



September 6, 2017

Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
and Science
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable José Serrano
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
and Science
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Chairman Culberson, Ranking Member Lowey,
and Ranking Member Serrano:

As the House considers H.R. 3354, the *Make America Secure and Prosperous Appropriations Act, 2018*, the Consortium for Ocean Leadership (COL) urges Congress to sustain and increase its support for the vital research and education programs within this bill.

COL appreciates the funding level in H.R. 3354 for the National Science Foundation (NSF) and does not share the concern expressed in the September 5, 2017 Statement of Administration Policy, that the bill provides \$687 million above the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 budget request for the NSF. Our nation's economy, health, and security benefit from federal investments in basic and early-stage research (e.g., the resources provided for in H.R. 3354).

Investing FY 2018 funds in federal science and technology agencies, including NSF, aligns with the administration's research and development goals (outlined in the August 17, 2017 memorandum on FY 2019 Administration Research and Development Budget Priorities). In this memorandum, the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Science and Technology Policy provide guidance on FY 2019 budget planning, and the administration identifies key research and development priorities – which include emphasizing basic and early-stage research; modernizing and managing research infrastructure; and technical training of the American workforce through science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. The memorandum proposes, “agencies should give priority to funding basic and early-stage applied research that, supplemented by private sector financing of later-stage R&D, can result in the development of transformative commercial products and services.” Maintaining resources for NSF in FY 2018 ahead of the FY 2019 administration prioritization is essential to supporting basic research, as NSF is the funding source for approximately 24 percent of all federally-supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities.

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Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute
Moss Landing Marine Laboratories
Mote Marine Laboratory
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Pennsylvania State University
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University of California, Santa Cruz
University of Connecticut
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University of Florida
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University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science
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DISCOVERY • UNDERSTANDING • ACTION

A strong federal research enterprise (via agencies such as NSF, NOAA, NASA, DOD, and DOE) increases the nation's homeland security and economic resiliency. This has never been more apparent as our country responds to the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey and anticipates future severe storms. Recovery from the damages caused by this hurricane season will reach into the billions of dollars. However, the forecasts for Harvey, Irma, and subsequent storms enable evacuations and protections that save lives and property. The impact and death toll from a storm like Harvey just 20 years ago, would have been much more serious. Harvey was not as deadly as it could have been due to improvements in storm forecasting that provided more accurate predictions of the hurricane's track, timing, and intensity – enabling the dissemination of accurate and trusted warnings to citizens in its path.

How did we improve our forecasting capabilities? The short answer is Congressional appropriations for ocean and environmental observations, computing and modelling, research, infrastructure, and training at NSF, NOAA, NASA, and other federal research agencies working with private weather research companies and universities. Federal investments enable scientists to develop and run models on advanced computing systems that turn huge amounts of raw observations into “actionable intelligence.”

COL is proud of the nation's investments in innovative research. We urge Congress to maintain and increase its strong support for research, development, and STEM education programs of the federal agencies funded by H.R. 3354.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan W. White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "J" and "W".

Jonathan W. White, RADM (Ret.), USN
President and CEO
Consortium for Ocean Leadership

Cc: Chairman Thad Cochran, Senate Appropriations Committee
Vice Chairman Patrick Leahy, Senate Appropriations Committee
Chairman Richard Shelby, Senate Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee
Ranking Member Jeanne Shaheen, Senate Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee
Mick Mulvaney, OMB
Dr. France Córdova, NSF