



11 September 2014

The Honorable Jay Rockefeller
Chairman, Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Rockefeller:

On behalf of the American Geophysical Union (AGU) and its more than 62,000 members worldwide – Earth and space scientists striving to advance scientific research and understanding for the benefit of humanity – I commend you and your colleagues on the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee for introducing the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2014 and reaffirming our national commitment to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education. AGU is especially pleased with the proposed five-year budget growth for the National Science Foundation (NSF) and support for the breadth of the NSF's basic research and infrastructure portfolio.

Much of the Earth and space scientific community relies on NSF for financial support to investigate, for example, how the atmosphere, oceans, land, water, and poles respond to and influence changes in the Earth's system, as well as how the sun and other space-based phenomena affect the environment and humanity across multiple scales. In performing this work, scientists have saved lives, advanced national security, and spurred technological innovation and growth in energy, transportation, and infrastructure.

With many of its members engaged in planetary science and solar physics, AGU is also pleased to see the bill highlight the importance of NASA's commitment to STEM education.

America's economic competitiveness, public safety, and national security depend on our investment in basic research and the next generation of STEM professionals. The America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2014 demonstrates the commitment in our national science and engineering enterprise that is required to sustain U.S. leadership in science.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine W. McEntee". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Christine McEntee
Executive Director/CEO
American Geophysical Union
CMcEntee@agu.org