

26 February 2018

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
S-146A, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
H-305, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

On behalf of the undersigned geoscience organizations and our tens of thousands of Earth, ocean, and space scientist members, we would like to thank you for your support in raising the caps on non-defense discretionary spending and preventing the detrimental effects of sequestration from impacting our nation's scientific enterprise. As you begin crafting the FY2018 spending bills under the latest budget agreement, the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018*, we urge you to recognize that investing in geoscience research is essential to the well-being and prosperity of the United States and its communities.

The *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018* provides a more than 12% increase in discretionary spending for FY 2018. With this increase to the spending caps, we encourage you to enact spending bills that provide an adequate increase in funding for our federal science agencies, including NASA, NSF, NOAA, USGS, and the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science. **We urge you to provide at least a 5% increase in funding for these agencies to ensure the U.S. retains global leadership in innovation and remain prosperous economically**, a position shared in the Innovation Imperative — a call to action led by nine large U.S. corporations and endorsed by over 500 leading industry, higher education, science, and engineering organizations from across the 50 states.

Without this level of growth, our federal science agencies will be unable to maintain cutting-edge research in all fields, train enough future scientists to fulfill national needs, and ensure that communities are resilient to natural hazards. Our science agencies provide critical information that helps to secure our nation and protect the health of local communities.

- NASA's Earth science missions help us quantify drought in the West, respond to flooding in the South, observe land-use changes in the East, and track agricultural water use in the Midwest. These observations, and many others like them, are integral to protecting our infrastructure, food supply, and public health and safety.
- NSF is responsible for funding the majority of our nation's basic research, which ensures the global competitiveness of the U.S. scientific enterprise. NSF funds 64% of all basic geoscience research conducted at universities. These funds are critical to supporting our future science and engineering workforce through grants for graduate- and undergraduate-level students.

- NOAA combines cutting-edge research and world-class facilities to ensure that the U.S. is resilient and weather-ready. Approximately one-third of our GDP is affected by weather and the environment, and therefore many sectors of our economy rely on NOAA's ocean and atmospheric data and monitoring. Industries such as agriculture, fisheries, and aviation rely on the agency's satellites and ocean observations to deliver high-quality continuous data and its oceanographic programs to provide insights into our nation's waters and coasts.
- The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) provides impartial information about hazards, such as earthquakes and floods, and natural resources, such as water, energy, and minerals, to keep the nation prosperous, healthy, and secure.
- The DOE Office of Science operates at the forefront of discovery as the lead federal agency supporting energy research. The Office of Science continues to shape our energy future by supporting researchers who are making key advances in fields related to solar energy, bioenergy, and batteries, among others, and does so across sectors including academia and Fortune 500 companies.

To continue crucial and cutting-edge research initiatives and put America on a path to scientific growth and progress, we ask that you provide at least a 5% increase in funding across NASA, NOAA, NSF, USGS, and the DOE Office of Science. When drafting appropriations legislation, we also urge you to avoid policy riders that deprioritize the geosciences, limit the ability of federal scientists and researchers to attend scientific and technical meetings, or restrict the use of climate data. Such riders impede the rate of scientific progress, slow economic growth, and put our national security at risk. America's economic strength, public safety, and national security depend on our commitment to invest in the Earth and space sciences.

Thank you for your consideration of our requests. We would be happy to work with you further if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

American Geophysical Union  
American Geosciences Institute  
American Institute of Professional Geologists  
Coalition for Ocean Leadership  
National Ground Water Association  
Seismological Society of America  
Soil Science Society of America

Cc: The Honorable Richard Shelby  
The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
The Honorable Tom Udall  
The Honorable Mike Simpson  
The Honorable Marcy Kaptur  
The Honorable Ken Calvert

The Honorable Betty McCollum  
The Honorable John Culberson  
The Honorable Jose Serrano  
The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
The Honorable Paul Ryan  
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi