



Coalition for National Science Funding

June 13, 2012

The Honorable first_name last_name
United States Senate
address
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator last_name :

As representatives of U.S. science, engineering, and higher education organizations, we write to you in strong support for the federal research and development budget of the National Science Foundation (NSF), and its mission—created over 60 years ago—to advance research across a broad spectrum of disciplines, research that has fueled American economic growth for decades.

NSF is unique among federal agencies in that it supports all disciplines in a balanced portfolio that uses the scientific peer review system as the foundation for awarding research grants based on merit.

As you prepare to debate the Commerce, Justice and Science (CJS) appropriations bill for fiscal year 2013, the undersigned organizations urge you to reject attempts to reduce funding for NSF. We also stand in strong opposition to legislative attempts to micromanage NSF and undermine the merit review process by singling out specific programs for elimination as recently occurred in the House.

In 2006, Alan Leshner, CEO of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, testified before the Senate in support of NSF research: “Every major issue facing modern society and every major issue facing our economic competitiveness will ultimately be multidisciplinary in nature...[requiring] the integration of the physical sciences or biological sciences with the social and behavioral sciences.”

We recognize the challenge that our nation faces in addressing the deficit and revitalizing our national economy. However, eliminating support for specific disciplines, such as the House did with respect to political science, sets a dangerous precedent that, in the end, will inhibit scientific progress and restrain our international competitiveness economically and with regard to national security. Congress should exercise its oversight responsibilities, but second-guessing the scientific process could have a chilling effect on scientists and young people considering a future in science. The country cannot afford to lose the incredible talent, experience, and energies of its scientists, regardless of their discipline.

Therefore, the undersigned organizations again urge you to protect the integrity of the scientific enterprise by ensuring that the NSF and its independent scientific panels determine where the best scientific opportunities are and how to absorb any potential reductions to its budget. Allocating federal investments competitively through scientific merit review is the very process that has led this country to be the world leader in science. We encourage you to provide Congressional oversight by protecting that process rather than allowing others to threaten critical contributions to our innovative spirit and knowledge base.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Any questions about this letter should be directed to Sam Pankin at 202-588-1100 or smr@ams.org

American Association for the Advancement of Science	California Institute of Technology	Optical Society of America
American Association of Physics Teachers	Case Western Reserve University	Oregon State University
American Astronomical Society	Cognitive Science Society	Penn State University
American Chemical Society	Columbia University	Population Association of America
American Economic Association	Computing Research Association	Psychonomic Society
American Educational Research Association	Consortium for Ocean Leadership	Purdue University
American Geophysical Union	Consortium of Social Science Associations	Pennselaer Polytechnic Institute
American Geosciences Institute	Council of Energy Research and Education Leaders	Research!America
American Institute of Biological Sciences	Council of Environmental Deans and Directors	Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
American Institute of Physics	Council of Graduate Schools	Social Psychology Network
American Mathematical Society	Crop Science Society of America	Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology
American Physiological Society	CUAHSI	Society for Computers in Psychology
American Political Science Association	DOSEOC, Inc.	Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics
American Psychological Association	Duke University	Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology
American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology	Earthquake Engineering Research Institute	Society for Mathematical Psychology
American Society for Engineering Education	Ecological Society of America	Society for Research in Child Development
American Society for Microbiology	Emory University	Society of Experimental Social Psychology
American Society of Agronomy	Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences	Soil Science Society of America
American Society of Civil Engineers	Genetics Society of America	SPIE, International Society for Optics and Photonics
American Sociological Association	Geological Society of America	Stanford University
American Statistical Association	Georgia Institute of Technology	State University of New York
APS Physics	Harvard University	The Johns Hopkins University
Association for Psychological Science	Human Factors and Ergonomics Society	The Ohio State University
Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography	IEEE - USA	University at Albany
Association for Women in Mathematics	Indiana University	University of Arizona
Association for Women in Science	Kent State University	University of California System
Association of American Medical Colleges	Law and Society Association	University of Chicago
Association of American Universities	Linguistic Society of America	University of Colorado Boulder
Association of Environmental & Engineering Geologists	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	University of Delaware
Association of Independent Research Institutes	Mathematical Association of America	University of Illinois
Association of Population Centers	Michigan State University	University of Kentucky
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)	Midwest Political Science Association	University of Maryland
Association of Research Libraries	Museum of Science, Boston	University of Michigan
Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy	National Academy of Neuropsychology	University of Oregon
Association of University Research Parks	National Association of Marine Laboratories	University of Pennsylvania
Behavior Genetics Associations	National Communication Association	University of Washington
Binghamton University	National Council for Science and the Environment	University of Wisconsin - Madison
Biophysical Society	National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON)	Vanderbilt University
Brown University	National Postdoctoral Association	Washington University in St. Louis
	New York University	West Virginia University
	Northwestern University	Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution