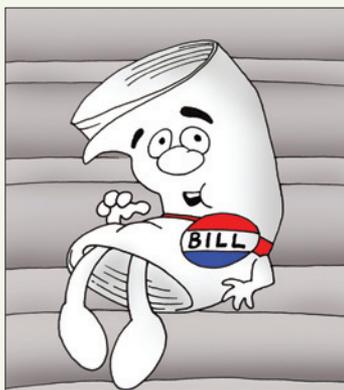


ASCB Proposes Basic Research Report Language

The 1970s U.S. television cartoon series *Schoolhouse Rock!* episode “I’m Just a Bill” is a surprisingly good tutorial on how a bill becomes a law in the U.S. Congress. However, it is not comprehensive.

In reality, when committees of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate pass bills, they write reports to accompany the bill. Congressional committees use these reports to describe what they intend the bills to do. This is necessary because exact intent cannot always be included in the text of the bill itself. Both courts and government agencies then use these reports to judge congressional intent and act accordingly.

With the FY11 budget process finally under way, the ASCB has suggested pro–basic biology research language for the report that will accompany the appropriations bill that funds the



“I’m Just a Bill” cartoon from *Schoolhouse Rock!*

U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH). The U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, and Education, the Senate committee that funds the NIH, has always been supportive of the NIH and of basic research, thanks to strong leadership by NIH champions Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Sen. Arlen Specter (D-PA).

A forecast of smaller increases in annual appropriations for the NIH will, however, intensify the competition for the limited funds among members of the NIH community. Therefore, the ASCB Public Policy staff felt that it was important to ask the Senate committee to reaffirm its support for NIH basic biology research funding.

When the report was published, it included a strong defense of basic research as part of intramural and extramural research at NIH. ■

—Kevin M. Wilson

Rockey Not “Acting” Anymore

Good things come to those who wait. Sally Rockey, who has served as the acting deputy director for the Office of Extramural Research at the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) since 2008, has formally been appointed deputy director.

In a memo announcing Rockey’s promotion, NIH Director Francis Collins highlighted some exemplary work she has accomplished as acting director. Collins said, “As just one example—though an enormously important one—of her many contributions to the agency, Sally demonstrated her outstanding leadership

during the NIH’s implementation of ARRA [the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009].”

Before joining the NIH in 2005, Rockey led the U.S. Department of Agriculture Extramural Competitive Research Program at the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service.

Rockey succeeds ASCB member Norka Ruiz Bravo, who left the NIH in 2008 and now serves as advisor for resource mobilization for research policy at the Pan American Health Organization. ■

—Kevin M. Wilson

