

Science Policy Office

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Last week, Congress took a major step forward in restoring order to the federal budget and appropriations process. The bipartisan budget agreement sets the overall discretionary spending levels for FY2014 and FY2015; paving the way for passage of appropriations bills through regular order.

Mostly notably, the budget deal provides some relief from the across-the-board spending cuts known as sequestration, increasing overall discretionary spending by about \$63 billion above sequester levels. The reprieve from sequestration for the next two fiscal years is a tremendous victory for our community and shows the power of grassroots advocacy. When we work together with a united voice, Congress listens.

However, the budget battle is not yet finished. Over the next few weeks, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees are working to finalize FY2014 funding levels for the National Science Foundation and USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) and Agricultural Research Service (ARS).

There is a very short window of opportunity to influence budget priorities during these negotiations. It is critical that members of Congress hear from researchers and students about the importance of research funding. You have a unique opportunity to impact the future of research by contacting your members of Congress and asking them to support research funding agencies in FY2014.

To email your members of Congress in support of AFRI and ARS [click here](#).

To email your members of Congress in support of NSF [click here](#).

The time to act is now. Be a voice for research and email your members of Congress today!

Dear:

Thank you for reaching a budget compromise that provides relief from sequestration for fiscal years 2014 and 2015. However, the task of building up the United States economy is just beginning. Scientific innovation and investments in knowledge-based capital are the foundation of a strong economy.

As you work to complete the FY2014 budget appropriations, I urge you to support the Senate's level of funding for the National Science Foundation for fiscal year 2014 at \$7.4 billion.

Scientific innovation is the result of long-term strategic commitments. Federal research initiatives and government support have enabled the United States to sustainably confront many challenges, such as food safety and security, natural resource management and clean energy



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production. The National Science Foundation is uniquely positioned to increase the broad knowledge base and institutional capacity of qualified scientists, engineers, and other technical workers required to address these upcoming challenges.

I understand the broader fiscal pressure our nation faces and encourage you to make strategic investments in our economy through scientific innovation and learning.

I look forward to supporting you in this important effort. Thank you for consideration.

Sincerely,

Dear:

As you work to finish fiscal year 2014 appropriations for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, I urge you to support critical USDA agriculture research programs.

Specifically, I strongly support \$316 million for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) as provided in the Senate Agriculture Appropriations bill (S.1244). AFRI is the premier competitive grants program for fundamental and applied research, extension and education in support of our nation's food and agricultural systems.

Now is the time to move agricultural research ahead by increasing funding for competitive grants to address some of the Nation's most pressing challenges: severe weather management, depleted water resources, and emerging plant pest risks.

Additionally, I support \$1.123 billion for the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) as provided in S.1244. ARS research programs and technologies ensures high-quality, safe food, assesses the nutritional needs of Americans, helps to sustain a competitive agricultural economy, enhances the natural resource base, and provides economic opportunities for rural citizens and communities.

I understand the broader fiscal pressure our nation faces and encourage you to make strategic investments in our economy through scientific innovation.

The budgetary decisions made today have far reaching impacts: scientific research funded today will be responsible for enhancing the Nation's agricultural productivity and economic prosperity in the future.

I look forward to supporting you in this important effort. Thank you for consideration.

Sincerely,

