



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, 113<sup>th</sup> 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