

American Statistical Association Endorses AAAS Statement of Concern Regarding Personal Attacks on Climate Scientists

MIAMI, FL (PRWEB) AUGUST 1, 2011 – The Board of Directors of the American Statistical Association (ASA), at its meeting here, expressed concern about recent and ongoing personal attacks on research scientists and endorsed the statement of the AAAS Board regarding attacks on climate scientists. The ASA, citing “the important role statisticians play in climate change research,” also stated its belief that the concern extends to researchers in all scientific disciplines.

“Disagreements about conclusions, methodology, or the data are an inherent part of scientific process,” the ASA Board said in its statement. “Indeed, it is through dialogue on such disagreements that science advances. Personal attacks, however, are not part of this process and interfere with it. Science operates at its best when scientists—no matter their viewpoint—have the freedom to state their scientific views.” The complete Board statement may be read at <http://www.amstat.org/about/pressreleases/ASABoardStatements.pdf>.

The AAAS Board statement of concern, “Regarding Personal Attacks on Climate Scientists,” which was approved on 28 June, said, “AAAS vigorously opposes attacks on researchers that question their personal and professional integrity or threaten their safety based on displeasure with their scientific conclusions... Scientists should not be subjected to fraud investigations or harassment simply for providing scientific results that are controversial.”

In other action, the ASA Board also endorsed the six recommendations in the AERA (American Educational Research Association) “Report and Recommendations for the Reauthorization of the Institute of Education Sciences.” The report and especially the section on the National Center for Education Statistics supports ASA’s 2009 request to the Secretary of Education to “ensure the autonomy, authority and stature of NCES in the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) reauthorization.” The text of the ASA statement is available at <http://www.amstat.org/about/pressreleases/ASABoardStatementsB.pdf>

The Board also expressed its disappointment in the recent Senate action (S. 679) to remove confirmation of the president’s appointment for NCES commissioner and points to the move as a reason for the Administration and Congress to quickly take up reauthorization of the IES legislation.

The ASA Board meeting occurred during the annual Joint Statistical Meetings, which is the largest annual gathering of statisticians in the world. JSM continues through Thursday, August 4.

About the Joint Statistical Meetings

JSM, which has been held annually since 1974, is conducted jointly with the American Statistical Association (ASA), the International Biometric Society (ENAR and WNAR), the Institute of Mathematical Statistics (IMS), the Statistical Society of Canada (SSC), the International Chinese Statistical Association, and the International Indian Statistical Association. JSM activities include oral presentations, panel sessions, poster presentations, continuing education courses, exhibit hall (with state-of-the-art statistical products and opportunities), career placement service, society and section business meetings, committee meetings, social activities, and networking opportunities.

About the American Statistical Association

Headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, the American Statistical Association is the world’s largest community of statisticians and the second oldest continuously operating professional society in

the United States. For 170 years, the ASA has supported excellence in the development, application, and dissemination of statistical science through meetings, publications, membership services, education, accreditation, and advocacy. Its members serve in industry, government, and academia in more than 90 countries, advancing research and promoting sound statistical practice to inform public policy and improve human welfare. For additional information about the American Statistical Association, please visit the ASA web site at <http://www.amstat.org> or call 703.684.1221.

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