



UC DAVIS FEDERAL RELATIONS UPDATE  
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Last week, the House passed the FY2015 Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations bill, which funds the National Science Foundation (NSF) and NASA. The bill keeps relatively high levels of funding for the research agencies, but unfortunately some House Republicans used floor debate to criticize NSF for its grant-making system.

During consideration of the bill, House Science Committee Chairman Lamar Smith (R-TX) and Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) offered an amendment that would have had no impact on NSF research funding, but gave Chairman Smith and other Members the opportunity to express their concerns about the agency's funding policies and call for reduced support for social and behavioral sciences research. The House approved the amendment by a vote of 208-201.

Despite continued strong opposition from the university, scientific, and business communities, the House Science Committee on May 28 approved Chairman Smith's FIRST Act (H.R. 4186), legislation to reauthorize programs in NSF and the National Institutes of Standards and Technology, as well as STEM education programs. The bill was approved on a party-line vote. It remains unclear if the measure will go to the House floor, and the Senate is unlikely to consider it.

Opposition was based on the bill's provisions to cap overall funding for NSF below the level of inflation, impose new conditions on the agency's grants system, and target the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) and the Geosciences directorates for significant cuts in authorized funding. During committee consideration, the panel approved an additional \$50 million cut in authorized funding for SBE, on top of the \$56 million cut in the underlying bill.

The committee made an important improvement in the bill regarding public access to the published results of federally funded research by lowering the embargo period for public access from the basic embargo period of 24 months to 12 months.

*Questions or need assistance*

If you have questions, need additional information about any of the above items, or would like assistance in connecting with senior federal officials, please let me know. I can be reached at [gabanks@ucdavis.edu](mailto:gabanks@ucdavis.edu) or at 530-752-9795.