

**DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN  
SERVICES, EDUCATION AND RELATED AGENCIES  
APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1991**

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**HEARINGS**

BEFORE A

**SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
ONE HUNDRED FIRST CONGRESS**

SECOND SESSION

**Part 2 (Pages 1-1209)**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

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**NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DEAFNESS AND OTHER COMMUNICATION  
DISORDERS**

**STATEMENT OF DR. JAMES B. SNOW, JR., DIRECTOR**

**ACCOMPANIED BY DR. JAY MOSKOWITZ, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR SCIENCE POLICY AND LEGISLATION, NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH**

**SUMMARY STATEMENT**

Senator HARKIN. Dr. Snow, Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, we are delighted to have you with us as the first permanent Director of the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders.

You set another precedent in being the first senior scientist recruited to serve at NIH from the private sector in many years, and we are delighted that you have agreed to lead this very important endeavor.

As you know, I have a strong interest in your Institute and want to follow what you are doing very carefully and want to be as supportive as possible.

I also want to give my public thanks again to Dr. Moskowitz next to you for helping to establish the Deafness Institute and to get it going for the last year, and I know you are delighted to be back in your other position again and have Dr. Snow on board, but you have done a great job in getting it going and I really appreciate it very much.

Dr. Snow, your request for next year is \$122.85 million or a 4.48-percent increase. Again, welcome and please proceed.

Dr. SNOW. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. In the 1½ years since the Institute was created by the Congress great strides have been made. We are particularly indebted to Dr. Jay Moskowitz for his very able stewardship that he provided the new institute during its initial development. Our goal is to maximize the gains that can be realized from research on human communication.

The NIDCD is pleased to join with other institutes at the NIH in celebrating the "Decade of the Brain." Neurobiology is an important component of our research portfolio, both extramurally and intramurally. An example of the focus of the NIDCD on neurobiology is neural regeneration. Regeneration of nervous tissue after injury and illness occurs in very few places in the human body. Interestingly, nasal neuroepithelium is one tissue that does have the ability to regenerate. Research in this area has profound implications for the repair and regeneration of the nervous system.

Scientists supported by the NIDCD have utilized the tools of molecular biology and molecular genetics to uncover important information on how human communication systems work at a funda-

mental level. I am very pleased to report that the gene for Usher's syndrome has been found on chromosome 1 by NIDCD-supported scientists. As you may know, Usher's syndrome causes deafness and blindness. These are areas that I intend to encourage for development and expansion.

Noise exposure represents the most common preventable cause of hearing loss today. The NIDCD sponsored a consensus development conference on noise and hearing loss at the NIH from January 22d to the 24th of this year. The statement drafted by the conference panel provided recommendations and avenues for future research related to noise and hearing loss.

One-half of our children have ear infections before they reach their first birthday, and 9 out of 10 children have ear infections by the time they are 6 years old. Otitis media is the leading cause of acquired hearing loss before age 10. The NIDCD, in collaboration with the NIAID, and the NICHD, is issuing a solicitation for research on a vaccine against otitis media.

Institute supported scientists have made great advances in therapeutic approaches to speech, voice and language disorders. This year investigators in the NIDCD intramural program were the first to demonstrate a successful treatment for voice tremor. I intend for our intramural program to provide a model to the scientific community in molecular biology and molecular genetics, to conduct clinical trials of promising new therapies and to serve as a national training resource.

Last year we reported to you on our research plan, the national strategic research plan. We now have a training plan. We are establishing a Physician-Scientist Award. Special emphasis will be placed on research training of underrepresented minorities and communicatively impaired individuals.

#### PREPARED STATEMENT

We plan to award several national multipurpose research and training centers this year. In addition, the Institute has undertaken a number of activities toward the development of an information clearinghouse.

Mr. Chairman, the fiscal year 1991 budget request favors basic research and totals \$122,847,000. I will be pleased to answer any questions you might have.

[The statement follows:]

## STATEMENT OF DR. JAMES B. SNOW, JR.

I am honored to appear before this Committee as the first permanent Director of the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD). In the year and a half since the Institute was created by the Congress great strides have been made. We are particularly indebted to Dr. Jay Moskowitz for the very able stewardship he provided for the new Institute. Under his superb leadership, a fully functioning administrative staff was assembled and all of the legislative mandates for the NIDCD have been initiated or planned. Excellent extramural and intramural scientific programs were transferred to the new Institute and we intend to build on that strong foundation. Our goal is to maximize the gains that can be realized from research on human communication. We are supporting research across the entire biomedical spectrum, from basic research to clinical studies to technology transfer and to prevention and rehabilitation. The basic research is building a foundation for the next generation, while many of the clinical and rehabilitation programs are aimed at helping those with disabilities today, improving their lives. I am very pleased to be able to share with you selections from exciting scientific advances from our areas of science as well as highlights of research plans of the Institute.

The NIDCD is pleased to join with several other Institutes at the NIH in celebrating the Decade of the Brain. Neurobiology is an important component of our research portfolio, both extramurally and intramurally. The NIDCD observed its first anniversary this October and elected to celebrate with a scientific lecture on the cutting edge of neurobiology and auditory research. An example of the focus of NIDCD on neurobiology is in neural regeneration. Regeneration of neural tissue after injury and illness occurs in very few places in the human body. Interestingly, nasal neuroepithelium is one tissue that does have the ability to regenerate. As scientists supported by the NIDCD seek to unlock the clues to why olfactory tissue has this ability, the information they learn can be applied to other nonregenerative tissues. Other NIDCD-supported researchers have determined that olfactory neuroepithelium is a source of renewal of olfactory receptor neurons, which have a powerful nourishing effect on the brain, and can be a direct source of additional cells for the brain. Scientists are now identifying the