Statement on FY 2015 House Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Bill

The Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) commends Chairman Frank Wolf (R-VA), Ranking Member Chaka Fattah (D-PA), and their colleagues for crafting a Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations bill that places a high priority on basic science funding at the National Science Foundation (NSF). CNSF is an alliance of nearly 140 organizations concerned about the future vitality of the nation's science, mathematics, and engineering enterprise. The funding level for NSF in this bipartisan appropriations bill has broad support in the science and higher education communities.

Under Chairman Wolf's leadership, the CJS Appropriations bill will provide critical support for NSF programs at a time when federal investments in science have been dwindling to rates that do not keep pace with inflation or with other countries' significant investments. In recent years, China and other nations have been rapidly increasing their investments in scientific research at the same time American investments have been stagnating, thus creating an innovation deficit for the United States. The House FY 2015 CJS Appropriations bill will help close this innovation deficit.

The Appropriations Committee, recognizing the necessity of federal investments in basic science research, provides a modest boost in funding to NSF programs. The bill provides a 3.3% increase for NSF over FY 2014 estimates and 2.1% above the President's FY 2015 request. Within a tight federal budget, steady and sustained investments in science will enable scientific discovery and attract new generations to STEM fields. NSF funding provides substantial support for federally-supported basic research in U.S. colleges and universities, funding that advances science and contributes to local economies. This basic research is the seed corn for the nation's economic growth.

Given the significance of federal support for basic science research in the U.S., a growing coalition of 54 Chambers of Commerce across the country formed "Business for Federal Research Funding" to call for increased research funding in the federal budget. This new coalition is focusing attention on how federal support for science is imperative to the nation's economic growth.

We urge Members of the U.S. House to support the funding levels for NSF that passed the full Appropriations Committee with bipartisan support. We also urge Members to oppose any amendments that undermine the NSF programs funded through the bill, including amendments that undercut important areas of basic science research such as Geosciences or Behavioral and Social Sciences; STEM education research through the Education and Human Resources Directorate; or individual grants that have been deemed meritorious by independent scientific review panels.

We appreciate Chairman Wolf 's and Ranking Member Fattah's longstanding commitment to basic science research at NSF, and urge Members to support the NSF provisions found in the FY 2015 CJS Appropriations bill.

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

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