



American Society of Agronomy • Crop Science Society of America • Soil Science Society of America

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May 10, 2017

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: FY18 Appropriations—Support for the National Science Foundation

Dear Chairman Shelby and Ranking Member Shaheen:

The American Society of Agronomy (ASA), Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA), represent over 18,000 scientists in academia, industry, and government, 12,500 Certified Crop Advisers (CCA), and 781 Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS), as the largest coalition of professionals dedicated to the agronomic, crop and soil science disciplines in the United States.

The Nation's agricultural system must sustainably produce the food and fuel America relies on for national and economic security. Currently, unpredictable conditions, growing global competition, and the steadily advancing age of farmers is putting America's agricultural economy at risk. America's future depends on the development of innovative, science-based solutions to meet our growing agricultural needs and a maintained commitment to training future generations of farmers and the agricultural scientists who support them.

We support **\$8 billion for the National Science Foundation** for the fiscal year 2018. This funding level will increase the broad base of fundamental knowledge in key disciplines, such as biology, plant science, chemistry, and soil science, which is needed to address agriculture's most intractable challenges. Such research funding will simultaneously support the scientists creating innovations today and the students who will tackle the unforeseen issues of tomorrow.

Within NSF, the Societies are very supportive of the **Innovations at the Nexus of Food, Energy, and Water Systems**. There is a pressing need to understand the interconnectedness of food, energy, and water. The recent drought in the U.S., which included major areas of California and Texas, illustrates an important opportunity for the integration of these fields. The drought had and continues to have devastating impacts on clean water availability, food production, and the energy sector, and scientific approaches to dealing with these manifold impacts, and mitigating the impacts of future droughts, must include perspectives from each of these often-siloed fields.

Of particular importance are Nexus programs that address the production, resilience, safety, and security of food, energy, and water resources. We urge you to include report language highlighting the

importance of this effort and the need to better understand the fundamental science behind the interconnected food-energy-water system.

The research and education programs funded by NSF are essential to ensure an economically competitive America now and into the future. A strong commitment to federally funded scientific research will boost the Nation's capacity for innovation, agricultural productivity, and economic prosperity.

Thank you for your consideration. For additional information or to learn more about the ASA, CSSA and SSSA, please contact Karl Anderson, Director of Government Relations, at kanderson@sciencesocieties.org or 202-408-5382.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ellen Bergfeld". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ellen" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Bergfeld".

Ellen Bergfeld, PhD, CEO
American Society of Agronomy
Crop Science Society of America
Soil Science Society of America

Cc:

Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies