey, would shift the Science Education programs from NSF to the new Education Department. This would interfere with what we have termed in previous testimony, the necessary continuum of science which must include science education at all levels with the total science concern. Another plan would shift all NSF to the Department of Education. Your comments on these possibilities are welcome.
- + NSF is preparing a report requested by Congress on research grants to four-year colleges. We have discussed with staff the data NSF is compiling, and I am forced to conclude that our institutions must make a separate case on their position on this. My cursory review proves that our scientists are less likely to receive basic research grants from NSF now than they were in the 60's, something NSF staff deny. But lumping our colleges with all the four-year colleges may bolster NSF's contention that, "Good people get funding" and, by implication, less able ones don't. NSF staff feel that getting four-year college faculty to university campuses to work with their grantees as research associates is a good answer to our problems. As for the argument about the value of research taking place on our campuses, I was told, "NSF will resist mightily."

We would appreciate your views about ways around these dilemmas and your priorities among NSF programs on the enclosed sheet. We hope you will send us your answers as soon as possible.

IW/kdh

enclosure to all: NSF Program Questionnaire