



April 21, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman
House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
Ranking Member
House Committee on Science, Space and Technology
394 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Johnson:

The undersigned member organizations of the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) hope to continue working with you to produce the strongest possible legislation to reauthorize the America COMPETES Act, incorporating the spirit and commitment of the original act and setting forth a robust vision of our nation's global leadership in science and technology. We also hope that you will adhere as closely as possible to the attached "Guiding Principles" presented in 2013 to the House Science, Space, and Technology Committee by a broad coalition of scientific societies, institutions of higher education, and private-sector businesses.

We are very concerned with Title I, pertaining to the National Science Foundation (NSF), of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2015 (H.R. 1806) introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives on April 15, 2015. While H.R. 1806 addresses some concerns raised by the scientific community last year in the FIRST Act (H.R. 4186, 113th Congress), major issues remain that will negatively affect NSF and the scientific community that relies on NSF. H.R. 1806 includes specific budget authorization levels for each of the individual directorates at NSF, as was the case in last year's FIRST Act. We object to this approach and also to the committee's decision

The Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) is an alliance of over 140 professional organizations, universities, and businesses advocating support for the National Science Foundation.

to significantly reduce funding levels for two specific directorates: Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences (SBE) and Geosciences (GEO). This approach runs contrary to the Guiding Principles, which call on the committee to “make a strong statement that the United States sees funding across all disciplines of basic scientific research as a top national priority” and to avoid offsets for any funding increases that could force “significant and potentially detrimental tradeoffs between one field of science and another.”

During the 16 years since Congress last authorized funding by directorate, NSF has adopted highly regarded long-range prioritization policies for determining budget priorities; these include formulating decadal reports, convening expert workshops, and continuously gathering input from the science community. Setting authorization levels according to directorate will reduce the flexibility NSF requires to take advantage of unanticipated discoveries and insights, which are coming ever more rapidly in the modern age. For the United States to remain globally competitive, it is essential that Congress continue to provide NSF the ability to fund grant proposals that advance knowledge in promising scientific areas, whether within or across fields, including the physical, mathematical, natural, social and behavioral sciences, engineering and computer sciences. This broad-based approach has driven American pre-eminence in innovation for decades and will continue to serve us well long into the future.

We deeply appreciate our relationship with the members and staff of the House Science, Space and Technology Committee. We believe by working together in the spirit of the original America COMPETES legislation we can help produce a bipartisan reauthorization bill that is supported not only by the members of the committee, but by the scientific and higher education communities as well. We stand ready to work with you to achieve that goal.

Sincerely,

Coalition For National Science Funding

Afterschool Alliance
Agriculture & Applied Economics Association
American Anthropological Association
American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Association for Dental Research
American Association of Physics Teachers
American Astronomical Society
American Chemical Society
American Educational Research Association
American Geosciences Institute
American Geophysical Union
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering
American Institute of Biological Sciences
American Institute of Physics
American Mathematical Society
American Physical Society
American Physiological Society
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association
American Society for Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
American Society for Engineering Education
American Society for Microbiology
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Civil Engineers
American Society of Mechanical Engineers
American Society of Plant Biologists
American Sociological Association
American Statistical Association
Arafune Government Relations Group
Archaeological Institute of America
Arctic Research Consortium of the U.S. (ARCUS)
Associated Universities, Inc.
Association for Psychological Science
Association for the Sciences of Limnology & Oceanography
Association for Women in Mathematics
Association for Women in Science
Association of American Geographers
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Association of Science-Technology Centers
Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy, Inc. (AURA)
The Bagley Group, LLC
Biophysical Society
Boise State University
Boston University
Brown University
California Institute of Technology
Cavarocchi Ruscio Dennis Associates, LLC
Coalition for Academic Scientific Computation
Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation
Computing Research Association
Consortium for Ocean Leadership
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Consortium of Universities for the Advancement of Hydrologic Science
Cornell University
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Scientific Society Presidents
Council on Undergraduate Research
Crop Science Society of America
Duke University
Earthquake Engineering Research Institute
Ecological Society of America
Entomological Society of America
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences
Federation of Materials Societies
Florida State University
Genetics Society of America
Geological Society of America
Georgia Institute of Technology
Harvard University
Indiana University
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE-USA)
Lewis-Burke Associates LLC
Linguistic Society of America
Madison Associates LLC
George Mason University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Materials Research Society
Mathematical Association of America
Michigan State University
Museum of Science, Boston
National Association of Marine Laboratories (NAML)
National Communication Association
National Council for Science and the Environment
National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON)
National Ground Water Association
National Postdoctoral Association
National Science Teachers Association
National Society of Professional Engineers
New Mexico Optics Industry Association
North Carolina State University
Northern Illinois University
Northwestern University
The Ohio State University
Optical Society of America
Oregon State University
Ornithological Council
Pennsylvania State University
Population Association of America/Association of Population Centers
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Research!America
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
SAGE Publications Inc.
Seismological Society of America
Semiconductor Industry Association
Society for American Archaeology
Society for Historical Archaeology
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics
Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology
Society for Neuroscience
Society for Research in Child Development
Soil Science Society of America
SPIE
State University of New York System (SUNY)
State University of New York at Stony Brook
Stevens Institute of Technology
Texas Tech University
Tufts University
UNAVCO
University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
University of California
University of Chicago
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of Florida
University of Illinois
University of Michigan
University of Missouri System
University of New Mexico
University of New Orleans
University of Pennsylvania
University of South Carolina
University of Wisconsin
Vanderbilt University
The George Washington University
Washington State University
Washington University in St. Louis
Wells Consulting
West Virginia University
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution