

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2026

HEARINGS BEFORE A SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

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NOTE: Under committee rules, Mr. Cole, as chairman of the full committee, and Ms. DeLauro, as ranking minority member of the full committee, are authorized to sit as members of all subcommittees.

ROBERT YAVOR, CHRIS ESPARZA, ALLEY ADCOCK,
ELIZABETH BARCZAK and CHRISTOPHER ECKHARDT
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PART 2—COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS FOR 2026

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**COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND
RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS
FOR 2026**

THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

WITNESS

HON. HOWARD LUTNICK, SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Mr. ROGERS. Good morning. The subcommittee will be in order. Without objection, the chair is authorized to declare a recess at any time.

Let me welcome everyone to this morning's hearing. Thank you to our subcommittee members, and to Secretary for being with us today for a good while.

The fiscal year 2026 budget request comes at a time of continued fiscal pressure. We must ensure every American taxpayer dollar is used efficiently and continue to work to reduce duplication across agencies and throughout the government.

The Department of Commerce's budget request totals \$8.4 billion, a \$1.8 billion, or 17 percent decrease from the current level. The budget request includes funding for targeted investments in tools to address unfair trade practices and emphasizes important initiatives, such as American manufacturing and trade enforcement.

Specifically, it includes a 50 percent increase for the bureau of industry and security to counter threats from China and protect America's technological competitiveness.

The budget request also includes a 20 percent increase for the Census Bureau to continue providing reliable statistics.

Overall, the Department of Commerce is charged with protecting supply chain security, economic growth and job creation, weather research and response, and economic data analysis, all keystones imperative to American prosperity.

On the international front, the department plays an important role in protecting our industries from one-sided trade practices, and strengthens supply chains that are key to ensuring our economic security and global leadership.

I have always been a big supporter of the Department of Commerce. The department's core initiatives are vital to small town economies across the country, including my district in eastern Kentucky. One of the most critical components of revitalizing rural America is expanding access to high-speed reliable broadband. In far too many places a lack of broadband access is not just an incon-

venience, it is a barrier to education, job creation, entrepreneurship, and even basic healthcare.

From EDA's emphasis on job creation and expanding economic opportunity, to NOAA's local weather forecast offices that work around the clock to send out alerts during times of severe weather, the department's wide ranging responsibility requires clear prioritization and accountability.

We look forward to hearing from you, Mr. Secretary, how this budget request furthers our shared goals of reducing wasteful spending, ensuring global competitiveness, expanding broadband, and driving economic development.

Let me now recognize my ranking member of the subcommittee, Ms. Meng.

Ms. MENG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you very much, Mr. Secretary, for testifying today. And as a fellow New Yorker, congratulations.

We meet today to discuss the Commerce Department's fiscal year 2026 budget request. At the same time I must express my strong disappointment that we are still awaiting the complete details of the budget request. We are also awaiting the full legally required details of the Commerce Department's fiscal year 2025 operating plan, despite the fact that such details were legally required to be sent to our Appropriations Committee more than a month ago.

These delays are unacceptable. They are also disturbingly a pattern that we have seen over the last four and a half months, a pattern of significant and often illegal actions by Federal agencies, including the Commerce Department.

In most cases we have learned of these actions not from the department itself, but from news media reporting, and from grants and contract recipients whose critical grant funding and contract extensions have been delayed or frozen often in direct violation of the Impoundment Control Act of 1974.

We have also heard from numerous Federal workers who have been fired without any good justification.

The National Weather Service has taken a huge hit under this administration. Hundreds of meteorologists and other Weather Service employees were fired or felt pressured to sign up for Elon Musk's deferred resignation program. As a result, the National Weather Service has been scrambling to keep a minimum staff at weather forecast offices around the country.

This staffing shortage has also forced the Weather Service to reduce its deployments of weather balloons, which have long provided critical information for accurate weather forecasting in local areas. This is all happening, by the way, right when both hurricane season and wildfire seasons are just beginning.

The Weather Service announced earlier this week that it is moving its limited resources around, which will only change the locations that are experiencing staffing shortages.

It has also announced that it has received permission to hire 126 new employees, but this is obviously far short of the number of working employees the Weather Service has lost since February.

It is unclear when these new employees will be on-boarded, let alone when they will be fully trained to the level of performance of the recently departed weather service employees.

Five former directors of the National Weather Service who served under both Republican and Democratic administrations wrote an open letter last month expressing their strong concerns. They wrote that National Weather Service staff, quote, “will have an impossible task to continue its current level of services. Not only are there fewer forecasters, but there are also fewer electronic technicians responsible for maintaining the critical NEXRAD radars. Our worst nightmare is that weather forecast offices will be so understaffed that there will be needless loss of life.” Unquote.

The administration is also holding back various emergency designated fiscal year 2025 Commerce Department funds. This is funding that Congress appropriated to support weather forecasting, create and preserve American private sector jobs, and protect our national security. Holding this funding back is unacceptable, and the administration should issue the required emergency designations immediately.

The administration and the Commerce Department have released some initial details regarding their fiscal year 2026 budget requests, most of which I find greatly concerning. For example, the administration is proposing to end funding for the Economic Development Administration, or EDA, contrary to your testimony at your Senate confirmation hearing in which you answered that you would maintain the programs at EDA.

As you know, the EDA helps create jobs and economic opportunities in distressed communities across the country, and historically two-thirds of its budget has helped create jobs in rural areas.

The administration is also proposing to end funding for the Minority Business Development Agency, or MBDA, again, contrary to your testimony in which you answered that you did not support dismantling MBDA.

In addition, contrary to the Trump administration’s stated goal of bringing manufacturing jobs back to America, the Trump administration is proposing to eliminate funding for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program, a successful bipartisan program that helps small and medium sized U.S. manufacturers in every State grow and improve their operations, and create jobs.

Furthermore, the budget request further effectively cuts the operating budget of the National Weather Service in 2026. It creates a real risk of a future gap in critical weather satellite data. This needlessly risks lives, property and public infrastructure across the country, especially during periods of hurricanes, wildfires and other extreme weather events.

The administration proposes to slash funding for other vital efforts, including grant funding to protect coastal and Great Lakes communities, as well as funding to better study and prepare for the consequences of climate change.

I very much hope that the appropriations bill that our subcommittee considers next month will reject these extreme cuts.

I look forward to further discussing these and other concerns at today’s hearing, and, again, thank you very much, Mr. Secretary, for your testimony today.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Ms. Meng. I would now like to recognize our witness, Secretary Lutnick. Am I pronouncing that correctly, Lutnick?

Secretary LUTNICK. You are.

Mr. ROGERS. For an opening statement.

Secretary LUTNICK. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. Without objection, your written statement will be entered into the record, and we hope you can summarize in 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF HON. HOWARD LUTNICK

Secretary LUTNICK. I will do my best. Thank you, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and the members of the subcommittee. It is an honor for me to join you today.

America is once again the most attractive destination for investment in the world. Under President Trump's leadership, the Department of Commerce is strengthening American industry from the most popular to those industries that have been long ignored.

We are focused on building an America and driving our economic growth, which will narrow the deficit and we will deliver a new era of American innovation.

Businesses are no longer looking overseas. They are choosing to invest in America first. Through the President's executive order establishing the investment accelerator in the Department of Commerce, we have already secured trillions of dollars of new commitments from world class companies and sovereign wealth funds eager to build and invest in the United States.

This surge in investment, paired with renewed commitment to fair and reciprocal trade is reigniting American's manufacturing base. We are bringing car manufacturing back to Michigan and Ohio. We are reopening steel mills in Pennsylvania. And just last month Arizona welcomed the largest semiconductor investment in the United States of America, thanks to an investment of TSMC.

The first chips deals that we are improving have now have commitments more than doubling the \$300 billion of investment in America, and that is without spending any more taxpayer dollars than those chips funds that you have already approved.

So our Commerce Department is driving substantial investments across America and benefiting the American taxpayer.

Critically, the President's America's first agenda goes beyond just economic growth and investment. The President is taking concrete actions to protect American workers, and our national security.

Under section 232, the Commerce Department is conducting numerous investigations to protect, to reshore, and to revive manufacturing capacity across our critical industries here in America.

The Trump administration is imposing tariffs and ending loopholes. In April we ended the de minimus loophole which allowed foreign companies to avoid paying tariffs on small shipments which basically undercut American small business. New export controls are protecting cutting edge technologies, and finally protecting our critical industries, and protecting American innovation.

In fact, the Bureau of Industry and Security, working with our partners in the Department of Justice, we have secured 22 criminal convictions, 32 arrests, 38 indictments, 231 detentions, and seized more than \$185.5 million, and then we did other types of seizures for another \$40 million.

Under this administration, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is tackling a mountain of unexamined patent applications left by the Biden administration, almost 800,000 unreviewed patent applications, successfully reducing the inventory backlog for the first time in 4 years. In the past 4 months alone we have removed 50,000 fraudulent goods and services from the trademark register that blocked the use of legitimate products by American businesses.

Many of these purported trademarks came from what they call “specimen farms” that are fake websites displaying products that don’t really exist.

At NOAA we are transforming how we track storm and forecast weather with cutting-edge technology. To improve the understanding and prediction of how hurricanes intensify, this season NOAA’s research centers will deploy new small aircraft drone systems and additional underwater gliders.

This year the National Weather Service will be running an experimental AI based forecast system, and all data we will make publicly available.

Today this commitment to innovation means earlier warnings and increased accuracy for Americans no matter where they live.

For far too long Americans have been unfairly treated by foreign nations because we allowed them to take advantage of our markets to the detriment of our own industry and Americans.

Thanks to President Trump, and this administration’s efforts, we are reversing this trend by reshoring critical manufacturing, eliminating unfair trade barriers and practices, and investing in our American workforce.

With your help, we will deliver growth and prosperity across our great Nation. I deeply appreciate you inviting me here today, and I look forward to answering your questions and talking together.

[The information follows:]

Opening Statement

June 5, 2025

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science,
and Related Agencies

Subcommittee Hearing Opening Statement

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and Members of the
Subcommittee – it is an honor to join you today.

America is once again the most attractive destination for investment in the world. Under President Trump's leadership, the Department of Commerce is strengthening American industry from the most popular to those industries long ignored. We are focused on building in America and driving our economic growth, which will narrow the deficit and deliver a new era of American innovation.

Businesses are no longer looking overseas — they are choosing to invest in America first. Through the President's executive order establishing the Investment Accelerator, the Department of Commerce has already secured trillions of dollars in new commitments from world-class companies and sovereign wealth funds eager to build and invest here in the United States.

This surge in investment, paired with a renewed commitment to fair and reciprocal trade, is reigniting American manufacturing. We're bringing car manufacturing back to Michigan and Ohio. We're reopening steel mills in Pennsylvania. Just last month, Arizona welcomed the largest semiconductor investment in its history, thanks to investments from TSMC.

The first deals we are improving now have commitments of more than \$300 billion of investment in the U.S., double the previous investment from these companies receiving CHIPS Act awards, without costing a single additional tax dollar from the American taxpayer. Our Commerce Department is driving substantial investments across America.

Critically, the President's America First agenda goes beyond just economic growth and investment. The President is taking concrete actions to protect American workers and our national security. Under Section 232, the Commerce Department is conducting numerous investigations to protect, reshore, and revive manufacturing capacity across critical industries.

The Trump Administration is imposing tariffs and ending loopholes. In April, we ended the de minimis loophole, which allowed foreign companies to avoid paying tariffs on small shipments undercutting American small businesses. New export controls are protecting cutting-edge technologies and finally protecting critical industries and American

innovation. In fact, the Bureau of Industry and Security, working with our partners in the Department of Justice, has secured 22 criminal convictions, 32 arrests, 38 indictments, 231 detentions - valued at more than \$185,500,000 - and 79 seizures valued at more than \$40,000,000.

Under this administration, the USPTO is tackling a mountain of unexamined patent applications left by the Biden administration—successfully reducing inventory backlog for the first time in four years. In the past four months, we have removed 50,000 fraudulent goods and services from the Trademark Register that blocked the use of legitimate products by American businesses. Many of these purported trademarks came from “specimen farms” that create fake websites to display products that aren’t for sale.

At NOAA, we are transforming how we track storms and forecast weather with cutting-edge technology. To improve the understanding and prediction of how hurricanes intensify, this season NOAA’s research centers will deploy new small aircraft drone systems and additional underwater gliders. This year, the National Weather Service will be running an experimental AI-based forecast system and all data will be publicly available. Together this commitment to innovation means earlier warnings and increased accuracy for Americans no matter where they may live.

For far too long, America has been unfairly treated by foreign nations because we allowed them to take advantage of our markets to the

detriment of our own American workers and industry. Thanks to President Trump and this administration's efforts, we are reversing this trend by reshoring critical manufacturing, eliminating unfair trade barriers and practices, and investing in our American workforce. With your help, we will deliver growth and prosperity across our great nation.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you, Secretary, for those words. We have a full compliment of members of the subcommittee with us this morning, and for that reason we will do our questioning under the 5-minute rule.

So, Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here. I yield myself 5 minutes.

You touched on this somewhat already, but I wanted to ask you about the Chinese Communist Party and their effect in this country, and our bipartisan concern. From economic warfare, to technological threats, China is seeking to obtain advantage of our Nation, our people and our companies at all possible opportunities.

Again, summarize what we are doing to strengthen our ability to counter China's unfair trade practices, protect American intellectual property, and secure critical supply chains and emerging technologies.

Secretary LUTNICK. The Chinese Communist Party seeks to become the dominant culture of the world, and it uses our knowledge, our innovation, and our entrepreneurial spirit against us. It sends 100s of 1,000s of students to train and learn here in order to build up their capacity to grow. They copy our innovations.

For example, if you see their airplanes, gosh, they look just like the F-22 because they have copied our models and our systems. They are trying to copy our technology. And in the race for AI supremacy, they are behind us, but they are working with a central government out to get us. Right. To beat us so that they will have intellectual superiority over us.

There are an AI race, and BIS, our bureau, is at the heart of protecting America. And that is why we have sought an increase in the budget, even though we are decreasing our overall budget, we need to arm the Bureau of Industry and Security to protect us and to help us keep key industries away from the Chinese so that they can't just copy us all the time.

Mr. ROGERS. The budget request for BIS does not specify any specific initiatives related to increasing oversight of entities posing a threat to U.S. national security. Why is that so?

Secretary LUTNICK. I would be happy to detail it either here or in writing, but the idea is to add enforcement agents, agents who carry weapons, agents who go and examine warehouses, examine those people who are exporting, examine the imports, find the particular items, and make sure we have export controls are rigorously enforced. So that is the specific use of the funds, is more people to protect and defend our export controls. The policies the government make need to be rigorously enforced, and we are trying to increase the enforcement capacity because we just don't have enough enforcement agents to do a great job.

Mr. ROGERS. Let me switch gears and ask you about the National Weather Service. Kentucky has been the target of floods and tornadoes and everything else. In fact, we lost 20 people 2 weeks ago in my hometown and adjoining area. I am concerned about the implications of local weather forecast offices operating at reduced staffing levels.

Take, for example, the Jackson Kentucky office, which is currently operating with multiple vacancies and no permanent meteorologist. What can we do about that? What steps are being taken

to ensure NOAA's local weather forecast offices have the resources, the technology and staffing to issue timely accurate warnings and protect lives in high-risk communities?

Secretary LUTNICK. All weather collection technology is in full force and effect, our satellites, our balloons, all sources are in full force and effect. The National Weather Service employs 2,100 meteorologists. Less than 130 took early retirement. It is fake news and inappropriate to suggest a single meteorologist or hydrologist was fired. That is preposterous and silly.

Less than 5 percent chose to retire. And we, using these responsible—Commerce Department sought and were granted the ability to hire those people, the same number, so we will have no reduction in force. Our National Hurricane Center has full staff.

And I want you to understand just the last portion what you said, we have numerous regional offices which are generally small, and, you know, they usually have three or four meteorologists, and these exist because the data is locally hardwired into old computers with hard drives and green screens. If I showed it to you you would be embarrassed.

The idea is to automate that, to put it on the cloud so that the 2,100 meteorologists we have, and the 100s of hydrologists that we have can forecast the weather from central locations and back up each other and be more appropriate.

So I think the technological advancements we will make over the next year or two years will totally change these things. But I want to be crystal clear, every single person, the National Weather Service, we are at full staff, we have full capacity, and we will have the best forecasting capacity that we possibly can to protect Americans. And I will not sleep if that were not true. That is required of you, of me, and of the America, that we deliver that for American people, and I promise you we are.

Mr. ROGERS. Ms. Meng.

Ms. MENG. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am glad to hear the status update of the regional local weather offices. It is very—your testimony and the numbers are really different from what has been reported in the press. We just want to make sure, you know, whether it is New York, my home State, or States like Kentucky which have gone through such horrible circumstances, and our condolences to your constituents and their families, Mr. Chair, we want to make sure that our local communities can be prepared.

I know that you are saying it is inconsistent from the reporting. Would you or your team be able to provide statistics and just more accounting of what has happened, where there are retired or layoffs, just so we can all be on the same page if you do think it is inconsistent with the press reporting?

Secretary LUTNICK. Sure. There were no layoffs. As I said there, were less than 5 percent retirements, and we have the authority to replace them. But that turnover is historically lower than it has normally been. As you can imagine, people are entitled to retire who have worked at the department. But I would be glad to give you very specific details. Be my pleasure.

Ms. MENG. Okay. Thank you so much. I wanted to switch gears and ask about the Census Bureau. In April, NPR reported that the hiring freeze and recent Census Bureau staff departures, including

those of five division or office chiefs, are raising concerns about whether the Census Bureau can continue producing reliable statistics for this country.

Acting Director Ron Jarmin also recently noted that the Bureau lost more than 1,000 employees in recent months. We have heard warnings that the reports of Elon Musk and the DOGE team accessing sensitive personal data of Americans at other Federal agencies could also undermine public trust in the Census Bureau.

Mr. Secretary, what are you doing to address these concerns?

Secretary LUTNICK. Again, my capacity to communicate throughout this administration has made the Department of Commerce well situated. We are not losing staff in ways that we don't want to under any circumstances. We are able to fulfill all of our mission at the Census Bureau.

The Census Bureau is one of the great statistical places in our government, our capacity to analyze and statistically think things through. If you couple that in its full—the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Right. Where we live and we do GDP. That is a great center of statistical capacity. And I think—so we have sought to add to the Commerce Department the Bureau of Labor Statistics so that CPI—I mean, shouldn't we have all of the great statisticians in the government working together. Again, these are the same concepts, which is use technology, use automation. I mean, the idea that the Bureau of Labor Statistics has enumerators calling around and asking for data when technology makes that amazingly capable, and we could do so much better, so we are seeking to use technology.

But I can promise you, the census is both well staffed, and, more importantly, brilliantly covered by statisticians who are great at doing their job. And I am really excited for the structure of how the census will work going forward. But you won't hear anything about weakness. And accuracy, I am not saying the fake news doesn't like to just say these things, but it is just not true. And I will happily send you those statistics as well because you will be very comfortable with the Department of Commerce.

Ms. MENG. Thank you. And just to follow up with that, recently you terminated the three advisory committees. There are also scheduled only two major field tests in 2026. Can you provide us an update on the field tests, when are they scheduled, and what are the changes to the questions about race and ethnicity, and also talk about the advisory committees.

Secretary LUTNICK. The advisory committees were set up—again, many of these things were set up long ago and they have sort of run their course. And we didn't really understand what type of advisory committee we need to understand how to do a census. It didn't seem logical.

With respect to the questionnaire, we have not considered that as of yet, so I don't—we just have not spent the time thinking about those topics. The decennial census is quite far away, and we have plenty of time to think about that going forward.

Ms. MENG. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Judge Carter.

Mr. CARTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And welcome, Mr. Secretary. My district in central Texas has become a leader in semi-

conductor production thanks to strong partnerships between the State, their local political organizations, the industry, the universities, and the workforce training centers, including programs tailored for veterans and military families.

How is the department supporting these types of locally driven efforts, and what more can be done to accelerate the pipeline of skilled American workers entering the semiconductor industry?

Secretary LUTNICK. Workforce training will be a centerpiece of the Trump administration, and I have been tasked to be part of the team to build that. So if the trillions of dollars that the Trump administration is bringing in to invest in America to build and to operate those gigantic production facilities, to reshore manufacturing, we need to train great Americans to be, you know, we say HVAC technicians. You realize these factories have these really high-tech closed loop cooling systems. Amazing. But training our workforce to do this is really a key part of the administration.

I think we will train 5 million Americans for these great jobs that are coming, just like that semiconductor plant in Arizona, I mean, 3,000 jobs for each plant and they are building 10 of them. So these are just great jobs coming. And Texas I know is going to have a great participation in that, and both you—use the schools, and I think it will be an extraordinary outcome for Americans.

Mr. CARTER. Well, Samsung is being a good neighbor in my district, and I am real proud of what they are doing.

As a member of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, I have remained deeply concerned about the national security risk tied to our reliance on foreign-made semiconductor components. What step is the department taking to reduce our dependence on overseas manufacturing, particularly for chips that support critical defense systems.

Secretary LUTNICK. Taiwan produces 90 percent of the world's wafers, which then chip apart, and that becomes chips. So the United States has a demand for 10 million sort of high-end wafers, and we, with the increase of \$100 billion investment that the Trump administration was able to bring in from TSMC, we will get to about 12 percent production. Woefully inefficient.

And I think what you are going to see is the Trump administration is going to be very very focused on bringing chip production to America, and the full supply chain to America, that is going to bring in probably between \$500 billion and a trillion dollar investment, and you are going to see that across the United States of America.

And the Trump administration is very very focused on trying to get up to 5 million wafers during this administration, which will be a record breaking speed, but I think it is very important for exactly the topic you raised.

Mr. CARTER. Well, that is fantastic. I am encouraged, we are encouraged by the launch of the United States investment accelerator and appreciate your continued focus on revitalizing American manufacturing.

Can you share more about how the rollout of this new office will take shape, and are there other—any early projects we can expect, particularly those that support the development of critical defense related semiconductor technology?

Secretary LUTNICK. It has been too slow, the process to build a great factory and a great advanced manufacturing facility in America. Generally it has taken 3 plus years from start to finish. And so the idea of the investment accelerator is exactly that, to assign, if you are willing to invest more than \$10 billion, assign your direct contact that will help you with permitting, regulation, and be a one government response to help you take that from 3 years, let's try to get it to 18 months so we can double our building capacity, focused on semiconductors, of course, but across all industry, and that is how we have been able to recruit over, just the department itself, over \$5 trillion of investment commitment and that we are taking care of how quickly they can build in America.

Mr. CARTER. Fantastic. I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Ivey.

Mr. IVEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Mr. Secretary. I wanted to join quickly with the comments from the chair and the ranking member regarding NOAA. And I hear your point about fake news and numbers, but I will say this, I mean, I have two NOAA installations in my district, and headquarters is, I don't know, just a couple of miles across the line, and I heard a very different story than what you are saying about people being forced out of there. But I look forward to getting the answers that you provide here.

I also saw your comments with respect to Senator Van Hollen yesterday. I look forward to seeing your responses to his questions, too.

I wanted to ask you about MBDA, which the ranking member raised as well. During your confirmation hearing on January 29th before the Senate Commerce Committee, Senator Blunt Rochester asked, yes or no, do you support dismantling the MBDA, and you said, I do not.

Now, I got the skinny budget numbers here and its got EDA and MBDA combined with a cut for \$624 million. And then the narrative connected with that, it says, that MBDA, the agency is fully eliminated.

So I wanted to ask you what changed, and what is the status of MBDA at this point?

Secretary LUTNICK. MBDA is not being fully eliminated. That is inaccurate. We are reducing it to its statutory minimum size, as is appropriate. The problem I see with MBDA—

Mr. IVEY. Could I ask before you move on, what that does mean, statutory minimum size?

Secretary LUTNICK. It means that it is required by law to be a certain size, and we will have it be a certain size.

Mr. IVEY. What size is that?

Secretary LUTNICK. It was 65 people. I think it is at less than 10 people.

Mr. IVEY. Okay. And why are you doing that?

Secretary LUTNICK. These are both small size—the problem is the GAO gives me a report that says there are 80 other programs and 80 institutions that are so much larger, 10 times larger that achieve the same outcomes and we are just too small and too inefficient to do it correctly. So I think we are better served with other programs—

Mr. IVEY. I apologize. I have a couple other areas to hit. I would love to see that GAO report. I want to know what those 80 other entities are because I am not aware of them. Maybe SBA has an overlap with the MBDA mission, but the other—I don't know what those other ones could be. But I look forward to hearing back from you on that because I think it is an important agency, it is statutory, so it needs to be maintained, certainly at some level, and there is a lot of benefit from it.

I would also mention the Congressional Black Caucus sent you a letter on this issue and asked for a response by April 18th. I don't think we have received it yet, so I would ask that you provide that response as well.

Let me move quickly to Quantum Technology. This is kind of a quicker point for me, but Quantum Computing, this chart shows basically funding by governments. China, as you can see, far outpaces the United States. We have got a couple of other—

Secretary LUTNICK. I couldn't see it, but I was guessing the top bar—I didn't need to see the words. I got the point.

Mr. IVEY. Fair enough. Fair enough. Well, here is the question, because this is concerning, obviously, and you touched on this a bit in your opening testimony, although you only talked about the enforcement side of competition with China, and clearly they are stealing a lot of our data, but they are also committing a lot of engineers, scientists and resources to outpacing us on the legitimate size of this, too, from the competitive side. I don't see that being reflected in not, just the Commerce Department, but the overall U.S. budget.

IonQ is a company in my district. It is a spinoff from the University of Maryland's incubator. We have a lot of those across the country.

Quick point, man, I am out of time already, the cuts that are being made, and there is an article I will submit for the record here, World Scientists Look Elsewhere as U.S. Labs Stagger Under Trump Cuts. New York Times, Cuts in Research, and a Scientist is Brain Drain. As we push these people out, I mean, you can shake your head if you want, but I went to a visit IonQ, and one of the things that came up was, I was like, how many of these people are from the United States, and he said not many. And I said why is that, and he said, well, in part because the pipeline isn't supplying these here in the United States, so we go overseas to get many of them.

And one last quick point on this, a venture capital firm I had a chance to meet with said that they invest, I think there are about 30 of these they invest in, they started setting up shop in Canada because they can get their engineers and scientists from overseas quicker over there. They don't have to go through the immigration piece. So we are losing money on that front.

So I look forward to hearing from you on that. Mr. Chairman, I apologize for the overrun, and I appreciate your generosity.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Cline.

Mr. CLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, I appreciate you being here. As you have highlighted concerns about the potential for unfair treatment of American tech companies in the EU, which could potentially force them to make costly operational

changes, can you share with us some of the steps the U.S. government is taking to promote a level playing field and prevent discriminatory practices like excess fines, enforced business model changes under regulations like their Digital Markets Act?

Secretary LUTNICK. This is a key topic for us in our trade negotiations with the European Union. We have a huge trade deficit in goods with the European Union, \$235 billion, so they are just getting great advantage of us. And so part of our reciprocity is—they also attack our great technology companies because they don't have them, so they write these bills, but basically they could just write America in the bill because they are only attacking great American companies. And it is the Trump administration's view that that is unacceptable. That if you want to have a trade deal with us, you are going to take your foot off of the necks of the great American companies and treat them with respect, especially if you are taking this much advantage from us. So we are looking at that as a one combined way of thinking, and that is why we get calls from American companies that say thank God someone is finally looking out for us.

Mr. CLINE. Can you elaborate on what steps the U.S. would take if the EU tries to regulate American AI through DMA or other regulatory means?

Secretary LUTNICK. The President has made it clear that EU's trade, and that they have a \$235 billion trade surplus with us, and he will say, well, if you are going to treat us poorly, we are going to treat you poorly. And if you want to treat us well, we will treat you well. Let's be reciprocal in how we treat each other. You are taking advantage of us—and I think the President will make sure, since we are the inventor of all of the leading AI chips of the world, we, America, are the inventors. We create it all. We make them in Taiwan, that is another topic, but we invent it all. We need to protect our intellectual property, and we need to make sure our compute power is here in America.

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Secretary, in your testimony you mentioned the removal of more than 50,000 fraudulent goods and services from the trademark register. Can you expound upon your efforts to counter trademark fraudsters, especially those that are foreign entities?

Secretary LUTNICK. What is common is that a great American company puts a trademark out, or even a young American company, and these other companies, and generally China is the leader in it, but they are not exclusively, they then file 1,000s of trademarks modifying it slightly all around it and sort of circle you and circle you and use our laws against us. And so the idea is for us to bring technology to the patent office, find them all and get rid of them so that we can protect our American companies' trademarks and make it proper instead of being sort of surrounded by these AI created trademarks. And that is the technology we are bringing to the patent office.

The Commerce Department is going to be so much more technologically capable when we are done with this administration you won't be able to recognize it as compared to what was there before.

Mr. CLINE. Let me ask you about the BEAD program. Yesterday you told our Senate colleagues that States must choose the cheap-

est option under the BEAD program. Under the previous administration, we know mismanagement and misguided attempts at policy outcomes like rate regulation significantly slowed the implementation of that program. Can you comment as to what steps you are taking to deliver on what the previous President was unable to do, and can you clarify how you define cheapest option?

Secretary LUTNICK. Sure. The Congress authorized broadband access to—across America, and I want to make sure we get the benefit of the bargain, which means there are three ways you can do it. You can do it by fiber, you can do it by what is called fixed wireless, like WiFi we all understand, and, of course, there is satellite. Whichever is the most efficient option to get somebody broadband, that should be the only rule. Let's have the outcome be the determiner. And if it is a tie, then, of course, we don't care at all which one you pick. But don't run fiber—they had proposals where they were running \$100,000 fiber to a house that was appraised at \$100,000, and that is silly. So whichever is reasonable. So what we have asked all the States to do is rebid just with reasonable technology, and then we will get the money out of the door.

In the calendar year 2025, the Biden administration had 30 months and they got zero out the door. So that is the difference between the Trump administration and the Biden administration. We will get the money out the door.

Mr. CLINE. Thank you for keeping the taxpayers in mind. I appreciate it. I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Morelle.

Mr. MORELLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling us together. And thank you, Mr. Secretary. Also, as a fellow New Yorker I congratulate you on your appointment.

You mentioned earlier the mission of the U.S. Commerce Department. You said nothing will take away from our mission. How would you in a sentence describe the mission of the Commerce Department?

Secretary LUTNICK. To protect, to defend and to enhance business in the United States of America.

Mr. MORELLE. The mission, according to the Commerce Department, is to create the conditions for economic growth and opportunities for all communities, you agree with that definition as well?

Secretary LUTNICK. Sounds excellent.

Mr. MORELLE. Okay. Great. And I apologize, you know, 5 minutes is so little time, we could have a much longer conversation, and I hope we will have the opportunity to do that, I want to also just reiterate what people said. This is not your choice, but I would pass along to the President that doing budget hearings when we don't have a budget is really hard to do. It is hard to drill down on numbers that we don't have, priorities that you have.

I appreciate you being here. I appreciate you defending the administration's approach. But it is really hard to do, so I just—you don't need to respond to that.

But I would love if you would provide, to whatever detail you can, the trillions of dollars investment that have been made during the last couple of months and how we were able to achieve the commitments of those trillions.

I will note, because this subcommittee had a fair amount to do with the CHIPS and Science Act, that I suspect much of the chip investment being made, whether it is in Texas, or whether it is in Arizona, or made in upstate New York in Syracuse, is partly by the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act. I hope you will continue to—continue those efforts.

I have to say that in talking to folks, both in my region in upstate New York, but throughout the State and other folks in the business world, what I hear about most is the need for predictability. And I have to say that most of the commentary that I hear from CEOs is the lack of predictability caused largely by the tariff situation has made it nearly impossible, whether you are a business large or small, to make judgments about where you will deploy capital and where you will deploy workforce.

As decisions are made to advance tariffs, sometimes reciprocal, sometimes—and then retrench, and then put them back in place, retrench again, that what I am hearing, and this different clearly than what you are hearing because I feel like we live in maybe an alternative reality, that many people are not making decisions at all on investment because they don't know whether the President intends to follow through, even the most recent announcements that there is another 90-day pause, during the 90-day period people are saying I don't know what this means, should I move ahead, should I not move ahead, are we going to pull back, are we going to advance, what should I be telling them about predictability, which is so important. I mean, you are a former CEO, you know this in your business world, predictability and what you can expect both from your government and from the markets is so critical in making decisions about investment policy.

Secretary LUTNICK. We had a bad deal in America that produced a \$1.2 trillion trade deficit. So fixing that will take some time. It will not take a lot of time, but it will take time.

I view letting the greatest dealmaker that the United States has who is in the oval office, let him make the deals. He is making the deals. I am working on them all the time. The deal for America will be opening access to markets that have been closed for hundreds of billions of dollars, and then charging and protecting industries which have been attacked by foreigners, like steel and aluminum, where the foreign governments, they give—imagine a steel blast furnace, you think how that melts, they give free or very cheap energy and they make it unfair.

So we are just going to get to a better deal for America, and it won't take that long, but it is a better deal for America.

Mr. MORELLE. Well, look, I appreciate it. I think many people would not agree with your assessment that the occupant of the White House is the greatest dealmaker ever. I am certainly not the greatest dealmaker ever, and I have never gone bankrupt in businesses that I have been involved in. So I am not sure I rely on it. But I also don't want to rely on a single individual.

But to my point, the advancing of tariffs and then bringing them back and causing—that goes to the predictability issue. I don't know how people can rely on what the tariff situation is going to be even when the courts in the United States have said emergency

powers expressed by the President are well beyond what was envisioned by the Congress.

So on predictability, I will just say because I think we will probably agree to disagree, I would just leave you with what I am hearing from people is not making investments, not being willing to make decisions because they don't know what to rely on.

And, frankly, I don't want to get into name calling, I know what people have said about the President and the whole thing, that is not important to me. What is important to me is advancing American interests. And, look, that is what we were trying to do in the past for all the criticisms of the previous administration, both Congress and the administration were interested in investing in core industries that were so vital to our national and economic security.

I would love to talk to you further whether in settings like this or offline because I really do think we all want to advance American interests. So thank you. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Gonzales.

Mr. GONZALES. Thank you, Chairman. And thank you, Mr. Secretary. It is a breath of fresh air to have a nonbureaucrat come up here and not give bureaucratic answers on very complex situations. So thank you for that.

You have a great team. Harry is doing a great job for you all. You have built a wonderful organization.

I applaud the administration, in a very short period of time President Trump is making America great again, and he is doing it through executive orders. I look forward to working with my colleagues here to make sure we codify those long term.

I will start off with a softball on trade. You know, I represent nearly, nearly half of the overall southern border. I appreciate the work the administration is doing to ensure our foreign partners are aligned in the same direction when it comes to strengthening our economic and national security alliances.

In particular, communities in my district, which spans over 800 miles, are dependent on strong reliable partnerships with Mexico and our Latin American countries to strengthen national security, public safety, and promote economic prosperity.

How can we leverage the relationship between U.S. and Mexico to strengthen our North American footprint to compete against our foreign adversaries like China?

Secretary LUTNICK. Mexico is a huge trading partner of America. What has happened is NAFTA allowed, you know, corporate chieftains to take their factories out of Michigan and out of Ohio and move it where there is cheaper labor. So they attacked American workers for the benefit of corporate profits.

Now, Mexico has amazing assets. They have got great energy. They have got great people. So the idea is let's figure out together with Mexico the businesses that they should be in. They should be in the mining business. They should be in the refining business. There are enormous businesses that would really sit well in Mexico. And so what we need to do is sort of rethink the relationship so that we harness their assets.

But they don't—we don't do it by stealing ours. It is illogical that we are making cars in Mexico for Americans. That is just illogical, and the President calls it out. But there are enormous things that

we can leverage and lean on on our great partner just to our south in Mexico to enhance their business, and, of course, then enhance the ability for us to import and to do business together.

I think the relationship will be great. It just needs to be reimagined in a way that takes care of American workers and doesn't just, you know, give them a hard time.

Mr. GONZALES. Yeah. Part of my conversations with Mexican leadership is we are always going to be neighbors. Always. Right. And I want us to be partners, and I want us to be working together on some of these same issues and find—you know, when Mexico is strong, we are strong. When we are strong, Mexico is strong, and vice versa.

When things are rough—I don't want to have security issues along the border that spill over because they are in a tough economic situation.

I look forward to talking—you know, working together and finding, you know, how we can find these industries that really can—they can lean on.

My next question is on autonomous vehicles. The United States pioneered the development of autonomous vehicle technology. We are home to Tesla whose leadership in driver assistance system position leads us to lead the world in full autonomy. As the Chinese Communist Party aggressively ramps up its own EV development, we can't afford to fall behind.

I understand that on January 16th, 2025, the Department of Commerce, BIS, which you spoke about earlier, issued a final rule to safeguard our national security by restricting certain ICTS transactions involving foreign adversaries, including those related to connected vehicle systems and automated driving software.

What other actions is the Department of Commerce taking to ensure the United States maintains the global leadership in autonomous vehicle technology?

Secretary LUTNICK. I would just point out that January 16th is a running out the door policy by the Biden administration.

So the Department of Commerce is deeply considering working closely with industry to make sure we are enhancing both our EV industry, and, importantly, that you spoke about the connection between AI and really manufacturing, bringing those two together, that includes both advanced manufacturing, and, of course, like autonomous vehicles, which is another example of that.

So I think we are very focused on that, and you are going to see new rules coming out of the Trump administration that would be more along the lines of what you would hope, which is industry and government working closely together to make sure we are the winner.

Mr. GONZALES. Good. Because this is the future. This is—we are not—we are not reading it in a book. We are living in it, and we need to lead on that. I certainly look forward to continuing to working with you. Thank you again for your testimony. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Ms. Dean.

Ms. DEAN. Thank you, Chairman Rogers. Thank you, Ranking Member Meng. Thank you, Ranking Member DeLauro. And thank you to you, Secretary Lutnick. Thanks for being here today.

I want to pick up on what Mr. Morelle was talking about, and I will use the word stability. And I think you know this from your many years in business, and that is what I thought about as I was preparing for today, the importance of stability, or as he said, predictability. Stability is the foundation of economic growth. I think you have lived it. Businesses need clear and predictable rules to plan and to invest for the future.

Given this administration's claim of being probusiness and progrowth, I am so baffled by the discussions around trade deficits, and the President's belief around trade deficits, and the President's beliefs around tariffs and the chaotic tariff policy. They are on. They are off. Many of the tariffs are punishing, creating a level of instability and uncertainty in our economy that we haven't seen since COVID.

I hear the same thing over and over from constituents, from small businesses, from bankers in my area, they can't figure out how to plan, how to lend. Businesses can't figure out how to expand, how to grow, whether to hire, whether to not hire.

And I heard just literally this morning from a very large American retailer, first word out of the woman's mouth was uncertainty, and the last thing she said to me was uncertainty, all surrounding tariffs, the lack of predicability.

I also serve on the Foreign Affairs Committee, was recently in U.K. and Denmark, met with the American Chamber in both countries, confused, uncertain, they can't figure it out, what in God's name is going on. We cannot plan to grow businesses. We cannot plan to grow growth and jobs. So I am baffled, absolutely baffled by this administration's talk around trade deficits and tariffs.

I fear the administration lacks a basic understanding of what a trade deficit is. I think many economists take issue with equating a country's trade deficit with any one country and its economic wellbeing.

Some economists actually view a trade deficit as a sign of a country's economic health because it means we are purchasing more.

For me, I have a pretty large trade deficit with my local grocer, or my hairdresser. It is a good thing. It means I have money enough to get my hair done once in a while, and to keep food on the table. It tells nothing about my overall financial position.

Do you know when this country actually had a trade surplus, Secretary?

Secretary LUTNICK. We have had trade surplus—the President likes to speak about before—

Ms. DEAN. Historically, when did we have a trade surplus? I am not talking about the President. Historically.

Secretary LUTNICK. I think early—about 100 years ago.

Ms. DEAN. It was the Great Depression. It was a sign of what was going on. It was during the Great Depression. That is a direction none of us wants to go.

Tariffs. It is 90 days. We are going to have 90 deals in 90 days, then there is a 90-day pause. Many of these tariffs, as they say, punishing. Tariffs on things that make no sense whatsoever. Where are we going to go with the remaining deals?

I know of one deal that has been apparently resolved with the United Kingdom. We got 89 more deals to do in just a few more days? Where are we on those deals?

Secretary LUTNICK. We are in the midst of negotiations with dozens and dozens of countries. We could sign deals, but they are only going to get better as we negotiate them.

Ms. DEAN. That is just simply not true, because as I told you, the American—

Secretary LUTNICK. Actually, I promise you it is true, because I am doing it. So I promise you it is true, and I am here testifying in front of you, and I promise you it is true.

Ms. DEAN. And Mr. Trump promised to bring down the cost of goods day one. And what he has done through his trade deficit fixation and his tariff chaos has nakedly increased the cost of goods. The estimates are that for consumers in my area, suburban Philadelphia, \$2,000 at least a year increases on goods.

I will give you an example of one. Bananas. What is the tariffs on bananas? Americans, by the way, love bananas. We buy billions of them a year. I love bananas. What is the tariff on bananas?

Secretary LUTNICK. The tariff on bananas would be representative of the countries that produce them.

Ms. DEAN. And what is that tariff?

Secretary LUTNICK. Generally, 10 percent.

Ms. DEAN. Correct. Ten percent. Walmart has already increased the cost of bananas by 8 percent, recognizing—

Secretary LUTNICK. But as countries do deals with us, that will go to zero. As countries do deals with us, that will go to zero.

Ms. DEAN. But the cost is on the American consumer now and on the businesses with the confusion now. Mr. Secretary, I believe you know better. I believe you recognize that a trade deficit is not something to fear. I believe you know that predictability, stability is essential for businesses. I wish you would show that truth to this administration.

And I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

Secretary LUTNICK. Do you mind, Mr. Chairman, if I make one quick comment to the end? Would that be okay?

Mr. ROGERS. I am sorry?

Secretary LUTNICK. Would you mind if I make one quick comment to the Representative?

Mr. ROGERS. Sure, please.

Secretary LUTNICK. There is no uncertainty if you build in America and you produce your product in America, there will be no tariff.

Ms. DEAN. We can't produce bananas in America.

Secretary LUTNICK. So the concept of building in America and paying no tariff is very, very clear.

Ms. DEAN. We cannot build bananas in America.

Mr. ROGERS. The time of the gentlelady has expired.

Mr. Clyde.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Secretary Lutnick, for appearing before the subcommittee today. First, I want to mention that, as I read your biography, I noticed that you have been awarded the Department of the

Navy's Distinguished Public Service Award. And as a 28-year Navy officer myself, I want to congratulate you as this public service award is the highest honor granted to nonmilitary personnel by the Navy. So congratulations, sir; job well done.

Secretary LUTNICK. Thank you.

Mr. CLYDE. Last November, the American people decisively elected President Trump with a mandate to restore common sense in Washington, including the mission of reducing the size, scope, and cost of the Federal Government. Thankfully, President Trump's fiscal year 2026 budget delivers on that promise by charting a course to rein in Federal spending. It proposes a 22.6 percent reduction in nondefense discretionary spending, \$163 billion cut from the fiscal year 2025 levels.

As a member of both the House Budget and the Appropriations Committee, I strongly support this effort and remain committed to restoring fiscal sanity, ensuring that future generations are not burdened by Washington's reckless spending addiction. And that is right, I say Washington has an addiction problem. It is an addiction to OPM. That is other people's money, OPM.

Washington needs to go to rehab for this spending addiction, and I was encouraged to see that your budget request reduces the Department of Commerce's footprint by \$1.75 billion, a 17 percent decrease from the fiscal year 2025 enacted level. And your proposal rightly eliminates duplicative programs within the Economic Development Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency, and curtails over a billion in Federal dollars that the Biden-Harris administration funneled into radical climate initiatives, research, and grant programs. So thank you for that.

The Department of Commerce's budget request also includes a historic investment in the Bureau of Industry and Security. Now, that bureau is also responsible for a rule issued in April of 2024, an interim final rule, which makes permanent the pause on firearm export licenses, severely restricting U.S. manufacturers from exporting firearms, ammunition, and components. This rule shortens licensed durations from 4 years to 1 and requires case-by-case approval. It also revoked around 2,000 previously approved export licenses, forcing companies to reapply.

So, Mr. Secretary, does the Department of Commerce have any plans to rescind this Biden administration interim final rule? How are we going to handle that?

Secretary LUTNICK. Yes. We are looking into it now, and I find that inconsistent with our views, so we are examining it now and you should expect us to comment on it shortly.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you. Thank you very much. I encourage you in every way to rescind that rule. I think it is very, very damaging to the firearms industry. And I think that, you know, that is a very important industry in this country because it has to deal with our constitutional rights.

Now, I would also like to address the tariffs and give you an opportunity to talk about that. For far too long, the U.S. has been disadvantaged by countries across the globe due to unfair trade practices. These longstanding trade imbalances have led to the off-shoring of manufacturing and have undermined critical supply chains, which have resulted in some of our defense industrial base becom-

ing dependent on foreign adversaries. Ultimately, the status quo trading system that we currently have has failed our workforce, threatened our national security, and left small town America behind.

Thankfully, President Trump is bringing countries across the globe to the negotiating table, ensuring that our economic policies remain America First and ensuring everyday American workers and families do not continue to be disadvantaged.

Can you speak to your role and that of the Department in the trade negotiation process, and could you highlight the successful trade agreement that was previously mentioned with the United Kingdom that President Trump recently secured?

Secretary LUTNICK. My role is to assist in opening markets for our ranchers, for our farmers, and for our manufacturers so they can sell their goods in markets that were always precluded from our manufacturers and our farmers having access. That is number one.

And number two, to break open the barriers that these countries put up to keep us out even without tariffs. So if we break them down and we open those markets, America will flourish. Remember, \$1.2 trillion of us buying from them means 4 percent of annual, our GDP, the largest country in the world, we are giving to other countries. If we had that domestically produced, our growth rate would be 6 percent, our deficit would go away by math, and we would be the winner in the world, and that is what the President is all about.

Mr. CLYDE. Well, thank you. Mr. Secretary, it is nice to see a successful businessman in charge of the Department of Commerce. And with that, I yield back. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Mrvan.

Mr. MRVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, it is a pleasure. I reside—I represent northwest Indiana, the steel—top steel producing capital within the Nation. With that, giving credit where credit is due, section 232 helped our steel industry, our steelworkers, and also our trades in the first administration. Now, as we go through this—

Secretary LUTNICK. So they are happy, right? Your constituents are happy.

Mr. MRVAN. The market goes up and down, as you well know, in the steel industry. No. They are—they were happy with section 232. That is why I said I give credit where credit's due.

Secretary LUTNICK. Thank you.

Mr. MRVAN. Yes, sir. So my underlying question is, ultimately, we want to make sure we have a level playing field and capacity in foreign countries such as China. They subsidize their steel. They flood the market. Then my steelworkers and people within my community lose their jobs.

I am going to give you an opportunity to talk about the 50 percent steel tariffs that are in place now, and I also want to talk about the concern that I have for downstream industries. Specifically, you had talked about in many different areas reshoring domestic manufacturing. I am on board and have advocated for reshoring domestic manufacturing. The time it takes to invest those

trillions of dollars and build up for capacity to build—as you had mentioned cars are being built in Mexico for America.

How are we going to invest, or how are you, one, the impact of the 50 percent tariffs, if you could discuss that with me, and then how is it affecting downstream industries, and what is the plan to make sure that those individuals who work in those plants that are downstream of the steel industries are going to be protected?

Secretary LUTNICK. So foreign countries subsidize the power, which is the biggest cost.

Mr. MRVAN. Energy.

Secretary LUTNICK. And so China can produce steel at \$450 a metric ton, and our price was generally just below \$1,000. So they basically put 40 blast furnace companies out of business, so they basically were crushing steel in America. And Donald Trump came in and said, look, it is a subsidy. So we put on 25 percent and that moved the price up to about \$900, and then it started to drift down because the Chinese are producing it at \$450, because they don't pay for power.

Mr. MRVAN. Right.

Secretary LUTNICK. So the President said, I have got to protect domestic steel. Because his view is you can't fight a war unless you can make steel. You can't fight a war unless you can make aluminum. And the steelworkers and aluminum workers of America are happy because they are being protected. The reasonable price point is where we are right now, which is just below \$1,000 a metric ton. We are going to build—tens of billions of dollars have been committed because of that to building plants, mills—

Mr. MRVAN. Can you give me examples of the promised investments?

Secretary LUTNICK. Hyundai promised \$7.5 billion.

Mr. MRVAN. Hyundai.

Secretary LUTNICK. Hyundai, you know, the Korean—

Mr. MRVAN. Hyundai. Sure.

Secretary LUTNICK. \$7.5 billion plant. There were a variety—I met with a variety of steel makers who offered us about \$6 billion of two new plants. Nippon Steel, \$14.1 billion of new investment.

Mr. MRVAN. That is a whole other 5 minutes, but yes.

Secretary LUTNICK. I believe you. But those are commitments that we have. And in auto, we have \$250 billion of commitments because of the tariffs to build and reshore in South Carolina, in Ohio, in Michigan, in Tennessee. These are all coming in because of our tariffs.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. So along with tariffs is the enforcement that you talked about. So what I—one of the reasons why I wanted to be in this committee is to be able to make sure that the enforcement side of it, the ITA, has the resources necessary.

Are you here making a commitment that there won't be cuts to the ITA that will reduce the resources that they need to make sure that the enforcement of the products that are coming in to our country that we can track that?

Secretary LUTNICK. Importing, exporting are key roles that we will never cut; we will only enhance. There are a whole variety of areas within these bureaus that you would agree with me are just

not necessary. So we are reexamining what is important and putting the resources on that, which is most important.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. I will wait for the second round to talk about Nippon, the Nippon deal. And just one very quick question. Were you in the room in the CFIUS committee for the Nippon deal?

Secretary LUTNICK. Yes.

Mr. MRVAN. What was your recommendation?

Secretary LUTNICK. My recommendation was it could be approved with mitigation, change.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. On my second round—and I am—I would like to continue that conversation. Thank you.

With that, I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Strong.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, for holding this hearing today. I would also like to thank the subcommittee staff for their hard work.

Secretary Lutnick, great to be with you again. Thank you and your staff for being here today. Each of you have had a full 48 hours.

I commend you for your efforts to prioritize President Trump's America First trade agenda. During your Senate budget hearing yesterday, you highlighted Alabama's role in the automotive industry and noted your department's \$250 billion commitment to reshore that sector.

In my district in Alabama, we are honored to be home to Mazda, Toyota, and Toyota Motor Manufacturing, where 66 percent of all combustible engines for Toyota North America are made in our district, 4,000 every 24 hours.

Mr. Secretary, what other sectors are you prioritizing investment in beyond the automotive industry to reduce our dependence on foreign suppliers for critical goods?

Secretary LUTNICK. We have examinations in pharmaceuticals, right. Too many of our pharmaceuticals are antibiotics. You can't fight a war and need to ask your adversary to send you the antibiotics. So we need pharmaceuticals to be reshored to America. We need semiconductors, which we have already discussed, reshored in America. Those are two big items. Aircraft parts is another place that we think there is focus, right. And, of course, as we have discussed, automotive is vital to America. Steel and aluminum, which I just discussed.

So those are the kind of topics that we are focused on bringing and making sure that we are reshoring for national security reasons in America.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you, Secretary Lutnick. My home, Alabama's Fifth Congressional District, has over 400 companies developing and deploying technologies with various national defense, space exploration, and homeland security applications.

Your budget request includes a 60 percent increase in funding for the Bureau of Industry and Security. How does your department plan to utilize this funding to protect and bolster domestic companies, and how would this funding be used to improve our economic competitiveness and national security?

Secretary LUTNICK. Export controls, making sure that our adversaries don't get our best equipment, our most cutting-edge ideas. So

if we don't have enough agents—you know, we have two agents in China. That is just—come on. So we just need more agents to protect and defend our policies, and that is what the request is for. Let's grow our agents in the field to enforce the policies that we make at home.

Mr. STRONG. Totally agree, and that leads to my next question. We are seeing increased sophistication from bad actors to circumvent U.S. trade laws. China is producing goods domestically and routing them through other countries to avoid the made-in-China label.

Your department has asked for funds to address unbalanced trade through increased anti-dumping and countervailing duty investigation. How will this funding help combat China's circumvention of American tariffs, and what tools or technologies are you leveraging?

Secretary LUTNICK. Unfortunately, it is not just China. There are numerous countries whose governments subsidize their industries and, therefore, create an uncompetitive environment, and then they, basically at below cost, try to export to America, which creates our trade deficit. So we have anti-dumping, countervailing duties. That is the idea. We need to study them and we need to enforce them, and that is a key role of the Department of Commerce. And we need to augment that and we need to defend it for exactly the point that these—for example, steel and aluminum, they are crushing our industry trying to put us out of that business.

What I loved is that the U.K. had one blast furnace left. They sold it to the Chinese, and the Chinese then got all their customers and shut it. I mean—and then they have no steel industry.

Mr. STRONG. Secretary Lutnick, in 2024, the Census Bureau selected Huntsville, Alabama as one of six cities to participate in the 2026 Census test run. The 2026 test is an opportunity for the Census to refine its operations in a city like Huntsville, which is experiencing fast population growth, making it harder to accurately count.

Secretary Lutnick, what will you do to commit to advocating for full funding this year and next to carry out this 2026 testing program, including the Huntsville site, and will you provide a clear timeline to the State so they can begin preparation without delay? And also, your thoughts about consistency from State to State not allowing non-U.S. citizens to be counted in the United States Census.

Secretary LUTNICK. Consistency makes sense. Commitment to doing the absolute best statistical analysis of the Census is easy for me to commit to. We will focus on it and we will deliver the structure to have the greatest Census with the best statistical analysis ever in the United States of America, and that is what you are going to get from the Department of Commerce.

Mr. STRONG. Mr. Secretary, thank you for bringing it home to America.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Ms. DeLauro.

Ms. DELAURO. Thanks very much, Mr. Chairman. My apologies. There are a lot of appropriations markups and hearings today, so I apologize for being late. And with that, I would like to ask unani-

mous consent to put my opening remarks in the record, if I can.
Thank you.
[The information follows:]

Ranking Member DeLauro Statement at Fiscal Year 2026 Department of Commerce Budget Hearing

Thank you, Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Meng, for holding this hearing on the Trump Administration's budget request for the Department of Commerce.

Secretary Lutnick, I welcome you to the House of Representatives. Thank you for appearing before the committee today.

However, I cannot thank you for submitting a budget request to undermine your own Department's mission, stifling its ability to lower the cost of living, protect American families, and help manufacturers and small businesses grow and succeed.

But before we talk about your request to suffocate your own Department next year, I want to talk about what is happening right now.

The American people are demanding help with the cost of living. But President Trump is not laser focused on the cost-of-living crisis – he is actually making it worse. He promised to fight for workers and the middle class, but instead put billionaires, like yourself, in charge of the government.

This Administration is attacking programs and services that protect Americans and foster their economic success in order to pay for tax breaks for billionaires. We need the government to fight for the middle class, the working class, and the vulnerable. We have an Administration doing the opposite.

Mr. Secretary, you have been a fierce advocate for the President's reckless and rudderless trade agenda, an agenda your Department plays a central role in realizing.

He imposes sweeping tariffs, which are taxes on the American people, and the Administration says it will create jobs.

When he takes tariffs away, it is 'Art of the Deal.'

Raise tariffs, creating jobs. Lower tariffs, 'Art of the Deal.'

Over and over and over again.

It is insulting to the intelligence of the American people to suggest that there is any grand strategy behind the President's trade agenda.

Will tariffs significantly raise revenue and reshore manufacturing? Or are they just a temporary tool to bring other nations to the negotiating table? They cannot feasibly do both, Mr. Secretary.

The American people are desperate for help with the cost of living, and this Administration's trade policies are causing their costs to rise even further. The Yale Budget Lab estimates that the tariffs will lower American households' purchasing power an average of \$2,500 this year. That's \$2,500 most households living paycheck to paycheck do not have, Mr. Secretary. \$2,500 is not much to billionaires. It is a lot for Americans struggling with groceries, health care, and housing costs.

And the level of uncertainty driven by the Administration's chaos is harming the economy, jeopardizing small businesses, and stifling the investments that create jobs. Tariffs can be a useful tool when applied surgically and methodically. Blanket tariffs on our biggest trading partners, announced on a whim then withdrawn without warning, only create confusion, hesitation, and distrust of the American marketplace.

The harm does not stop there. This Administration is making the cost of living crisis worse by recklessly, and unlawfully, freezing and stealing funds from agencies, programs, and services across the government that help the American people, including grants and programs within your Department.

Funding for every state to provide seniors, veterans, rural families, and people with disabilities with the skills and tools they need to access the internet was frozen, as was emergency funding to help NOAA procure weather radars and satellites that help create lifesaving forecasts.

At NOAA, you have overseen the dismissals of National Weather Service forecasters and other critical employees, endangering American communities. As a result of funding and employee cuts within NOAA, we have fewer forecasters, fewer weather balloon launches, and less reliable weather data and forecasts that families, businesses, and state and local governments rely on to stay safe and stay open.

Weather forecasts are not waste, fraud, and abuse. Ensuring veterans, rural students, and seniors access the internet is not waste, fraud, and abuse. This does not provide efficiency. It creates chaos.

Turning to your budget, you continue to destroy our weather and climate forecasting capabilities, with over \$1 billion in cuts to research, data programs, grants, and satellite procurement at NOAA.

You destroy a lifeline that promotes development in communities that have been left behind – abandoning the very people this Administration claims to support – by completely eliminating Economic Development Administration grants.

You set back our industrial competitiveness and hurt small and medium-sized manufacturers with cuts to the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and a total elimination of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program. This program helps these smaller manufacturers expand, create jobs, increase their sales, and streamline their operations – and you take that away from them.

And while implementing your disastrous and chaotic trade policies, you slash the International Trade Administration, hurting our efforts to increase exports of American products and services and protect American producers against trade cheating by China and others.

Mr. Secretary, you are telling the American people one thing is happening, and you turn around and do the opposite. We will not tolerate this charade any longer.

I thank the Chair, and I look forward to your testimony.

Ms. DELAURO. And good morning to you all. It is good afternoon now.

Mr. Secretary, let me just follow up on something that my colleague, Mr. Mrvan, was asking about, and that was the International Trade Administration, which helps to increase our exports of American products and services, protects American producers against trade cheating by China and others. I think it is important to note to my colleague, Mr. Mrvan, that there has been almost a 30 percent cut to the ITA, \$183 million. That is below what was proposed for 2025.

So it was going to cost American jobs, decimates ITA's U.S. commercial service, operates out of U.S. export assistance centers and U.S. embassies abroad, works to maintain and increase the exports of U.S. products and services. So the agency which is meant to protect, if you will, our exporters, et cetera, is now being decimated.

I think one has to look at what has been cut. There is the MEP program that I believe has been eliminated. One needs to go carefully through each of these areas and get a sense of, in fact, what is being cut back.

And, you know, facts are funny. You have got to deal with the details and with the facts. You just can't speak about it and make general statements. And when you cut back on agencies in the way that you have, and slash and burn, if you will, then we are not going to get to where we want to go.

I want to focus a second on two quick areas. One is transparency in government, because it is critical. Americans need to see where their tax dollars are going. And since 2022, we have had in place—I say that, it may be self-serving. I worked hard on this issue, and we got bipartisan, bicameral agreement to make sure that the executive branch, and I made sure—that was with the Democratic administration—they are legally required to publicly post budget documents. That is how and where taxpayers' dollars are being spent. They are called apportionments. Put that aside. It is about saying how the money is going to be spent, and that is online.

Now, this information is legally required. It is binding on a Federal agency. The Office of Management and Budget uses the information to tell agencies how and when they can spend the funds that Congress has appropriated. Beginning in March, OMB stopped posting these documents. This is illegal, and it is a slap in the face to the principle of transparency, accountability, and government spending, which this administration claims to champion.

Mr. Secretary, I am going to ask for your commitment to once again making the amount specific budget documents, apportionments, how and where U.S. tax dollars are being spent by the Department of Commerce and its bureaus publicly accessible. Will you commit to doing that?

Secretary LUTNICK. It is my understanding that my department is following the CR with precision, as is required.

Ms. DELAURO. No. You are inaccurate, because I will get to spend plans. We do not have details on the spend plans, which the CR requires, and it hasn't happened. We have a lack of specificity on—this is—it is more than 5 weeks after the legal due date. We do not have a detailed spend plan as required by the law.

Let me go back. Will you commit to getting online how and where the American taxpayers' dollars with regard to the Department of Commerce are being spent, as is required by the law?

Secretary LUTNICK. I will, of course, follow the law, but it is my understanding, as I have been advised, that we have filed precisely according to the CR's requirement.

Ms. DELAURO. I do not know who you got your advice from, but this is the Appropriations Committee. We are looking at every spend plan. And let me just tell you, the bare-bones spend plan was 3 weeks late. Surely, in that time you must have had time to put together a more detailed spend plan.

This is false. The law sets out the timeline and the level of detail. What is happening is illegal and in contravention of what this committee does and it puts together. And if you can't make a commitment—I take that as no, you will not commit—so that the public has no idea, no idea of what any agency in this administration as how they are spending the taxpayers' dollars and where those dollars are going.

I yield back and wait for a second round. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your indulgence.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Moore.

Mr. MOORE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Secretary Lutnick, for being here. Really appreciate it. A lot of your comments are just so spot on. Just a little while ago, we heard something pretty interesting: the idea that trade deficits are good. We heard an example of, I guess, a banana, the price of a banana at a Whole Foods outside of suburban Philadelphia going up.

I can tell you in West Virginia what the generational price has been for the degradation and destruction of our industries in the State of West Virginia over the last several decades, 40 years of it, it has destroyed us. It has destroyed us.

And you talked about this blast furnace switcheroo that they had there in the U.K. That happened to us in West Virginia. So Cleveland-Cliffs and the United Steelworkers Union had requested tariffs on template steel from the Biden administration. We didn't get it. We didn't get the tariffs on the template steel, and we shuttered that steel plant. We have lost thousands of jobs since then, and now there is only one blast furnace left in the whole United States that makes template steel.

And I would appreciate it if the Commerce Department would take a look at that, because that is a national security issue and it is terrible for us. I mean, we used to be known for manufacturing steel. It was hugely disappointing by the last administration not taking any action on that.

But I do want to ask this. Just shifting gears real quickly. Is BIS specifically—and you have talked about plusing up that budget—have you all looked at—and this is during the Obama administration, we went through the Export Control Reform Initiative. This is where they created the 600 series and the ECCNs, and then expanded EAR99, right. So there is a lot more items that can go out without a license under that.

Have you all looked at going back and reviewing that? I actually worked here when we were going through that process, and it

seemed, I guess, to make sense at the time, but you do see that it has created at times, in my view, some gaps as it relates to critical technology. Have you all looked at perhaps reviewing that Export Control Reform Initiative that happened about a decade ago, and maybe trying to tighten up some of those export controls, specifically on critical dual-use technology?

Secretary LUTNICK. Very thoughtful point, right on the point, and we are on that topic. We are on it.

Mr. MOORE. Yeah. It occurs to me, particularly when we created the 600 series, which is essentially like a United States munitions light series within the Department of Commerce under BIS. This is how some of our defense technology gets out there, and it is very—it is very disappointing. Obviously, this is not the idea is that, you know, we wanted to cruise at export capacity for defense manufacturers and others out there, but specifically around some of this off-the-shelf technology, EAR99, items that are going to be exported, I would really like if you all would take a look at this and the way this was set up back then and trying to tighten those controls. BIS is, I mean, really the last stop in protecting our technology.

Could you talk, though, just briefly—you talked about the steel industry. Could you talk about, from a national security standpoint, why it is so important? You touched on it a little bit, but why it is so important to the national security of the United States to have a vibrant steel industry.

Secretary LUTNICK. You cannot fight a war unless you can make the munitions, period. You can't make a missile without steel and aluminum. You can't produce anything in defense without steel and aluminum. You must have a domestic industry.

The President has made it crystal clear, and I think it is obvious when I say it, and we need to protect it, just like you said, in West Virginia. They didn't protect you and you lost the business. That cannot continue, and the Trump administration will not allow it to continue.

Mr. MOORE. Yeah. And then they just raised the price of template steel right after they acquired it.

Secretary LUTNICK. Of course.

Mr. MOORE. After they crushed it. Last real quick question. One issue that I am concerned about is transformers in this country, which we don't have a great domestic capacity in terms of manufacturing. There is actually one manufacturer of electrical steel in the United States right now, and one, maybe a couple, that can actually manufacture transformers.

Myself and others in the Steel Caucus, a few of us sent a letter, obviously not your department, but asking for the Defense Production Act to be invoked around that. Is this something that your department is looking at at all as it relates to transformers?

Secretary LUTNICK. We are now.

Mr. MOORE. Okay. That is a great answer.

And with that, I yield back. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Secretary, the results are in. You are a hit. They want an encore performance. Are you available for a few minutes more for the members that may like to ask another question?

Secretary LUTNICK. I am at your service, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROGERS. We promise you we will be brief and on time. Thank you, sir.

I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Secretary, rural communities, which are often ignored by Washington, face unique challenges, one of which is access to reliable broadband. How is the Department planning to continue addressing broadband gaps and prioritizing expansion into unserved areas?

Secretary LUTNICK. The Congress has launched the BEAD Program for broadband access. Under the Biden administration, they gave out no money after 30 months. Our objective is as follows. Within the next 90 days—I think we are going to put it out on Friday—basically saying, if your State is willing to just be technologically agnostic, meaning produce the right access at the lowest price or at the—if it is a tie, I don't care which one you pick, make that application within 90 days, and then this department will put out the money by the end of the year.

So we will go from not having given any money under the Biden administration to having the full program funded and distributed. Provided they are technologically agnostic by the end of 2025, all the money will be distributed so that broadband access can be built by the States. That is my promise.

Mr. ROGERS. Well, broadband is vital, as you well know, and, of course, the places where it is not in being really are the rural areas, where it is not profitable for a utility to go into, which is an age-old problem that we faced before.

Let me highlight another important initiative to rural America. That is EDA, Economic Development Administration, particularly the one to have assistance to coal communities. My district, as was West Virginia, had a complete breakdown of the industry over the last 10 years. I lost 15,000 jobs in my district alone. But EDA has been a crutch for us to use to help revitalize and bring back into competitive nature rural areas. What do you think about EDA?

Secretary LUTNICK. So, first, I will address that the administration wants to revitalize clean coal. We think it is vital to America. And so for both yourself and the Representative I just spoke to, you should rely on this administration to bring back clean coal, because it is vital. The country needs power. We need power. And we will do that.

And with respect to EDA, the same thing. There are many other ways to do it better than to have a reasonably small group inside the Commerce Department. We will stick with disaster relief, we will stick with our Tech Hubs, but the concept of providing that kind of program I think is better served with bigger, more sophisticated programs.

Mr. ROGERS. Well, there are rural areas that are not coal dependents. What about those communities?

Secretary LUTNICK. I would be happy to meet with you offline and go through it together. You know, I am tasked with being efficient with taxpayer dollars, and when I get a GAO report that has 80 other programs, I just think it is more efficient to do it in a more practical way than do it in a small way in my department. Not that I don't enjoy doing things, but efficiency is my objective.

And I think it was important that I show a budget that was substantially lower that proves that we can do our great job with less taxpayer dollars.

Mr. ROGERS. Well, we want to work with you on this subcommittee. We want to see you succeed, because when you succeed, the country and the President succeed. But we have our priorities as well as it relates to offering jobs back home to keep our people from having to move to another locale. So I hope we can work with you.

Secretary LUTNICK. Of course.

Mr. ROGERS. Ms. Meng.

Ms. MENG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And let me fix my microphone.

All right. I want to piggyback off a little bit about Representative Dean's banana example and how it affects the cost of living for our constituents all across America. You know, I have heard from many Asian-American business owners. They own restaurants. They own supermarkets. They own well-known supermarkets like 99 Ranch and H Mart. They are really concerned about the rising costs of goods, like anything from basmati rice to the burdock root to different sauces that are utilized by the Asian-American community, fastest growing community in this country.

I know that you mentioned, you know, due to the tariffs, the price will eventually come back down, but I just wanted to, you know, make an observation that the cost of living for Americans, as we know, is already high, and it is hard for them to be able to afford these goods and these products that they are using today. And the restaurant owners, the supermarket owners, small business owners are really in a bind, because they don't know if they have to raise their prices and pass on the higher cost to consumers or to eat the cost themselves. And coming out of a pandemic where they barely survived, they are now worried that, because of these high costs, that their businesses, you know, may not survive.

So I just wanted to highlight this issue that is happening in my district and I am sure in many other districts across the country, about a lot of these products that are largely not produced here in the United States.

Secretary LUTNICK. The inflation under the Biden administration was very, very difficult and created a very difficult time for Americans across the country.

Ms. MENG. The prices have gone up recently, starting this year.

Secretary LUTNICK. Fortunately, inflation, as the last numbers were very low, in the low twos and back toward the level that the Fed says is their long-term goal, so that is very promising. But I will tell you, in our trade deals, our expectation is for unavailable natural resources, a banana, right, other spices and the roots, the things you have suggested, your expectation should be there will not be a tariff.

But when we give that to a country, right, like coffee, right. When we say to Ghana, okay, we will not charge you a tariff on coffee or cocoa, but you will open your market to allow our farmers to sell soybeans, because you are blocking us on soybeans. Why do you expect to sell us coffee and cocoa and not let us sell soybeans?

It seems unfair. Let's make that fair. And that is an example of a trade deal.

Granted, these are small countries, but that is the kind of model that, when we are done, we will not have tariffs on unavailable natural resources, but we will have market access for our farmers and our ranchers. You know our chicken and pork and beef are treated horribly around the world, horribly. That has to end. And if we use that by saying you can export coffee to us, but you need to treat us better for our agricultural products back to you, I think that is fair trade.

Ms. MENG. I appreciate that. Do you have a sense of a timeline? I appreciate that the costs will eventually come back down, but when my constituents, you know, just average individual consumers or small business owners are asking me when the prices will come back down, prices that have gone up only in recent months after this new Trump administration, what can we tell our constituents?

Secretary LUTNICK. The President has set out July 9 as the date by which he expects most transaction deals to have occurred. If they don't occur because of back-and-forth, the President can just set the agenda and say here is your offer, and set that trading deal in place. And your expectation should be by July 9.

Ms. MENG. I appreciate that. And I just, in my 30 seconds left, I want to align myself with the concerns made by the Chair about EDA. This is a program that is very important, you know, programs from Tech Hubs, the Recompete Program, the Good Jobs Challenge. So many programs are important to our rural areas, to job creation. We know that in your confirmation hearing you pledged to maintain these programs, and we hope that that will continue.

Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Alford.

Mr. ALFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I apologize for missing the first round. I just literally ran back from the House floor doing a speech, but that is our job. And I need to get in shape.

Anyway, thank you for being here. You are doing such a great job. And we are proud to have you in that position.

I want to—I know all the good questions have already been asked and answered, but I want to talk about the tariffs just a little bit. You know, the Democrats doubted these. The media doubted it. The pundits doubted it. A lot of people made fun of the tariffs, didn't like them, but they are working. We have already seen the results. In fact, the Congressional Budget Office now estimates the proposed tariffs will reduce our Federal deficit by \$2.8 trillion. That is a success story.

Secretary, what is the strategy behind these? Is it simply a negotiating tool? Is it the art of the deal? Or does the President mean it when he says it about these tariffs, and why are they being so successful so far?

Secretary LUTNICK. Build in America, in the greatest economy in the world. Remember, America is the consumer of the world. \$20 trillion we consume every year. So if you want to sell here, build here. And if you don't want to sell here, pay to come into our market. We are receiving a run rate of \$34 billion a month to the

Treasury of the United States of America because of tariffs. So anybody who says that tariffs aren't working can't count to \$34 billion.

Mr. ALFORD. I want to talk about the funding for NOAA and the National Weather Service. You know, Missouri has gotten hit pretty hard. We have a lot of tornados. We had a bad spring, and it is still going on. There was a lot of damage in my district just south of Kansas City.

We have a regional NOAA center in Pleasant Hill, Missouri. It is a smaller center like you were talking about earlier, and I heard you talking about what is going to be happening in the future to some of these centers. Are centers like Pleasant Hill, which they already have some vacancies, are those regional centers in danger of closing at any time in the future, as far as you know, being replaced by automation and AI in a centralized location?

Secretary LUTNICK. I will give you an example in Missouri, which was we have all these research people in NOAA, but they were separate from operational. So we started putting them together to take that research and start using it. And what it did is it produced an analysis that showed that we had horrible tornado conditions in Missouri. And so 2 hours earlier than the record ever in NOAA, we gave those warnings and saved 120 people. Got them out 2 hours earlier. So we are totally on it.

But the concept of having four people, and one of them has a baby and one of them is out sick, and somehow we are not able to do it 24 hours a day, it seems silly. We should have—if we have 2,100 meteorologists, I promise you, we can cover the United States of America 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and we can have better technology, right.

We used to have human beings would launch a weather balloon.

Mr. ALFORD. Right.

Secretary LUTNICK. Like, I could imagine, like, someone just going whoop on a—come on. It is called autosonders. We now do it in an automated fashion, so I don't need the person to launch the balloon because I can automate launch the balloon—

Mr. ALFORD. So I have been inside the center; it is pretty cool. And I used to be in television news there in Kansas City. A lot of my friends are meteorologists at these stations who have personal relationships with the people at NOAA and NWS. I think they are a little concerned.

Will these centers be closing, but the information, which is also lifesaving, be coming from a centralized location?

Secretary LUTNICK. I think it will be both. I think there will be many centers that will stay and will augment and be bigger and stronger and more powerful, but the concept is we have got to be able to automate ourselves and back each other up. This concept that the data just stays in Missouri and is not available to be analyzed by Nebraska or other meteorologists is illogical. That needs to change.

If I showed you the technology, you would drop your head embarrassed to be an American. When we are done in this Commerce Department and I am done with my term, I promise you, you will be proud of the technology in the Department of Commerce.

Mr. ALFORD. Mr. Chair, if you would indulge me for one more question. I want to talk about the BEAD Program, also very impor-

tant to my State, very rural State. Biden administration put in \$42.5 billion, and not one home hooked up. It is a disgrace, I think.

You talked about tech-agnostic approach and you talked about the three options. It has got to be a fix—what are those three options again?

Secretary LUTNICK. Fixed wireless, which we all know is WiFi.

Mr. ALFORD. Right.

Secretary LUTNICK. Right? Fiber, laying cable, or satellite. Any of those three serve broadband, and we should be agnostic to which one.

Mr. ALFORD. So some of the folks in my district and State are concerned that we want to get everyone hooked up, but it has got to be the right system. Satellite is not going to work all over Missouri, so we are going to get the system that actually works, right, for our money?

Secretary LUTNICK. Yes.

Mr. ALFORD. All right. I hear the light tap of the chairman's gavel. I will yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Ms. DeLauro.

Ms. DELAURO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Just a couple of things. I gather, and I am just going to assume that it is a no, that you are not going to post where, how, and when American taxpayers' dollars are being used, for what programs. That is the issue of the apportionment, which is, again, illegal, so it is a legal issue there. You are not responsible, but you can get back to your OMB friends and tell them that they are liable for penalties when they come contrary to the Antideficiency Act.

Food for farmers. Let me just—what you said there. U.S. food aid programs across USDA purchased roughly \$1 billion worth of grain from farmers across the country. One farmer from Illinois said to kill that program is a disaster, it is morally bankrupt, and it hurts the farmers' bottom line. USAID spends \$2 billion annually on U.S.-grown agriculture for humanitarian aid. Losing even a portion of that has already been a disaster for farmers.

I want to talk about the spend plan, because lest you know, this is the public law. This is—which requires you in the CR to provide a spend plan to detailing how you will use taxpayer dollars at the program, project, and activity level. You provided a bare-bones spend plan with only account level numbers, no details, no transparency for the American people. You are out of compliance with the law.

I am asking you, when are you going to come into compliance with the law with the spend plan?

Secretary LUTNICK. As I said, as far as I know, we are in compliance with the CR, but I will happily go back and I—

Ms. DELAURO. No, no. Right. Please. Please let us know when we are going to receive the details that we need for this effort in order to be able to do our business. This is the Appropriations Committee. We need to know how much, where it is going, what are the specific programs. We just can't make a decision saying this is the pot of money we need, but we have no specificity about where it is going.

And I just might add, you are not the only agency that is not in compliance. So I am going to ask you, give us a timeframe when you can get back to us with the detail.

Secretary LUTNICK. I will take it under advisement. I will talk to my advisers and—

Ms. DELAURO. Okay. Well, I would just say, Mr. Chairman, I believe we need to have an answer on when that data is coming before we decide what it is that we are going to spend and appropriate with regard to the Department of Defense.

I was listening on trade deals, et cetera, and this is—I will just state this. You are looking at doing a trade deal with Lesotho. Whoa. I know they have a lot of penguins.

Secretary LUTNICK. We are not spending time on that. Don't worry about it.

Ms. DELAURO. Yeah, but I think it is important to note that Mr. Musk, who is now gone, I don't know if his contract is gone for Starlink in Lesotho. Let's just talk about what these deals are beginning to look like.

Trade and tariffs. At one point you said about whether or not the cost would go up. You said that is, quote, silly. That is silly that they will not go up.

I think Congresswoman Dean and I were at the same meeting this morning where the National Retail Federation is beside themselves with the uncertainty and with the struggle of what is going on with small businesses. 99.6 percent of businesses have fewer than 500 people. 40 percent of the wages are paid by small businesses. They will struggle if they are in a higher tariff environment, and the question of uncertainty looms large.

Tariffs, taxes on the American people. Let's face it. American people are desperate for help with the cost of living. These trade policies are, in fact, causing it further—the Yale Budget Lab estimates that tariffs will lower American households' purchasing power an average of \$2,500 this year. \$2,500, most households who live paycheck to paycheck do not have.

Mr. Secretary, \$2,500 dollars is not a lot to billionaires, but it is a hell of a lot of money for Americans who struggle with groceries, with healthcare, and with housing costs.

This administration, the President said that costs would come down on the first day. What the administration is doing is making it worse, and the level of uncertainty is providing chaos, it harms our economy, it jeopardizes small business, and it stifles the investment that creates jobs. We need to know what you are doing, how you are doing it.

I thank the chairman again. But it can't be, you know, God is in heaven, all is right with the world. You need to face the facts and be truthful about what is happening with the trade policies and other areas that this administration is engaged in.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary LUTNICK. I disagree.

Ms. DELAURO. I am sure you do.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Strong.

Mr. STRONG. Secretary Lutnick, Huntsville, Alabama is home to the National Weather Service Forecast Office. Could you elaborate on your plans to deploy an experimental AI-based forecast system?

Secretary LUTNICK. Sure. The way we have been doing it is we have been taking data in and doing it consistently over the last 20 years. AI systems can then take the weather patterns of the world, examine how they respond to each other, and do much better and be much more efficient, much faster, and much more learned. So we are going to take research, technology, and the enormous amounts of data that we collect, and we continue to collect and we are only going to continue to collect more going forward, and we will just become much, much better at forecasting dangerous conditions to protect Americans.

Mr. STRONG. We definitely know about those dangerous conditions and we have seen it in the last couple of weeks across the Southeast. How can we work with you to ensure that my district's existing expertise and capabilities are leveraged to support and collaborate with you during this significant effort?

Secretary LUTNICK. I look forward to meeting with you offline and be glad to go through that and help you do it together. Sounds great to me.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you. Recent reports by NOAA and other Federal agencies have highlighted significant concerns regarding China's distant-water fishing fleet. Notably, in September of 2024, NOAA denied U.S. port privileges to certain Chinese-flagged long-line vessels due to their involvement in illegal, unreported, and unregulated IUU fishing activity.

Mr. Secretary, given these recent developments, what specific measures is the Department of Commerce implementing to enforce trade restrictions against Chinese food products linked to IUU fishing?

Secretary LUTNICK. Under the Biden administration, we were not even allowed—allowing our fishermen to use our 200 miles of exclusive fishing zone for ourselves, and of course, when we weren't out there fishing, guess who was out there fishing? Right? Our adversaries just go in. If you are not there, well, they are going to fish there just the same.

So the idea was, first, we allow all of our fishermen the maximum usage they possibly can, because we protect and care about American fishing. We care about it. And second, we are going to hold accountable anybody who poaches, who breaches, or is in our space or near our space, we are going to go and make sure they cannot have access to our markets if they do so.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you. Mr. Secretary, the American farmer is suffering, commodity prices are low. Many countries have taken advantage of the American farmer. It appears that we are buying beef from other countries rather than buying from the American cattle farmer.

What is the number one thing as Secretary that you can do to help the American farmer?

Secretary LUTNICK. We in trade deals can open the market. Beef in the U.K.; corn, right, in the U.K.; cereals in the U.K., in Europe, in India. India won't buy a bushel of our corn. If they buy ethanol, right, then that will help our corn farmers. So we have got to open these markets.

Beef, poultry, pork. You won't believe how poorly our farmers are treated, our ranchers are treated, and our fishermen are treated.

We weren't allowed to sell lobster in the U.K. You say, oh, come on. If you read the way we are treated so badly, you would understand why the President is on these trade deals. Make it fair for our people.

I always lead with agriculture, because we are just treated so badly. If you read it, you would just keep shaking your head. I can't believe it. I didn't know it when I wasn't here. And when I first read it, I said, oh, come on. And it is all sort of old rules that are just not true anymore, and we are blasting those open. And that is what I am going to do for our farmers, our ranchers, and our fishermen.

Mr. STRONG. I am thankful for what you are doing, and these trade agreements have got to stop where America is being taken advantage of. And I commend you and your staff for what you are doing. I know it is a lot of hours being spent, but we are in a process of resetting America, and the American farmer, the American automobile industry will be better because of it.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Ivey.

Mr. IVEY. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I wanted to follow up, Mr. Secretary, with respect to the chair's questions about EDA. You mentioned 80 programs with respect to what sounded like maybe the same 80 programs you were talking about for MBDA.

Secretary LUTNICK. From the GAO, and I will send you that report. You have asked for it. I will find it and I will send it to you.

Mr. IVEY. Okay. I appreciate that.

Real quick point. You know, the prices will come down point with respect to the impact on small businesses and retail and the like. I just want to say that, you know, I have got a lot of small businesses. I am sure there are plenty across the country who can't wait. You know, they are really up against the wall right now. The wolf is at the door. Their businesses are at risk of being shut down. So the faster this resolves, the better.

I know you mentioned July 9 with respect to the tariffs, and that can't come soon enough. And I hope that, whatever happens on July 9, there is some effort to pay attention to what is happening to these businesses in the country. They are multinational, you know, corporations, they will survive. But smaller businesses that are really, you know, struggling to make ends meet, they don't have that luxury, they don't have that kind of margin.

Real quick on NIST. And you heard I think from both sides of the aisle with respect to the need for a budget that gives more detail. And actually, I just saw you testified, I think you said you are reviewing all 5,700 contracts that—I don't think it was FEMA, but it was NOAA, and you said you are reviewing all of them. And so someone who is going to—

Secretary LUTNICK. All above \$100,000.

Mr. IVEY. Okay. Someone who pays that level of attention to detail, when you were a CEO, I am sure that you demanded something better than the skinny budget when you were making corporate decisions for your business. You had to. And I know that when you go through these contracts in the way that you are, that is the attention to detail that we want to actually provide in our

roles here in Congress and in functioning and carrying out our aspect of the appropriations process. So please give us that level of information so we can do our job carefully and closely too.

And then real quick point with respect to NIST. Again in the skinny budget, there is a \$325 million reduction under that category. I don't really know where the money is coming from, but NIST is a critical agency, as you know, with respect to cyber and quantum and the like. You got a letter from—I guess in concern about this—Software and Information Industry Association, CCIA, ITIF Center for Data Innovation, a bunch of private industry leaders, tech net, raising questions about where these cuts are going to come from and what is being done with them.

The work done at NIST is not just a matter of maintaining technical excellence; it is a direct investment in ensuring that American industry continues to set the global benchmark for innovation. And we emphasize that NIST work represents a high-value investment that directly contributes to U.S. economic growth, competitiveness, and technological leadership. We caution that downsizing NIST or eliminating these initiatives will have ramifications for the ability of the American AI industry to continue to lead globally.

So I share those concerns. I would like to add to the record this article, Eric Geller, NIST loses key cyber experts in standards and research for the record.

NIST is playing a critical role in our competition with respect to AI for quantum across the board. I don't know what cuts you are talking about making with respect to them, because the level of—or lack of detail with respect to the budget, but please be careful in the cuts that you make here. I don't know that any of them are justified necessarily. I can't really tell.

But cutting NIST at this time—and that chart I tried to show you that you couldn't see, the quantum competition, we need all hands on deck. This is a critical time for the United States right now. Making cuts to those industries—or to those aspects of the government, they are such key players with respect to the industries, this couldn't be a worse time to do it.

So I appreciate your leadership on this and hope that you will continue to make sure that the United States can take a leadership role in these industries.

Secretary LUTNICK. We are not cutting in quantum. We are not cutting in AI. But there are old programs that need to be reexamined, and that money can be used better.

And the last thing I would say is we keep talking about small businesses. Ninety percent of our businesses are American businesses. And we keep talking about 10 percent that import. If you build in America, you are being protected by the tariffs. It is good for small business in America that build in America. Ninety percent of them build in America.

Mr. IVEY. Not all businesses build in America, as you just heard from—

Secretary LUTNICK. Ninety percent.

Mr. ROGERS. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. Dean.

Ms. DEAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thanks for hanging around for a second round.

I wanted to first, Mr. Chairman, just offer for the record some articles and documents. The first is a Washington Post article of this week, entitled, "We are Witnessing the Suicide of a Superpower."

The second is, as ranking member revealed, the report from Yale Budget Lab, titled, "The State of U.S. Tariffs: June the 1st of this year." One of the highlights, American consumers face the highest average tariff rate they have endured since 1938, the Great Depression.

The next one, U.S. trade document—U.S. Trade Representative, titled, "Reciprocal Tariffs, Calculations, and the Flawed Formula." I am sure you know this formula very well, Mr. Secretary. It is incoherent and flawed. I enter that for the record.

And a New York Times article, April 7, "The Trump White House Cited My Research to Justify Tariffs. It Got It All Wrong."

And the final one, which was revealing of my use of the banana here, "Bananas to Car Seat—to Car Seats, Walmart Warns of Price Rise Due to Tariffs."

For the record. Without objection?

Mr. ROGERS. Without objection.

[The information follows:]



Opinion
Max Boot

We are witnessing the suicide of a superpower

The president's assault on science dangerously undermines America's superpower status.

Updated June 3, 2025

On June 14 — the 250th birthday of the U.S. Army and, not so coincidentally, the 79th birthday of President Donald Trump — a gaudy display of U.S. military power will parade through Washington. No doubt Trump thinks that all of the tanks and soldiers on display will make America, and its president, look tough and strong.

But the planned spectacle is laughably hollow. Even as the president wants to showcase U.S. military power, he is doing grave and possibly irreparable damage to the real sources of U.S. strength, including its long-term investment in scientific research. Trump is declaring war on science, and the casualty will be the U.S. economy.

Since the 1940s, when the University of Chicago, Columbia University and the University of California played a central role in the Manhattan Project, the engine driving U.S. economic and military competitiveness has been federal support of research universities. That partnership has produced most of the key inventions of the information age, including the internet, GPS, smartphones and artificial intelligence.

Federal support of university research has also made possible the success of the United States' world-leading biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries. Advances enabled by federal support include magnetic resonance imaging, the Human Genome Project, LASIK surgery, weight-loss drugs such as Ozempic, and drugs that have saved countless AIDS and covid-19 patients.

Now Trump is sabotaging a research and development pipeline that is the envy of the world. The Trump budget would cut the National Science Foundation budget by 55 percent. Already, the U.S. DOGE Service has terminated more than 1,600 active grants from the foundation, worth \$1.5 billion. According to the New York Times, the science foundation's grants this year are being disbursed at the slowest pace in at least 35 years. The NSF directly supports 357,600 researchers and students; many of them will now be out of luck.

It's a similar story at the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who subscribes to an array of crackpot health theories, has already reduced the HHS workforce by 10,000 people with buyouts or early retirements, and now he intends to lay off an additional 10,000. Adding insult to injury, Kennedy wants to prohibit government scientists from publishing in the leading peer-reviewed journals. "CDC clobbered," one official told The Post. "The agency will not be able to function. Let's be honest."

These budget cuts are hitting hard at America's — and the world's — leading research universities: Johns Hopkins is losing \$800 million; Columbia, \$400 million; the University of Pennsylvania, \$175 million. No school has suffered more than Harvard University, which has lost more than \$2.6 billion in federal funds.

Indeed, Trump says he wants to eliminate all of Harvard's federal contracts and give the money to trade schools. This is populism gone crazy. Valuable as trade schools are, they will not be making breakthroughs in fighting Alzheimer's disease, cancer, strokes, sickle cell anemia or other diseases that are being researched at Harvard.

Then there is the administration's assault on foreign students. Trump tried to kick all international students out of Harvard — an order halted by a federal judge Thursday. Meanwhile, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who has vowed to retaliate against U.S. allies that censor free speech, has sought to expel foreign students for expressing views he dislikes about the war in Gaza. The State Department announced last week that it was temporarily halting all interviews for foreign-student visas, and Rubio said the agency would "aggressively revoke" visas of Chinese students in the United States "with connections to the Chinese Communist Party or studying in critical fields."

As The Post noted, about 100 million people belong to the Chinese Communist Party, most for careerist rather than ideological reasons. And of the 277,398 Chinese students currently studying at U.S. universities, more than 110,000 are pursuing degrees in math, science and engineering — all areas of weakness for the U.S. educational system. Expelling a substantial number of foreign students, who typically pay full tuition, would deal another heavy blow to universities already reeling from federal budget cuts.

It isn't just universities that benefit from the presence of foreign students — so does the entire country. According to the Association of International Educators, the more than 1.1 million international students in the United States create about \$44 billion in economic activity and 378,000 jobs. And then there are the benefits they deliver after they graduate, assuming they are allowed to stay in this country. The National Foundation for American Policy reports that one-quarter of all billion-dollar U.S. start-ups have a founder who attended a U.S. university as an international student.

The United States' competitors are salivating at the prospect of gaining an edge in technological competition at our expense. France, Australia and Canada are throwing out the welcome mat to scientists who can no longer do their work in the United States. But the biggest beneficiary is likely to be China. Even before the Trump cutbacks, China was already catching up to the United States in scientific spending; its research and development budget has been growing by an average of 8.9 percent a year, compared with just 4.7 percent in the United States.

In March, Beijing announced a \$138 billion government fund that will invest in cutting-edge fields such as AI, quantum computing and hydrogen energy.

So while China is investing to win the economic (and potentially military) contests of the future, Trump is undercutting long-term U.S. military and economic competitiveness with his anti-intellectual animus. The weapons systems that will be paraded in Washington on June 14 won't be of much help to the United States in the future if it falls behind in the R&D race with China. I fear we may be seeing, as suggested by China expert Rush Doshi, the suicide of a superpower.

What readers are saying

The comments overwhelmingly criticize President Trump's budget cuts to U.S. research universities, highlighting the detrimental impact on innovation and scientific progress. Many commenters express concern that these cuts will lead to a brain drain, with talented scientists... [Show more](#)

This summary is AI-generated. AI can make mistakes and this summary is not a replacement for reading the comments.



State of U.S. Tariffs: June 1, 2025

Published: June 1, 2025 Updated: June 6, 2025

[Download the Data](#)

Key Takeaways

1

The Budget Lab (TBL) estimated the effects all US tariffs and foreign retaliation implemented in 2025 through June 1, including the effects of the higher 50% steel & aluminum tariffs announced May 30. TBL analyzed the June 1 tariff rates as if they stayed in effect in perpetuity.

2

Current Tariff Rate: Consumers face an overall average effective tariff rate of 15.6%, the highest since 1937. After consumption shifts, the average tariff rate will be 14.5%, also the highest since 1938.

3

Overall Price Level & Distributional Effects: The price level from all 2025 tariffs rises by 1.5% in the short-run, the equivalent of an average per household consumer loss of \$2,500 in 2024\$. Annual pre-substitution losses for households at the bottom of the income distribution are \$1,100. The post-substitution price increase settles at 1.3%, a \$2,100 loss per household.

4

Commodity Prices: The 2025 tariffs disproportionately affect clothing and textiles, with consumers facing 31% higher shoe prices and 28% higher apparel prices in the short-run. Shoes and apparel prices stay 17% and 15% higher in the long-run respectively.

5

Real GDP Effects: US real GDP growth is -0.5pp lower from all 2025 tariffs. In the long-run, the US economy is persistently -0.3% smaller respectively, the equivalent of \$100 billion annually in 2024\$.

6

Labor Market Effects: The unemployment rate rises 0.3 percentage point by the end of 2025, and payroll employment is 376,000 lower.

7

Long-Run Sectoral GDP & Employment Effects: In the long-run, tariffs present a trade-off. US manufacturing output expands by 1.3% but more than crowds out other sectors: construction output contracts by 2.0% and agriculture declines by 0.9%.

8

Fiscal Effects: All tariffs to date in 2025 raise \$2.4 trillion over 2026-35, with \$347 billion in negative dynamic revenue effects, bringing dynamic revenues to \$2.0 trillion.

Changes since the Last Report

Since the [May 29 report](#):

- On May 28, the U.S. Court of International Trade invalidated the Trump Administration's tariffs imposed under authority from the International Emergency Economic Powers Act. That case is ongoing; however, on May 29, a federal appeals court temporarily agreed to preserve the IEEPA tariffs. That means that as of today, June 1, those tariffs remain in place, and they are reflected in our analysis.
- On May 30, the Trump Administration announced that the U.S. will double its current tariff rate on steel and aluminum imports from 25% to 50%.
- TBL incorporated updated data on USMCA-compliant trade shares with Canada. Whereas before, TBL assumed that 38% of trade with Canada was USMCA-compliant, March Census data showed that the share rose substantially to 50%.

TBL analyzes tariffs on a "real-time current policy" basis, where policy as it stands as of date certain is assumed to continue in perpetuity, even if framed as a temporary policy.

Current Tariff Policy as of June 1

U.S. Tariffs	Retaliatory Tariffs
20% broad tariff on all Chinese imports (effective February 4; increased March 4)	China 10%/15% list (announced February 4)
10% tariff on Canadian potash and energy (effective April 2)	Canada 25% list (announced March 4)
25% tariff on all Mexican imports and other Canadian imports* (effective March 4)	China 10%/15% list (announced March 4)
25% tariff on all automobiles, with an exemption for US content and a discount through April 2027 on parts tariffs for US-assembled autos** (effective April 3), reduced to 10% on the first 100K UK imports (announced May 8)	Canada 25% list (announced March 13)
50% tariff on all steel and aluminum imports (effective March 12, raised May 30), 0% on the UK (announced May 8)	China broad 125%, lowered to 0% for 90 days (announced April 4; increased April 11; lowered May 12)
Modified April 2 announcement: 10% minimum tariffs on all countries ex. China, Canada, & Mexico; 125% tariff on China lowered to 10% for 90 days on May 12 (effective April 9, modified April 9, 90-day duration)***	China suspension of exports of minerals and magnets (announced April 11)****
	UK reduction in ethanol tariff on the US to 0% (announced May 8).

* USMCA-compliant trade remains duty-free. TBL assumes that 48% of imports by value from Mexico are USMCA-compliant, while 50% of imports from Canada are compliant.

** TBL assumes that 40% of automobile content in imported motor vehicles from Canada and Mexico are of US origin. For the purposes of the auto tariff rebate, TBL assumes that 1/3 of imported autos are assembled in the US.

*** The tariffs announced on April 2 apply to most imported goods but exempt steel, aluminum, and autos—which have already been tariffed separately this year—as well as copper, pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, lumber, energy, and critical minerals. The Administration clarified the scope of the semiconductor exemption on April 13. TBL carved out these commodities in its analysis of the April 2 announcement but does stack tariffs on those commodities from earlier announcements where applicable.

Table: The Budget Lab • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Results

The table below summarizes the effects of current tariffs in place as of June 1, **assuming they stayed in force indefinitely.**

Table 1. Summary Economic & Fiscal Effects of 2025 Tariffs Through June 1

	2026-35		Conventional Score****	
			In Equilibrium	
	\$billions	% of GDP	% Change in PCE Price Level**	Decline in Average Real Disposable Income per Household (2024\$)*
All 2025 Tariffs to Date*	\$2,381	0.6%	1.49%	-\$2,455

* Increases steel & aluminum tariffs to 50%.

** Pre-substitution. *** Post-substitution.

**** Under relaxed conventional assumptions.

Table: The Budget Lab • Source: Congressional Budget Office, S&P Global, GTAP v7 [Corong et al (2017)], GTAP-RD, The Budget Lab analysis. • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Average Effective Tariff Rate

The distinction between *pre-substitution* metrics (before consumers and businesses shift purchases in response to the tariffs) and *post-substitution* (after they shift) is a crucial one. One metric where the difference is meaningful is the average effective tariff rate.

Measured pre-substitution—assuming there are no shifts in the import shares of different countries—the 2025 tariffs to date are the equivalent of a 13.2 percentage point increase in the US average effective tariff rate. That calculation assumes that, for example, the share of imports from China remains at 14%, where it was in 2024. This is the right way to think about the tariffs from the perspective of consumer welfare, since it reflects the full cost faced by consumers before they start making difficult spending choices. This increase would bring the overall US average effective tariff rate to 15.6%, the highest since 1937.

Post-substitution—after imports shift in response to the tariffs—the 2025 tariffs are a 12.1 percentage point increase in the US average effective tariff rate, which brings the overall US effective tariff rate to 14.5%, the highest since 1938.

The timing of the transition from “pre” to “post” substitution is highly uncertain. Some shifts are likely to happen quickly—within days or weeks—while others may take longer.¹

Table 2. Average Effective US Tariff Rate, New 2025 Policy Through June 1

Pre- and post-substitution

	Effective Tariff	Import Share		Average Effective Tariff	
		Pre- Substitution	Post- Substitution	Pre- Substitution	Post- Substitution
China	27.2	14%	7%	3.7	1.9
Canada	11.2	13%	16%	1.4	1.8
Mexico	10.7	15%	18%	1.7	1.9
Rest of World	11.0	58%	59%	6.4	6.5
Total		100%	100%	13.2	12.1

Table: The Budget Lab • Source: Source: GTAP v7, The Budget Lab analysis. • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

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Figure 1. Average Effective US Tariff Rate, New 2025 Policy Through June 1

By Country Contribution and Pre/Post Substitution
Percentage points

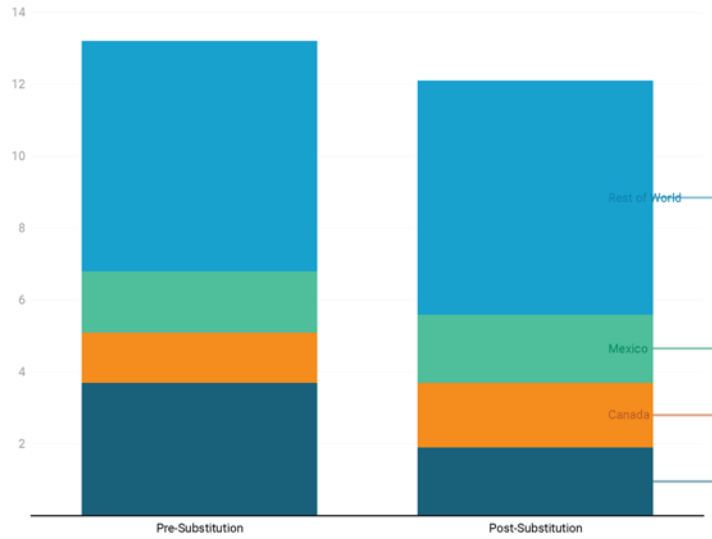


Chart: The Budget Lab • Source: Source: GTAP v7, The Budget Lab analysis. • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Figure 2. U.S. Average Effective Tariff Rate Since 1790

Customs duty revenue as a percent of goods imports



* Includes 50% steel & aluminum tariff.

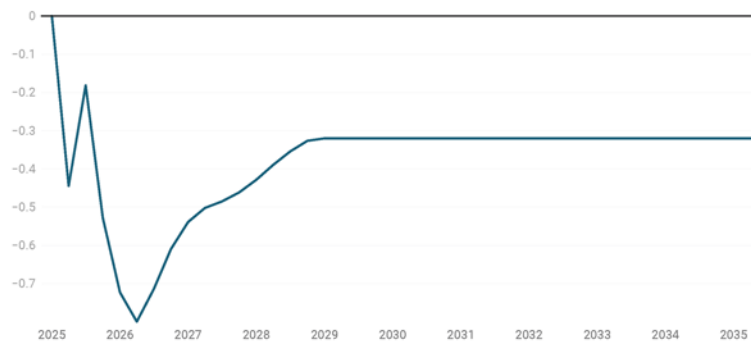
Chart: The Budget Lab • Source: Historical Statistics of the United States Ea424-434, Monthly Treasury Statement, Bureau of Economic Analysis, The Budget Lab analysis. • Created with [Datawrapper](#)**Average Aggregate Price Impact**

The 2025 tariffs imply an increase in consumer prices of 1.5% in the short-run, assuming no policy reaction from the Federal Reserve. This is a pre-substitution number that captures consumer welfare effects. It is the equivalent of a loss of purchasing power of \$2,500 per household on average in 2024 dollars. The post-substitution price increase settles at 1.3%, a \$2,100 loss per household.

US Real GDP & Labor Market Effects

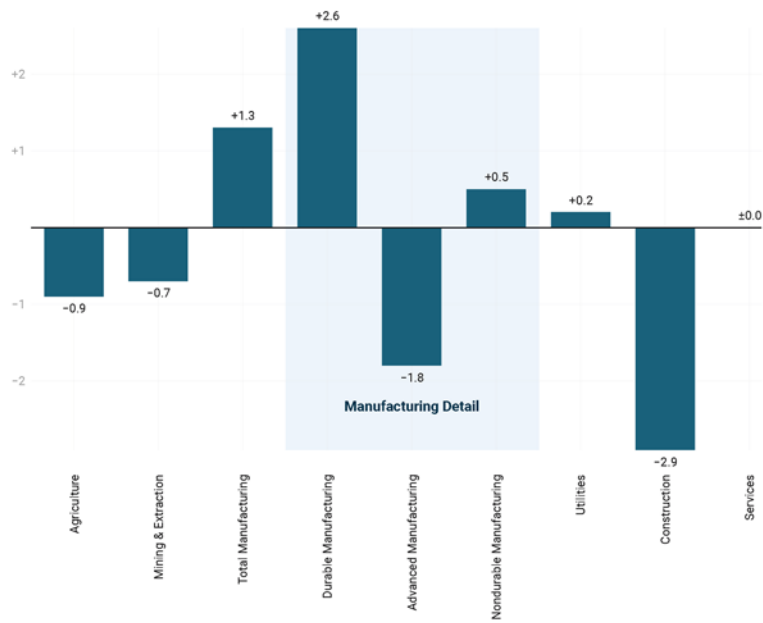
All 2025 US tariffs plus foreign retaliation lower real GDP growth by -0.5pp over calendar year 2025 (Q4-Q4). The unemployment rate ends 2025 0.3 percentage point higher, and payroll employment is 376,000 lower that same quarter. The level of real GDP remains persistently -0.32% smaller in the long run, the equivalent of \$100 billion 2024\$ annually, while exports are -14% lower.

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Figure 3. U.S. Real GDP Level Effects of 2025 Tariffs to DateU.S. tariffs implemented through June 1
Percentage point change against baselineChart: The Budget Lab • Source: S&P Global, GTAP v7, GTAP-RD, The Budget Lab analysis. • Created with [Datawrapper](#)**Long-run US Sectoral Output & Employment Effects**

Tariffs shrink the overall size of the US economy in the long-run by 0.3%, but beneath aggregate GDP they also drive reallocation across US sectors. Long-run output in the manufacturing sector expands by 1.3% under the tariffs, with nonadvanced durable manufacturing output 2.0% larger, nondurable manufacturing 1.1% larger. However, advanced manufacturing is down by 1.8%. Moreover, the expansion of the overall manufacturing sector more than crowds out the rest of the economy: construction contracts by 2.9%, agriculture by 0.9%, and mining & extraction by 0.7%.

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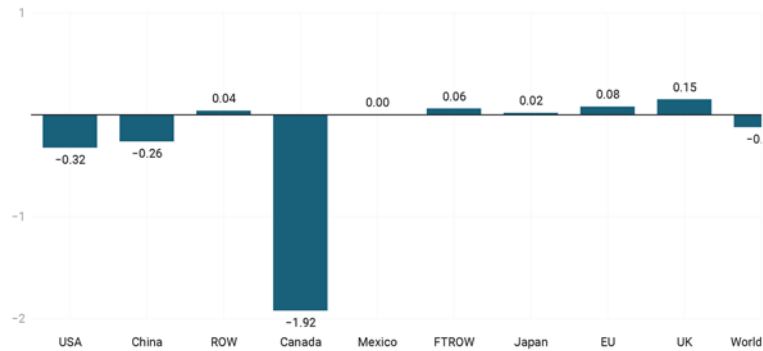
Figure 4. Change in Long-Run Real U.S. GDP by Sector from 2025 TariffsEffect of all 2025 U.S. tariffs through June 1
Percentage Points

Real value added by sector.

Chart: The Budget Lab • Source: GTAP v7, The Budget Lab analysis. • Created with [Datawrapper](#)**Global Long-run Real GDP Effects**

Canada has borne the brunt of the damage from US tariffs so far, with its long-run economy -1.9% smaller in real terms (reflecting both US tariffs and Canadian retaliation to date). China's economy is -0.3% smaller, almost as large as the hit to the US. The EU economy is 0.1 percentage point larger in the long-run, while the UK's is 0.2% bigger thanks in part to the benefits of US-UK trade deal.

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Figure 5. Long-Run Change in Real GDP Level from 2025 Tariffs to DateU.S. tariffs implemented through June 1
Percentage point change

FTROW = countries with a comprehensive free trade agreement with the US
 ROW = all other countries

Chart: The Budget Lab • Source: GTAP v7 [Corong et al (2017)], The Budget Lab analysis. • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Fiscal Impact & Historical Context

The 2025 tariffs to date, were they to remain in place (and not expire after 90 days), would raise \$2.4 trillion over 2026-35 conventionally-scored.² Given the negative output effects of the tariffs, there would be additional dynamic reductions in tax revenue as a result. Based on Congressional Budget Office rules-of-thumb, TBL estimates that these effects would total -\$347 billion over the decade, bringing total dynamic revenue to \$2.0 trillion over 2026-35.

Short-run Distributional Impact

Tariffs are a regressive tax, especially in the short-run. This means that tariffs burden households at the bottom of the income ladder more than those at the top as a share of income. The regressivity is about the same when looking at all 2025 tariffs: the burden on the 2nd decile is 2.5x that of the top decile (-2.5% versus -1.0%). The average annual cost to households in the 2nd, 5th, and top decile rise to \$1,100; \$1,900; and \$5,000 respectively.

Figure 6. Short-Run Distributional Impact of 2025 Tariffs to Date

Through June 1
Percentage points of disposable income by household income decile

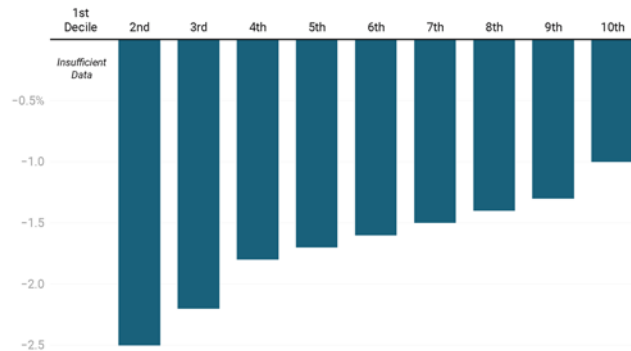


Chart: The Budget Lab • Source: GTAP v7, Census, BLS, BEA, The Budget Lab analysis. • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Constant 2024\$ of Average Disposable Income per Household

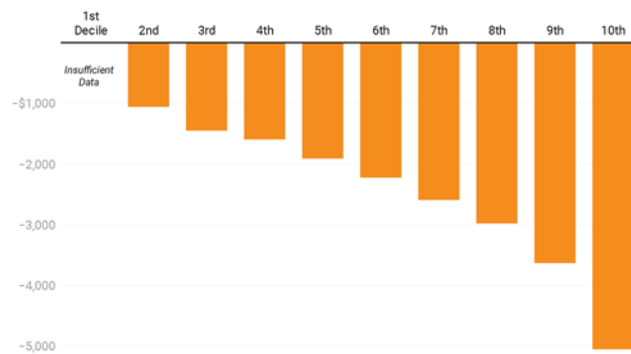


Chart: The Budget Lab • Source: GTAP v7, Census, BLS, BEA, The Budget Lab analysis. • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Tariffs are more distributionally-ambiguous in the longer-run. Tariffs reduce both labor income and above-normal returns to capital, or rents. We assume that owners of capital hold rents rather than consume them in the short-

run, but do consume them over their lifecycle in the long-run. The implication is that the tariff burden is more regressive in the short-run and more evenly-distributed across households in the long-run.

Commodity Price Effects

The charts below show how the 1.5% price level increase from the 2025 tariffs to date would look across individual commodities in the short-run (pre-substitution), as well as the 1.3% long-run price increase (post-substitution).

Some high level takeaways:

- Consumers face high increases in clothing and textile prices in the short-run: prices increase 31% for leather products (shoes and hand bags), 28% for apparel, and 15% for textiles. After substitution and global supply shifts in the long-run, prices remain 17%, 15%, and 10% higher, respectively.
- Food prices rise 2.4% in the short-run and stay 2.4% higher in the long-run. Fresh produce is initially 6.7% more expensive while stabilizing at 3.6% higher.
- Motor vehicle prices rise 12.7% in the short-run and 11.3% in the long-run, the the equivalent of an additional \$6,100 and \$5,400 respectively to the price of an average 2024 new car.

Figure 7. Commodity Price Effects from 2025 Tariffs Through June 1

Percent change to price level

name	Short Run	Long-Run
Metals nec	32.9	15.9
Leather products	31.2	17.0
Wearing apparel	27.5	15.2
Electrical equipment	19.0	11.8
Crops nec	18.5	11.1
Computer, electronic and optical	16.4	7.9
Ferrous metals	16.0	10.7
Textiles	15.2	9.8
Natural gas	13.3	4.5
Motor vehicles and parts	12.7	11.3
Mineral products nec	10.9	6.8
Rubber and plastic products	9.5	6.9
Machinery and equipment nec	9.4	7.4
Metal products	8.9	6.7
Transport equipment nec	7.7	6.5
Manufactures nec	6.9	5.1
Vegetables, fruit, nuts	6.7	3.6
Fishing	4.6	3.0
Oil	4.6	1.2
Wood products	4.3	3.3
Chemical products	3.4	3.3
Food products nec	2.9	2.8
Paper products, publishing	2.9	2.8
Vegetable oils and fats	2.8	2.0
Processed rice	2.6	9.0
Beverages and tobacco products	2.1	3.0
Cereal grains nec	1.4	1.2
Animal products nec	1.2	0.8
Basic pharmaceutical products	1.1	1.2
Sugar	0.9	1.9
Paddy rice	0.9	1.1
Petroleum, coal products	0.9	1.3
Bovine meat products	0.8	1.2
Minerals nec	0.8	0.9
Forestry	0.8	0.7
Meat products nec	0.5	0.8

Dairy products	0.3	1.4
Oil seeds	0.3	-0.4
Wool, silk-worm cocoons	0.2	10.2
Electricity	0.2	0.6
Wheat	0.1	0.6
Bovine cattle, sheep and goats	0.1	0.5
Construction	0.0	1.2
Plant-based fibers	0.0	0.6
Coal	0.0	0.1
Raw milk	0.0	1.0
Sugar cane, sugar beet	0.0	-0.6
Water	0.0	1.0
Gas manufacture, distribution	0.0	0.6
Recreational and other services	0.0	0.6
Trade	0.0	0.5
Dwellings	0.0	0.3
Transport nec	0.0	0.8
Education	0.0	0.4
Communication	0.0	0.6
Insurance	0.0	0.3
Financial services nec	0.0	0.3
Warehousing and support	0.0	0.9
Water transport	0.0	0.8
Human health and social work	0.0	0.7
Public Administration	0.0	0.6
Air transport	0.0	0.5
Accommodation & food services	0.0	0.6
Business services nec	0.0	0.6
Real estate activities	0.0	0.4

nec = "Not elsewhere classified"

Table: The Budget Lab • Source: Source: GTAP v7 [Corong et al (2017)], The Budget Lab analysis. • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Footnotes

1. TBL assumes throughout its tariff analysis that the transition to longer-run GTAP equilibria occurs after three years.

2. TBL employs a “relaxed conventional” assumption for the retaliation scenario, whereby foreign income is permitted to fall but US income remains fixed.

Reciprocal Tariff Calculations

Executive Summary

Reciprocal tariffs are calculated as the tariff rate necessary to balance bilateral trade deficits between the U.S. and each of our trading partners. This calculation assumes that persistent trade deficits are due to a combination of tariff and non-tariff factors that prevent trade from balancing. Tariffs work through direct reductions of imports.

Reciprocal tariff rates range from 0 percent to 99 percent, with unweighted and import-weighted averages of 20 percent and 41 percent.

Introduction

To conceptualize reciprocal tariffs, the tariff rates that would drive bilateral trade deficits to zero were computed. While models of international trade generally assume that trade will balance itself over time, the United States has run persistent current account deficits for five decades, indicating that the core premise of most trade models is incorrect.

The failure of trade deficits to balance has many causes, with tariff and non-tariff economic fundamentals as major contributors. Regulatory barriers to American products, environmental reviews, differences in consumption tax rates, compliance hurdles and costs, currency manipulation and undervaluation all serve to deter American goods and keep trade balances distorted. As a result, U.S. consumer demand has been siphoned out of the U.S. economy into the global economy, leading to the closure of more than 90,000 American factories since 1997, and a decline in our manufacturing workforce of more than 6.6 million jobs, more than a third from its peak.

While individually computing the trade deficit effects of tens of thousands of tariff, regulatory, tax and other policies in each country is complex, if not impossible, their combined effects can be proxied by computing the tariff level consistent with driving bilateral trade deficits to zero. If trade deficits are persistent because of tariff and non-tariff policies and fundamentals, then the tariff rate consistent with offsetting these policies and fundamentals is reciprocal and fair.

Basic Approach

Consider an environment in which the U.S. levies a tariff of rate τ_i on country i and $\Delta\tau_i$ reflects the change in the tariff rate. Let $\varepsilon < 0$ represent the elasticity of imports with respect to import prices, let $\varphi > 0$ represent the passthrough from tariffs to import prices, let $m_i > 0$ represent total imports from country i , and let $x_i > 0$ represent total exports. Then the decrease in imports due to a change in tariffs equals $\Delta\tau_i * \varepsilon * \varphi * m_i < 0$. Assuming that offsetting exchange rate and general equilibrium effects are small enough to be ignored, the reciprocal tariff that results in a bilateral trade balance of zero satisfies:

$$\Delta\tau_i = \frac{x_i - m_i}{\varepsilon * \varphi * m_i}.$$

Parameter Selection

To calculate reciprocal tariffs, import and export data from the U.S. Census Bureau for 2024. Parameter values for ε and ϕ were selected. The price elasticity of import demand, ε , was set at 4.

Recent evidence suggests the elasticity is near 2 in the long run (Boehm et al., 2023), but estimates of the elasticity vary. To be conservative, studies that find higher elasticities near 3-4 (e.g., Broda and Weinstein 2006; Simonovska and Waugh 2014; Soderbery 2018) were drawn on. The elasticity of import prices with respect to tariffs, ϕ , is 0.25. The recent experience with U.S. tariffs on China has demonstrated that tariff passthrough to retail prices was low (Cavallo et al, 2021).

Findings

The reciprocal tariffs were left-censored at zero. Higher minimum rates might be necessary to limit heterogeneity in rates and reduce transshipment. Tariff rates range from 0 to 99 percent. The unweighted average across deficit countries is 50 percent, and the unweighted average across the entire globe is 20 percent. Weighted by imports, the average across deficit countries is 45 percent, and the average across the entire globe is 41 percent. Standard deviations range from 20.5 to 31.8 percentage points.

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GUEST ESSAY

The Trump White House Cited My Research to Justify Tariffs. It Got It All Wrong.

April 7, 2025

Listen to this article · 5:41 min [Learn more](#)**By Brent Neiman**

Mr. Neiman was a Biden administration Treasury official who co-wrote trade-related academic research cited by the Trump White House.

My first question, when the White House unveiled its tariff regime, was: How on earth did it calculate such huge rates? Reciprocal tariffs, after all, are supposed to treat other countries the way they treat us, and foreign tariffs on American goods are nowhere near these levels.

The next day it got personal. The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative released its methodology and cited an academic paper produced by four economists, including me, seemingly in support of its numbers. But it got it wrong. Very wrong. I disagree fundamentally with the government's trade policy and approach. But even taking it at face value, our findings suggest the calculated tariffs should be dramatically smaller — perhaps one-fourth as large.

Let's start with the biggest mistake. The office said it calculated its reciprocal tariffs at a level that would theoretically eliminate trade deficits with "each of our trading partners," one by one. Is that a reasonable goal?

It is not. Trade imbalances between two countries can emerge for many reasons that have nothing to do with protectionism. Americans spend more on clothing made in Sri Lanka than Sri Lankans spend on American pharmaceuticals and gas turbines. So what? That pattern reflects differences in natural resources, comparative advantage and development levels. The deficit numbers don't suggest, let alone prove, unfair competition.

There are some reasonable arguments in favor of reducing the overall trade deficit, such as to reduce risks from our debt. But these arguments don't apply country by country. The Nobel laureate Robert Solow explained why when he quipped, "I have a chronic deficit with my barber, who doesn't buy a darned thing from me." Mr. Solow also surely ran a chronic surplus with his students, and these imbalances reveal nothing about trade barriers in hair care or higher education, nor would they speak to his financial health.

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For the sake of argument, let's grant President Trump his goal of eliminating all trade deficits, no matter how destructive that would be. Could these reciprocal tariffs succeed?

Again, no. The administration's tariff formula assumes that a tariff placed on one country won't affect imports from any others and ignores any implications for exports. These assumptions may work for an action against one small trade partner, but not for the broad salvo announced last week. A large tariff on Japanese auto parts could cause an increase in demand for imports from Mexico and vice versa. And the tariffs clearly invite retaliation and may over time increase the dollar's value, both factors that would most likely depress U.S. exports.

Let's keep going. Not only will we grant the government its goal, but we will also ignore flaws in its tariff formula. Do the computed tariffs then look right?

Guess what? They do not. The government's formula uses four different numbers to calculate tariffs, including imports and exports for each trading partner. The part that directly relates to our research is an estimate of how much import prices change in response to the additional costs imposed by tariffs.

The value of that term, known as the rate of pass-through, isn't obvious and depends on how companies behave. If foreign exporters cut prices to fully offset the tariffs, leaving import prices unchanged, the pass-through would be zero. Alternatively, it could equal 100 percent if exporters don't budge, which means import prices would rise in step with the tariffs.

Alberto Cavallo, Gita Gopinath, Jenny Tang and I studied the tariffs placed on Chinese exports in 2018 and 2019. (This is the "Cavallo et al." reference in the government's methodology.) We found that tariffs of, say, 20 percent caused domestic importers to pay nearly 19 percent more. This represents a pass-through into import prices of about 95 percent, which is the value I would have plugged into the government's tariff formula. In simple terms, that implies that the price paid for U.S. imports would rise almost as much as the tariff rate.

The administration's trade office cites our work, but mentions a different result from the paper, which found a low pass-through rate to the listed prices at two retailers. The Trump administration then plugs a rate of 25 percent into its formula. Where does 25 percent come from? Is it related to our work? I don't know. The reciprocal tariffs have enormous implications for workers, firms, consumers and stock markets around the globe. But the methodology note offers shockingly few details.

Had the trade office instead used a value closer to the 95 percent number from our work, as I believe it should have done, the computed tariffs would have been as little as one-fourth of what they are.

As a result of these and other methodological choices, Wednesday's reciprocal tariffs will bring average tariff rates to their highest level in over 100 years. Their breadth is striking, hitting large economies such as China and Europe, and also

small developing and emerging-market countries including Jordan and Zambia. And despite being billed as a “do unto others” trade policy, they are not calculated in line with the Bible’s golden rule.

I would strongly prefer that the policy and methodology be scrapped entirely. But barring that, the administration should divide its results by four.

Brent Neiman is an economics professor at the University of Chicago’s Booth School of Business. From 2022 to earlier this year he served at the U.S. Treasury as a counselor to the secretary and the deputy under secretary for international finance.

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A version of this article appears in print on , Section A, Page 21 of the New York edition with the headline: The White House Mangled My Research to Justify Those Insane Tariffs

This Article is From May 16, 2025

Bananas To Car Seats, Walmart Warns Of Price Rise Due To Trump Tariffs

A slew of companies including toy manufacturer Mattel, and consumer products giant Procter & Gamble have announced higher prices.



Higher prices began to appear on Walmart shelves in late April and accelerated this month.

New York:

Walmart, which became the nation's largest retailer by making low prices a priority, has found itself in a place it's rarely been: Warning customers that prices will rise for goods ranging from bananas to car seats.

Executives at the \$750 billion company told industry analysts Thursday that they're doing everything in their power to absorb the higher costs from tariffs ordered by President Donald Trump.

Given the magnitude of the duties, however, the highest since the 1930s, higher prices are unavoidable, and they will hurt Walmart customers already buffeted by inflation over the past three years.

Trump's threatened 145% import taxes on Chinese goods were reduced to 30% in a deal announced Monday, with some of the higher tariffs on pause for 90 days.

Those higher prices began to appear on Walmart shelves in late April and accelerated this month, Walmart executives said Thursday. However, a larger sting will start to be felt in June and July when the back-to-school shopping season goes into high gear.

"We're wired to keep prices low, but there's a limit to what we can bear, or any retailer for that matter," Chief Financial Officer John David Rainey told The Associated Press on Thursday after the company reported strong first-quarter sales.

Rainey emphasized that prices are rising not just for discretionary items such as patio furniture and trendy fashions, but for basic necessities as well. The price of bananas, imported from Costa Rica, rose from 50 cents per pound, to 54 cents. He thinks car seats made in China that currently sell for \$350 at Walmart will likely cost customers another \$100. Baby strollers are also sourced from China, Rainey said.

Higher prices arrive as many Americans pull back on spending as they grow increasingly uneasy about the economy. A slew of companies including toy manufacturer Mattel, toolmaker Stanley Black & Decker and consumer products giant Procter & Gamble have announced higher prices or plans to raise prices.

But Walmart's moves are even more significant given its outsized power in the retailing landscape. Walmart says that 90% of American households rely on the retailer for a range of products, and more than 150 million customers shop on its website or in its stores every week. Analysts will dissect the earnings reports from other retailers including Target and Home Depot, set to be released next week.

Government data Thursday revealed slowing sales growth for retailers. Walmart says that its consumers have become cautious and selective.

Tariffs on China and other countries are threatening the low-price model at the core of Walmart's success.

The full impact of tariff costs had been delayed as companies tried to beat the clock by bringing in foreign goods before Trump's tariffs took effect. Retailers and importers had also largely halted shipments of shoes, clothes, toys, and other items due to new tariffs, but many are resuming imports from China in the narrow window that opened during the temporary "truce" this week, hoping to avoid sparse shelves this fall.

Yet retailers, already operating on thin margins, say they have no choice but to raise prices to offset higher costs from tariffs. And they are also bracing for higher shipping costs fueled by a surge of companies scrambling to get their goods on ships to the US.

Rainey told The Associated Press that the retailer did not pause shipments from China as a result of the tariffs like others because it didn't want to hurt its suppliers and wanted to

keep merchandise flowing. It has built in hedges against some tariff threats. Two-thirds of Walmart's merchandise is sourced in the US, with groceries now accounting for roughly 60% of Walmart's US business.

Still, Walmart isn't immune.

CEO Doug McMillon told analysts Thursday that Walmart imports general merchandise from dozens of countries. But China, in particular, represents a big chunk of volume in certain categories like electronics and toys.

Tariffs on countries like Costa Rica, Peru and Colombia are raising costs on groceries like avocados, coffee and roses, in addition to bananas, company executives said. In some cases, Walmart is absorbing costs on general merchandise within departments or a category and not simply passing on a tariff cost attributable to each item individually, executives said.

Walmart is also asking suppliers to swap input materials for components if possible, for example, using fiberglass instead of aluminum, which Trump hit with tariffs in early March.

"We're very dependent upon imports for these types of products," Rainey told The Associated Press.

He said there are some goods for which Walmart simply can't shift production or produce easily in the United States.

McMillon, who was among a select group of CEOs of major retailers who met with Trump at the White House late last month to discuss tariffs, told analysts Thursday that he's hoping tariffs would be further reduced.

Walmart earned \$4.45 billion, or 56 cents per share, in the quarter ended April 30, down from \$5.10 billion, or 63 cents per share, in the same period last year.

Adjusted earnings per share were 61 cents, exceeding the 58 cent projections from industry analysts, according to FactSet.

Revenue rose 2.5% to \$165.61 billion, just short of analyst estimates.

Walmart's US comparable sales - those from established physical stores and online channels - rose 4.5% in the second quarter, though that's slowed from a 4.6% bump in the previous quarter, and a 5.3% increase in the third quarter of 2024. .

Business was fueled by health and wellness items as well as groceries. Sales were weaker in home and sporting good, which was offset by robust sales of toys, automotive goods and kid's clothing, the company said.

Global e-commerce sales rose 22%.

Walmart said it expects sales growth of 3.5% to 4.5% in the second quarter.

Like many other US companies, however, it did not issue a profit outlook for the quarter because of the chaotic environment, with stated US tariff policies changing constantly. The company maintained its full-year guidance issued in February.

(Except for the headline, this story has not been edited by NDTV staff and is published from a syndicated feed.)

Ms. DEAN. Thanks so much.

I want to ask you about—I was interested in what you said to Mr. Morelle in terms of the mission, and some of the language you used, the mission of your department, to protect, defend, and enhance business in America. That was a good summary?

Secretary LUTNICK. Sounds good.

Ms. DEAN. I think that is what you said. I tried to write it down fast.

Secretary LUTNICK. Still sounds good.

Ms. DEAN. I just wonder, did your department, did you personally, or your department whose mission that is, have any problem with the President's recent trips overseas; or the development of his business and his family's business around bitcoin, meme coin, fundraising, or investor raising dinners; any worry with the Department of Commerce with the President and his family growing their own business while on the job?

Secretary LUTNICK. My trip to the Middle East was extraordinary in that we came home——

Ms. DEAN. I am sure. I am asking you about——

Secretary LUTNICK [continuing]. With \$5.1 trillion of investment in America. It was amazing.

Ms. DEAN. Mr. Lutnick, I am asking you, did the question of conflict of interest come up for the leader of the free world?

Secretary LUTNICK. No.

Ms. DEAN. No? Thank you.

I ought to have a team of lawyers take a look at that. It is grotesque the way this President is using his office to enrich himself, his businesses and his family's. That ought to be something you are interested in.

I want to tell you something I agree with you on and I agree with the President on, the closing of the de minimus loophole. You are absolutely right, it hurts retailers when stuff comes in here, package after package, order after order, under \$800, no tax, no tariff, no review. It hurts retailers.

But I know the other reason that I believe the President is interested in that is in tackling the precursors of fentanyl and making sure these packages don't come in unabsorbed, unknown, and then off to Mexico to only come back manufactured and to kill our children.

So I want you to know, I want the President to know, that is a good thing. And I hope it brings great revenue to our Treasury. It should. We have passed on that, at the expense of our children and at the expense of retailers.

Secretary LUTNICK. Thank you.

Ms. DEAN. So please take that back.

And, finally, I guess I want to tell you, do you know when we met? I don't know if you remember. We met once in Davos. We had a very interesting conversation, and you told me some of your backstory. And this goes back to where I started with stability.

I think it is very well known that, when you began college, your father died. And what a trying time that must have been because your mother had predeceased. And you were at Haverford, very near my district. And Haverford College said stay, you stay, get

your education, and you did. And they offered you that stability at a time when you must have needed it most.

I had a similar experience. My father died when I was in my third semester of college, suddenly, of a heart attack. Difficult. We were all wobbling for quite a while. But his company offered scholarships to kids who lost their parents, and I got a scholarship to go to law school, offering me stability that I had no idea I would ever lean upon.

I take you back to that because what have you done in the meantime? You have rewarded Haverford. You are making sure that other kids get that stability. Please take that back into your work in the Department of Commerce. You know stability is what our consumers, our constituents, our businesses, our banks need. This is not stability. It is an incoherent tariff policy that is costing every single one of us.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Mrvan.

Mr. MRVAN. Mr. Secretary, during our first exchange, we talked slightly about Nippon. My first question will be, is, with that deal you said you agreed, and I don't want to put words in your mouth, were you in the room or at the table for the CFIUS agreement, and what was your recommendation?

Secretary LUTNICK. I can't really discuss the particulars, but generally, we came to the view that the deal would be good for America. The President came to view it, it would be good for America, and we are discussing how to make sure that that protects the USA and America, and those discussions are ongoing right now.

Mr. MRVAN. So in the beginning, the administration, when he was a candidate, was against the deal.

Secretary LUTNICK. Well, the terms of the deal did not protect America, and he is interested in making sure the terms of the deal protect America.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. And I agree. So I represent northwest Indiana, Gary, Indiana, one of the top steel producing. One of the concerns with it, the USW, the union, is to specifically make sure that the investments that have been agreed upon, that those—

Secretary LUTNICK. You can say promised. How about that?

Mr. MRVAN. See, that is my concern. You are right, promised, based on market conditions. So these are real-life individuals. My father came over from—or grandfather came over from Czechoslovakia, ended up in northwest Indiana, worked in the steel mills. Families, everywhere around my district, it is our economic engine.

You have passionately talked about how it is a national security issue, right. So with that, many promises have been made.

First and foremost, to my steelworkers, just a recommendation, the USW wants a seat at the table because they are concerned about disinvestment in their union blast furnaces that will go to nonunion shops and other parts of the country.

So in my district, which I am here to protect, that—our concern level is to make sure that the administration hears the voices very loudly and clearly from my district that we want assurances, not based on market conditions, that this investment, promised investment, will protect steelworkers' jobs and tradesmen who provide the back—the maintenance on those blast furnaces.

So what are you going to do specifically? Not broad strokes of what is going to happen. Specifically, what are you going to do to protect those jobs in my district?

Secretary LUTNICK. I agree with you. My understanding is the President agrees with you, and I think the end result of the transaction with Nippon will agree with you.

Mr. MRVAN. What are some of the specifics, or can I get a commitment from you that the USW union representation leadership will have a seat at the table to protect their interests in U.S. steel?

Secretary LUTNICK. I think the best I can say is that the President understands their concerns, I understand their concerns. I have met with the steelworkers union, and I understand their concerns, and—

Mr. MRVAN. Do you understand that this creates uncertainty, unpredictability for families who want to make sure that they have a secure income, healthcare, secure pension; that that uncertainty causes great disbelief in what is going on? And specifically, what are you going to do to protect those jobs?

I understand you agree with me. We agree that a \$14 billion investment on top of a regular \$14 billion investment, that is pretty good. But what are you specifically going to do to protect those steelworkers' jobs?

Secretary LUTNICK. The President of United States flew to Pittsburgh—

Mr. MRVAN. I saw the press conference. I have got a minute. What are you specifically going to do? I saw what—I saw the press con—I saw it. I saw the rally. Specifically, what are you going to do?

Secretary LUTNICK. The President of the United States will direct what he wants to do, and I will assist him in doing so. He knows the steelworkers union concerns, and I think they will be very happy with the outcome.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. So time is of the essence, they want a seat at the table so that there is not disinvestment in my community and investment in other parts of the community which would have cheaper labor. I want to make sure that I articulate that to you.

Then, ultimately, I also want to ask about with the Nippon deal. If there is reshoring manufacturing and there is a 50 percent tariff around the world on steel, correct, Nippon now is an investor in U.S. steel, please tell me if they are going to be able to circumvent that 50 percent tariff and ship steel.

Secretary LUTNICK. No.

Mr. MRVAN. No.

Secretary LUTNICK. No. If they make it in America, you don't pay the tariff. If you make it anywhere else but America, anywhere else, you are going to pay.

Mr. MRVAN. But the—are you following me? A foreign country is investing in an American company to circumvent those trade policies—to the tariffs—

Secretary LUTNICK. If you hire Americans and you build it here, you don't pay the tariff.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay.

Secretary LUTNICK. So if a foreigner builds, good for them.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay.

Secretary LUTNICK. But in America, with American——

Mr. MRVAN. Know that—I just want to close in saying, know that I agree a \$14 billion investment in the infrastructure of our steel industry is a good thing, but understand how vitally, gravely important it is to the steelworkers, to my community, to my economic development, or my economic engine——

Mr. ROGERS. Time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. MRVAN [continuing]. That you stand up for those jobs.

Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Secretary, you have been so generous with your time. I am sorry that we went over what we had intended timewise, but it was worth it from our point of view.

We look forward to working with you to be sure that you are a success, and we are very impressed with your exuberance in the work that you are upon now.

So good luck to you. We wish you well, and we want to stay in touch with you to try to help to be sure everything works out A number one.

So that concludes today's hearing. We want to thank our witness, Secretary Lutnick, for being here and sharing with us his plans for the future.

Without objection, members may have 7 days to submit additional questions for the record.

The subcommittee stands in adjournment.

[Whereupon, at 1:14 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

THE HONORABLE GRACE MENG
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED
AGENCIES BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD*

Question 1: How many National Weather Service meteorologists were both on the payroll and working (i.e., not on administrative leave) on January 19, 2025?

Answer: 2,283

Question 2: How many National Weather Service meteorologists were both on the payroll and working (i.e., not on administrative leave) on June 5, 2025?

Answer: 2,076

Question 3: How many overall National Weather Service employees were both on the payroll and working (i.e., not on administrative leave) on January 19, 2025?

Answer: 4,369

Question 4: How many overall National Weather Service employees were both on the payroll and working (i.e., not on administrative leave) on June 5, 2025?

Answer: 3,751

Question 5: Regarding the planned 126 permanent, mission-critical National Weather Service field position hires, by when does the Department anticipate that these employees will be both on the job and fully trained in their job positions?

Answer: The National Weather Service (NWS) anticipates most successful hires for the planned 126 permanent, mission critical NWS positions will be on station within the first quarter of FY 2026, assuming adherence to the 80-day timeline for hiring and no unreasonable delays in Permanent Change of Station arrangements and security clearances. The length of time it will take for these employees to be fully trained is dependent on their previous experience. This may range from a few weeks for an experienced forecaster/meteorologist to learn the local weather patterns and operating procedures of their new duty location, to up to a year for a recent graduate with no operational experience.

Question 6: A recent news report in the publication Environment and Energy Daily highlighted that a growing backlog of hundreds of unsigned NOAA contracts has slowed agency operations to a crawl—so much so that Senator Ted Cruz has raised concerns about the gridlock. After being sworn in as Secretary, you have insisted on personally reviewing any contract that exceeds

one hundred thousand dollars. However, as Senator Cruz pointed out, NOAA alone has 5,700 contracts set to expire this year, covering everything from post- hurricane flood assessment to janitorial services. Are press reports accurate that the first part of this contract review process is being led, or has recently been led, by a recent college student who worked as a food hall monitor last year?

Answer: Following the Administration's Executive Orders on procurement and contracts, the Department of Commerce updated its review process for contracts and grants to streamline the acquisition process.

Question 7: The Washington Post and Axios both reported that in late March 2025, during a dangerous stretch of tornadic storms and flooding, the National Weather Service came within hours of losing access to a crucial information technology system known as the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System, or AWIPS, that is used to take in, analyze, forecast, and send out operational weather data. The necessary contract was finally renewed late on March 31, 2025. What steps is the Department taking to ensure that such dangerous close calls like this never, ever happen again?

Answer: In accordance with Executive Order 14222, "Implementing the President's 'Department of Government Efficiency' Cost Efficiency Initiative," the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), and current Department of Commerce processes, NOAA's NWS continues to ensure proper contracting support for Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS) operations. AWIPS currently has appropriate contract support in place, and the ability to extend that contract, as needed. NOAA's NWS is also advancing the next stage of the program this fiscal year, as we implement Cloud AWIPS, in accordance with Congressional direction.

Question 8: The Washington Post reported that some of the recent scrutiny of contracts has included stopping basic facility repairs. It was reported that during an April 2025 storm, a tornado came within miles of the weather forecast office in Paducah, Kentucky, where staff had to use portable toilets in the office parking lot because the bathrooms were inoperable and staff were unable to hire a plumber. Can the Department assure the Committee that a scenario like this will never happen again as a result of the Department's contract and other spending review processes?

Answer: Following the Administration's Executive Orders on procurement and contracts, the Department of Commerce updated its review process for contracts and grants to streamline the acquisition process.

Question 9: How much money will the Commerce Department need to pay for contract termination settlements as a result of Commerce Department contract termination actions between January 20, 2025, and June 5, 2025?

Answer: In negotiating settlements, the Department is mindful to ensure that only allowable costs under applicable law and contract terms are recovered. These decisions ensure taxpayer

funds are used to further the interests of the government with a focus on administration priorities and the national interest. For too long, there has been little to no review of contracts that are automatically green lit without any vetting. Under President Trump's leadership, the Department's review process is finally putting the American taxpayer first by ensuring contracts and grants are properly vetted prior to disbursement.

Question 10: It is my understanding that the Commerce Department is proposing to end its longstanding partnership with NASA, whereby NASA manages the development of NOAA weather satellites. Isn't this effectively imposing a brand-new duty on an already overburdened NOAA workforce? Doesn't NASA bring significant value to NOAA from its decades of experience in handling procurement and technical management of satellites, satellite instruments, and satellite launches?

Answer: Restructuring NOAA's satellite programs to be more streamlined, innovative, and cost-effective requires changes to the NOAA business model. To achieve these aims, NOAA will explore adopting commercial best practices as appropriate. In the near term, NOAA will continue its partnership with NASA for technical and programmatic expertise even as the acquisition role is transitioned to NOAA.

Question 11: What detailed analysis has the Department done that demonstrates: (1) that NOAA can take on the specific weather satellite acquisition and procurement work that NASA has done for decades, and (2) that NOAA can somehow do this same work faster, cheaper, and more effectively than NASA has been doing for decades, especially at a time when NOAA has recently lost hundreds of employees?

Answer: Restructuring the GeoXO program into a more streamlined, innovative, and cost-effective operation will require changes to the NOAA business model. To achieve its aims, NOAA will adopt commercial best practices. In FY 2026, NOAA will work with NASA to convert the instrument and spacecraft contracts from cost-plus to firm-fixed price. NOAA will also take steps to assume the role of acquisition agent and achieve the novation of contracts to NOAA to create a more agile and cost-effective program, while eliminating unnecessary layers of bureaucratic oversight. NOAA will continue its partnership with NASA for technical and programmatic expertise as the acquisition role is transitioned to NOAA.

Question 12: The most important function of our government is national security. The Department of Commerce plays a key role in keeping the country safe through the Bureau of Industry and Security, which restricts foreign adversaries' access to critical technologies such as advanced microchips, components for military equipment and even software. Last year, to name just a few examples, BIS seized an aircraft belonging to Nicholas Maduro, the president of Venezuela, busted a gunrunning conspiracy that smuggled guns to Haiti, and imposed a record \$5.8 million dollar fine on a company that was exporting low-level electronics to China. Unfortunately, the president chose not to issue a proper emergency designation, resulting in a \$20 million dollar cut to the Bureau of Industry and Security. That means that the Bureau is

working with 10 percent fewer dollars than it had in fiscal year 2024. They are being asked to do much more with much less in the current fiscal year. Did the Department ask the president to designate this emergency funding and make the full fiscal year 2025 appropriation available to BIS? If not, why not? Why not maximize the resources available to BIS?

Answer: In FY 2025, BIS received an almost \$20 million intradepartmental transfer, bringing the Bureau's total budget to \$190.1 million.

Question 13: Are any persons associated with Elon Musk's DOGE organization still operating out of any offices of the Commerce Department or its bureaus?

Answer: No.

Question 14: Are any further firings planned at the Commerce Department? If so, how many employees and in which bureaus, and which functions would be further negatively impacted?

Answer: The Department remains committed to fulfilling its statutory functions, consistent with applicable law and administration policy, to improve the daily lives of the American people. While we are unable to address questions regarding matters that are the subject of active litigation, the Department ensures it maintains compliance with relevant and applicable court orders.

Question 15: When will the Department send back responses to the questions contained in the Meng/Ivey letter that was sent to Secretary Lutnick on April 7, 2025?

Answer: The Department of Commerce responded to this letter on June 2, 2025.

Question 16: Please provide the full number of Federal civilian employees, including those in full and part-time status, employed by the Department, categorized by agency of employment, occupation, probationary status, and duty-station location for each week beginning January 20, 2025.

Answer: The Department provided the Committee with its FY 2025 spend plan briefing materials. These materials contain Department employment information with details for each bureau within the Department.

Question 17: Please provide the number of employees terminated by your department, categorized by agency of employment, occupation, probationary status, and duty-station location, for each week beginning January 20, 2025.

Answer: Please see prior response. The Department provided the Committee with its FY 2025 spend plan briefing materials. These materials contain Department employment information with details for each bureau within the Department.

Question 18: What is the current employment status of employees who were terminated but

who have been ordered by a Federal court to be rehired (i.e., are they on administrative leave? Are they getting paid?)?

Answer: The Department continues to ensure that it is maintaining compliance with relevant and applicable court orders, and remains committed to fulfilling its statutory requirements, consistent with applicable law and administration policy.

Question 19: Please provide the number of employees who participated in the Deferred Resignation Program, categorized by agency of employment, occupation, and duty-station location.

Answer: Across the Department, 1,620 people opted into the Deferred Resignation Program and were approved.

Question 20: Please provide the number of employees who are currently on administrative leave, categorized by agency of employment, occupation, and duty-station location.

Answer: As of September 30, 2025, approximately 1,200 employees are on administrative leave. About 300 employees are on administrative leave for reasons other than DRP.

Question 21: Please provide information on the impact that terminations, administrative leave, and Deferred Resignation Program departures have had and are having on Department missions, including weather prediction capabilities.

Answer: The Department remains committed to fulfilling its statutory requirements, consistent with applicable law and administration policy, to improve the daily lives of the American people. Regarding weather prediction capabilities, NOAA's National Weather Service has taken steps to sustain mission-critical operations to protect lives and livelihoods and deliver actionable information to support commerce and the U.S. economy.

Question 22: Please provide subsequent reports going forward on a twice monthly basis regarding the Department's Federal civilian employees, including at minimum, the number of full and part-time employees, occupations, agency of employment, and duty-station location. The report should also include the number of federal employees who were separated and later reinstated, as well as the number of employees reinstated and put on administrative leave.

Answer: The Department will review this request.

Question 23: Please provide information on the extent of the Department's current use of voluntary separation incentives such as Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments (VSIP), including bureaus and occupational categories of employees currently receiving such offers.

Answer: The Department is aligned with President Trump's efforts to transform the Federal bureaucracy and restore accountability to the American public. VERA and VSIP are voluntary programs allowing organizational change with minimal disruption to the work force.

Question 24: Please provide an accounting of all GSA-managed leases for the Department, broken down by bureau and by NOAA line office, as of January 19, 2025.

Answer: Please find the spreadsheet with this information, which has been made publicly available on the GSA website, here: <https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/fy23-federal-real-property-profile-frpp-public-dataset>.

Question 25: Please provide a list of any of the Department's GSA-managed leases that have been cancelled since January 20, 2025.

Answer: Please find a list of lease terminations that are publicly available on the Department of Government Efficiency website: <https://www.doge.gov/savings>.

Question 26: Please provide a list of any of the Department's GSA-managed leases that are or have been considered for cancellation since January 20, 2025.

Answer: Please find a list of lease terminations that are publicly available on the Department of Government Efficiency website: <https://www.doge.gov/savings>.

Question 27: Please provide information on the impact on Departmental missions, including on weather prediction capabilities, of any terminated leases, as well as the potential impacts of any lease cancellations under consideration.

Answer: The Department remains committed to fulfilling its statutory requirements, consistent with applicable law and administration policy, to improve the daily lives of the American people. Regarding weather prediction capabilities, NOAA's National Weather Service has taken steps to sustain mission-critical operations to protect lives and livelihoods and deliver actionable information to support commerce and the U.S. economy.

THE HONORABLE TONY GONZALES
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED
AGENCIES BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD*

Question 1: I recognize the Department has been working closely with the White House as President Trump works to secure the best trade deals for Americans. One industry that relies on fair and balanced trade in TX-23 is fresh tomatoes. Nearly 50,000 American jobs and \$7.5 billion in domestic economic activity are tied to the trade of fresh tomatoes from Mexico to the United States—more than 30,000 of those jobs are in Texas alone.

As you know, the Department of Commerce recently announced the intent to terminate the Tomato Suspension Agreement—which was last negotiated successfully under President Trump’s first term. The agreement provides much-needed stability to the market for fresh tomatoes in the United States. The Tomato Suspension Agreement has long supported these American jobs and ensured American families have access to healthy and flavorful year-round tomatoes.

The Tomato Suspension Agreement has been in place since 1996 as a proven tool to prevent dumping, stabilize prices, and ensure fair competition, without resorting to consumer-harming tariffs. Further, Commerce’s own reviews showed no violations, no price suppression, and consistent enforcement. Can you explain the rationale for ending a functioning and renegotiable agreement?

Answer: On April 14, the Department of Commerce announced its intent to withdraw from the 2019 Agreement Suspending the Antidumping Investigation on Fresh Tomatoes from Mexico (Tomato Suspension Agreement), with termination effective in 90 days. Pursuant to that notice, on July 14, the Department announced its decision to withdraw from and terminate the Agreement.

The Department’s decision to terminate the Agreement was made after taking the time necessary to solicit comments from interested parties and a variety of other stakeholders, holding meetings with several interested parties, and carefully considering the options. The Department withdrew from the Agreement under Section XLB, which explicitly allows the Department to take such action with 90-days’ written notice.

Mexico remains one of our greatest allies, but for far too long, our farmers have been crushed by unfair trade practices that undercut pricing on produce like tomatoes. Since 1996, when the first suspension agreement went into effect, Mexican tomato imports have grown nearly 400% and

Mexico now controls 70% of the U.S. market. In that time, hundreds of tomato growers were forced out of the industry and are still being forced to shut down operations.

Now that the 2019 Agreement is terminated, the Department is issuing an antidumping duty order, resulting in duties of 17.09 percent on most imports of tomatoes from Mexico. Antidumping duties are calculated to measure the percentage by which Mexican tomatoes have been sold in the United States at unfair prices. This action will not only raise millions in tariff revenue but will also allow U.S. tomato growers to compete fairly in the marketplace.

Question 2: Is the Department looking at potential renegotiations? If not, can you commit to working towards renegotiating the agreement?

Answer: We have had productive discussions with Mexico on all aspects of our trade relationship. We look forward to continuing those discussions and achieving mutually beneficial outcomes for both countries.

Question 3: The President and this administration have been clear in their commitment to restoring American manufacturing. Your office stated that “Bringing manufacturing back to this country is one of this Administration’s highest priorities”—I want to note for you that there is a significant manufacturing presence across my district, such as in San Antonio, Eagle Pass and El Paso.

Can you further elaborate on the justification for zeroing out an account like the Manufacturing Extension Partnership that provides critical assistance to American manufacturers to compete internationally?

Answer: The MEP was created over 30 years ago, and the challenges it was set up to address are not aligned with advancing America’s manufacturing interests in the sectors that will drive our future competitiveness. Further, multiple IG investigations have uncovered numerous concerns with how the funds are being implemented across the network.

The Department will continue to evaluate how it can best use the resources provided by Congress to most effectively advance U.S. manufacturing capabilities in alignment with the President’s priorities for U.S. leadership in critical and emerging technologies. To that end, NIST continues to incrementally fund current agreements (as appropriate on a case-by-case basis) as we assess the program to ensure that it is optimized as authorized by statute.

Question 4: Is the Department planning new initiatives or expansions of existing programs aimed at reshoring manufacturing and reducing reliance on foreign suppliers for essential goods?

Answer: The President has promised to strengthen U.S. manufacturing and bring jobs back to America. The Department of Commerce is fully committed to advancing domestic manufacturing capabilities and to ensuring that the United States will lead the world in the most advanced manufacturing sectors, from semiconductors to pharmaceutical production, that strengthen our economic and national security. The Department will continue to support

strengthening and revitalizing American industry, especially through programs related to advanced manufacturing. Consistent with the President's FY 2026 Budget Request, NIST is investing in efforts to support the U.S. manufacturing base, including Manufacturing USA.

THE HONORABLE ROSA L. DELAURO
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED
AGENCIES BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD*

Textile industry

Question 1: Recent comments out of the administration have downplayed the significance of the U.S. textile industry to our country's economic well-being and national security. The American textile industry is an essential supplier to the U.S. military, providing life-saving gear and advanced technologies to protect our men and women in uniform, as well as a critical employment driver in rural communities across the country.

Can you please speak to the importance of a thriving American textile manufacturing industry and its contributions to U.S. economic and national security?

Answer: The U.S. textile industry is a major engine of economic growth, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs and generating billions in output and exports. From a national security perspective, the U.S. textile industry is indispensable for U.S. military readiness, as a strategic asset that ensures self-reliance in critical materials, and in reducing vulnerabilities to foreign disruptions. Without a robust domestic textile base, the U.S. would be exposed to supply chain risks from geopolitical tensions or trade disruptions, particularly with major importers like China, which is one reason why the Administration closed the de minimis loophole globally to protect American producers from unfair competition while also preserving our industrial capacity.

A thriving U.S. textile manufacturing industry is essential for fostering innovation, employment, and trade while fortifying our national defense and emergency response capabilities. Commerce remains committed to supporting this sector through policies that advance fair trade, investment, and sustainability.

THE HONORABLE MARK ALFORD
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED
AGENCIES BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD*

Question 1: Secretary Lutnick, during the hearing we discussed your plans to ensure National Weather Service offices are operating with up-to-date technology and in an efficient manner to best serve the interests of Americans.

Is this a master plan or more of a conceptual idea?

Answer: The NWS continues to implement the NWS Priorities & Action Strategies for the Future. This consists of 10 initiatives designed to ensure that the NWS remains an indispensable, global leader in providing quality weather, water, and climate services to decision-makers anytime, anywhere. Additional information can be found at:
<https://www.noaa.gov/NWStransformation>.

Question 2: Please describe in detail your plan for revamping NOAA and provide a list of the offices that will be shut down and/or centralized as part of these efforts.

Answer: There are no planned closures of any NWS offices.

Question 3: Will the regional office in Pleasant Hill, Missouri be on the potential list of offices to be closed?

Answer: There are no planned closures of any NWS offices, including the Weather Forecast Office (WFO) Kansas City/Pleasant Hill.

THE HONORABLE JOSEPH MORELLE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED
AGENCIES BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD*

Question 1: Congress has consistently funded and reauthorized the Manufacturing Extension Partnership with strong bipartisan support, recognizing the program's role in strengthening small and medium-sized manufacturers and supporting the U.S. industrial base.

Why is the Department refusing to execute the full \$175 million FY25 appropriation for the MEP program—leaving millions unspent—in direct defiance of clear congressional intent?

Answer: The MEP was created over 30 years ago, and the challenges it was set up to address are not aligned with advancing America's manufacturing interests in the sectors that will drive our future competitiveness. Further, multiple IG investigations have uncovered numerous concerns with how the funds are being implemented across the network.

The Department will continue to evaluate how it can best use the resources provided by Congress to most effectively advance U.S. manufacturing capabilities in alignment with the President's priorities for U.S. leadership in critical and emerging technologies.

To that end, NIST continues to incrementally fund current agreements (as appropriate on a case-by-case basis) as we assess the program to ensure that it is optimized as authorized by statute.

Question 2: I am troubled that the MEP Centers whose awards were initially terminated in April were only renewed for six months, and there's been no indication that Centers up for re-competition or renewal at the end of this month will be awarded. This creates damaging uncertainty for centers and the manufacturers they support across the country.

Will you commit today to fully executing the \$175 million appropriation as authorized by Congress, and will you commit to renewing MEP awards for the full year in accordance with applicable award terms and conditions?

Answer:

The MEP was created over 30 years ago, and the challenges it was set up to address are not aligned with advancing America's manufacturing interests in the sectors that will drive our future competitiveness. Further, multiple IG investigations have uncovered numerous concerns with how the funds are being implemented across the network.

The Department will continue to evaluate how it can best use the resources provided by Congress to most effectively advance U.S. manufacturing capabilities in alignment with the President's priorities for U.S. leadership in critical and emerging technologies.

To that end, NIST continues to incrementally fund current agreements (as appropriate on a case-by-case basis) as we assess the program to ensure that it is optimized as authorized by statute.

THE HONORABLE MADELEINE DEAN
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED
AGENCIES BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD*

Question 1: I support this Administration's decision to limit or close certain aspects of the *de minimis* exemption. Please let me know what Congress can do to help in this pursuit and please do not hesitate to contact my office so we can work together on this important issue.

Answer: I appreciate your feedback and am pleased to work with you and any of your colleagues in Congress committed to advancing U.S. trade interests for the benefit of the American people. Eliminating the *de minimis* loophole globally is a very big deal and was long overdue. This rule has been abused for years and has allowed foreign companies to avoid paying tariffs on shipments into our country, giving them an unfair advantage over American small businesses. For example, in FY2024 over 1.36 billion *de minimis* shipments entered the U.S. mostly from Chinese fast fashion and e-commerce giants like Temu and Shein. Beyond the impacts of the *de minimis* loophole on small businesses there are also critical national security imperatives that made this work necessary. President Trump's Executive Order furthered this administration's efforts to combat the opioid crisis and hold the CCP accountable by closing the loophole that has subsidized and allowed chemical companies to export fentanyl and related precursor chemicals that are used to produce synthetic opioids sold illegally in the United States.

Question 2: Are you open to providing tariff carveouts or exceptions for certain products (e.g. bananas, coffee, chocolate) that cannot be grown, or grown economically, in most parts of the United States?

Answer: President Trump is our top trade negotiator. He has made clear that any decisions on trade and tariff matters are guided by the national interest, including economic security, supply chain resilience, and the well-being of American workers and industries.

Question 3: Blanket tariffs disproportionately harm small businesses as they have less financial flexibility to take on the associated extra costs and uncertainty. How were/are small businesses factored into the tariff decisions made by this Administration?

Answer: We recognize many products are not naturally available in the U.S. and would be eager to explore trade opportunities with countries that open their markets to the U.S. and eliminate trade barriers.

Tariffs are implemented in a manner that supports fair competition, transparency, and the national interest with a focus on helping American businesses of all sizes. The administration's

trade policy, including the use of tariffs, is an essential part of strengthening and reestablishing our domestic industrial base.

Small businesses are a critical part of the U.S. economy, and Commerce conducts robust engagement with small and medium-sized businesses on a variety of trade-related policy matters and in various forums. Ensuring that the relevant stakeholders have a voice in future trade policies will always be a priority.

Question 4: Are you committed to the use of blanket tariffs, as opposed to targeted, industry-specific tariffs? Please explain your reasoning and how you account for (1) small businesses and (2) the pass-through costs of tariffs to American consumers.

Answer:

We recognize many products are not naturally available in the U.S. and would be eager to explore trade opportunities with countries that open their markets to the U.S. and eliminate trade barriers.

Tariffs are implemented in a manner that supports fair competition, transparency, and the national interest with a focus on helping American businesses of all sizes. The administration's trade policy, including the use of tariffs, is an essential part of strengthening and reestablishing our domestic industrial base.

Small businesses are a critical part of the U.S. economy, and Commerce conducts robust engagement with small and medium-sized businesses on a variety of trade-related policy matters and in various forums. Ensuring that the relevant stakeholders have a voice in future trade policies will always be a priority.

Question 5: If the 90-day pause for reciprocal tariffs passes on July 9th without the necessary trade deals finalized, what happens for those countries where a deal is not made? Do the reciprocal tariff rates from April kick in again? Will there be another pause?

Answer: Under President Trump's leadership, we have reached historic deals with many of our largest trading partners around the world. For those countries that refused to come to the negotiating table, we have informed them of their new tariff rates and have begun collecting those duties.

Question 6: Who, or which group of individuals, formulated the reciprocal tariff calculation posted to the U.S. Trade Representative's website?

Answer: Please reach out to the Office of the United States Trade Representative for questions about their website.

Question 7: How was the reciprocal tariff formula created? Were the economists cited to in the

U.S. Trade Representative's [explanation](#) of these reciprocal tariffs contacted or included in this process? To what extent were those economists engaged in this process?

Answer: The reciprocal tariffs were developed through an interagency process that considered a range of economic and strategic factors to ensure consistency with U.S. trade policy objectives.

Question 8: One of the economists the U.S. Trade Representative cited to for the reciprocal tariff calculation, Brent Neiman, wrote an op-ed titled "[The Trump White House Cited My Research to Justify Tariffs. It Got it All Wrong.](#)" Among other issues Dr. Neiman takes with his research being misapplied to this formula is that the reciprocal tariff rates should be $\frac{1}{4}$ of what they were. In any event where these reciprocal tariffs come back, including the 90-day pause ending without the necessary trade deals made, can you commit to taking Dr. Neiman's feedback into account?

Answer: The reciprocal tariffs were developed through an interagency process that considered a range of economic and strategic factors to ensure consistency with U.S. trade policy objectives.

* Responses provided as of September 30, 2025.

MONDAY, JUNE 23, 2025.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WITNESS

HON. PAMELA BONDI, ATTORNEY GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Mr. ROGERS. Good afternoon. The committee will be in order.

Without objection, the chair is authorized to declare a recess at any time.

We will begin by myself being recognized for an opening statement.

I would like to welcome our witness, the Honorable Pam Bondi, Attorney General of the United States, to testify on the Department of Justice's fiscal year 2026 budget.

To begin, I want to thank the Attorney General for speaking at the Rx and Illicit Drug Summit this past April down in Nashville, Tennessee.

That is, I think, the third or fourth of those summits that you have been there to speak, and we appreciate that especially.

That summit gathers the best and brightest to discuss ways our Nation can tackle the opioid and addiction crisis impacting every corner of our country.

At this year's summit, we received some encouraging news from the CDC: that overdose deaths have decreased by nearly 30 percent.

Unfortunately, we still lost over 80,000 loved ones in 2024, and recent provisional data from the CDC suggests that the progress that has been made might be coming to an end. And, indeed, 70 percent of those deaths were from fentanyl.

Significant more work needs to be done to curb opioid addiction, including focusing on the precursor chemicals being produced in China and the manufacturing labs in Mexico, as well as tracking down the cartels and criminals that shop these drugs to our Nation's children.

The Department of Justice must keep this at the top of their priority list.

Unfortunately, Madam General, your job at the top will not be easy, and the list of issues that the American people are counting on you to address is long and dangerous.

From fentanyl and immigration to violent crime and supporting local law enforcement, the Department of Justice needs to uphold the rule of law and equal justice while tackling the most dangerous situations confronting Americans.

To make matters even more difficult, this all must be accomplished within a budget that needs to be rightsized for efficiency and effectiveness.

The Department of Justice's fiscal year 2026 budget request totals just under \$34 billion. This represents a reduction of close to \$3 billion from fiscal year 2025.

Specifically, the request includes about \$11 billion to target violent crime, \$10 billion to tackle drug crimes, over \$3 billion to defend the Nation and our citizens against transnational organized crime, and over \$3.5 billion to address immigration.

These are the exact issues that hit home for many families, and these are the issues that are being discussed between neighbors in all of our States, including mine in Kentucky, and across the Nation.

After 4 years of politicization at the Biden Department of Justice, these are the issues that the American people expect you to address. They want a Department of Justice that protects American citizens from violent crime, not one that is weaponized against them for speaking their minds.

Thus far, we have seen much progress on many of these fronts, including an administration that is taking the Nation's borders seriously.

Attorney General Bondi, I stand ready to support you in your efforts to ensure that the American public lives in a society that is free from crime and abuse. I look forward to hearing from you today regarding the fiscal year 2026 budget, and then we will go from there.

There are critically important funding decisions ahead of us, and I hope we can gain a better sense of your priorities today so that we can make the best decision on behalf of the American public.

Let me now recognize the ranking member of this subcommittee, Ms. Meng, for any remarks she cares to make.

Ms. MENG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And welcome, Attorney General Bondi.

Tens of thousands of public servants at the Department of Justice and its bureaus have historically worked very hard and continue to work hard to protect public safety and uphold the rule of law in our country.

Yet, I must take this opportunity to express my very strong concerns about this current administration's lack of respect for the rule of law.

Over the past 5 months, we have seen numerous examples of this administration outright breaking the law.

The administration continues to illegally withhold billions of dollars in funding that Congress appropriated, including hundreds of recently terminated Justice Grants that had been previously awarded through open and competitive processes.

The administration is violating the Federal law that mandates that the Office of Management and Budget publish apportionments and show the public how and when Federal agencies are spending appropriated funds.

The Justice Department has begun illegally restoring the gun possession rights of convicted felons and domestic abusers. It is allowing the sale of forced reset trigger devices without a background check.

These are devices that effectively convert regular firearms into machine guns, which I fear will only make mass shootings in the United States more numerous and deadly.

More than 1,500 individuals involved in the January 6 attack on the Capitol were pardoned or granted commutations of sentences.

The President's new appointee as Pardon Attorney, Ed Martin, previously raised money to help defend some of the most violent of these individuals, people who assaulted police officers. Some of the pardoned January 6 defendants have subsequently been arrested, charged, or sentenced for other crimes.

Under this President, the U.S. has accepted a luxury jetliner from Qatar, very likely in violation of the Emoluments Clause of the Constitution.

This President has also issued a series of illegal and unconstitutional executive orders, several of which are being challenged in courts right now.

Presidential actions in recent months have also directed highly political and targeted investigations against law firms and individuals, including Miles Taylor, a former staffer for the House Appropriations Committee's Republican majority.

Meanwhile, the administration has weakened law enforcement against political corruption by gutting the Department's Public Integrity Section, which fairly investigates and prosecutes corruption by government officials.

It has dismantled Task Force KleptoCapture, which was started after Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine to enforce sanctions and target oligarchs close to the Kremlin. It has also ended the FBI's Foreign Influence Task Force, which was created to defend against foreign influence operations targeting U.S. institutions.

Furthermore, dozens of experienced career Federal prosecutors, litigators, and FBI leaders have been fired or forced out since the start of this administration, including James Dennehy, the highly respected leader of the FBI's New York Field Office.

I am really concerned about what is happening in the Department of Justice, especially based on the Department's fiscal year 2026 budget request. The proposed budget weakens the country's efforts to fight crime and keep Americans safe.

The proposal reduces funding for the FBI, despite the heroism of agents like those in Minnesota who aided in the recent capture of the deranged man accused of killing a State representative and nearly killing another.

It slashes funding to fight the trafficking of fentanyl and other dangerous illegal drugs by reducing the budget of the DEA, cutting the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas program by more than a third, and by completely eliminating the dedicated funding for the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force program.

The administration also proposes a cut of more than 25 percent to the ATF, which will further weaken the government's ability to fight illegal gun trafficking.

This budget proposal also puts further pressure on State and local budgets at a time of great economic uncertainty.

The proposal cuts by more than \$800 million funding to grants to local and State law enforcement for fighting and reducing crime, including a cut of more than \$37 million to Byrne Justice Assist-

ance formula grants that help our local law enforcement in every single State.

I am also concerned about the huge cuts to grants aimed at preventing and prosecuting violence against women, such as STOP grants and Sexual Assault Services grants.

The administration also proposes eliminating three valuable programs aimed at fighting and preventing hate crimes at the same time that the FBI is reporting that hate crimes are at historic highs.

The administration's budget would completely eliminate the Community Relations Service, which was created by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prevent and resolve conflicts in American communities.

These actions and this budget proposal simply don't demonstrate a commitment to the rule of law and equal rights for all Americans.

I look forward to discussing these important issues at today's hearing.

Thank you for being here.

And thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. We have in attendance the ranking member of the full committee, Ms. DeLauro, whom I now recognize.

Ms. DELAURO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank you and Ranking Member Meng for holding this budget hearing.

And I also want to say a thank you to our witness, Attorney General Bondi, for appearing before the subcommittee today.

Welcome to the House of Representatives.

A well-functioning, well-funded, well-led Department of Justice is critical to the safety and the security of the American people. And the Department of Justice's employees are dedicated public servants who work diligently and often in dangerous settings to keep criminals off the streets.

But, unfortunately, the Department of Justice under your leadership has become a tool of political retaliation and the front door for criminals seeking to curry favors and pardons.

As I told Director Patel last month, pressure from the White House to investigate the President's opponents or to quash investigations of his allies threatens the Department's credibility and the very foundation—and the foundation on which this Nation stands, and that is the rule of law.

The Attorney General must shield the rule of law from political pressure, not act as an instrument for implementing the President's political hit list.

Attorney General Bondi, the Department of Justice is not the President's personal law firm. Loyalty or disloyalty toward the President, or even the President's agenda, is not a valid measure of the performance of your employees nor of the appropriateness of a particular criminal investigation.

President Trump is more focused on revenge, retaliation, and retribution rather than lowering the high price for everyday essentials, and the American people are bearing those costs.

The American people expected President Trump to address the high cost of living, but the President is not laser-focused on the cost-of-living crisis. He is actually making it worse.

Instead, he put billionaires like Elon Musk in charge of our government, and they are attacking civil servants who are not loyal to him but to the Constitution and to the rule of law. And they are stealing programs, the funding for the programs that keep America's communities safe.

This administration is deliberately undermining agencies that protect the American people. Over \$4.5 billion in the Department of Justice grants, those funds, including COPS grants, the Office on Violence Against Women grants, have been unlawfully frozen, stolen from the communities that are counting on this funding to improve their own law enforcement capabilities.

This funding supports reentry initiatives, violence prevention. It helps prevent hate crimes, provides services for crime victims, and supports underserved communities. Stealing this funding makes the American people less safe, more likely to become victims of crime.

Freezing this money is an illegal impoundment. There is no lawful authority to unilaterally impound or, in my words, steal. You can continue to say there is inherent authority. You can say it over and over and over again. But it is not true and we are going to correct it over and over and over again. And how many times can the courts and the Government Accountability Office tell you so?

Your Department is responsible for upholding the law. You must unfreeze grant money appropriated by the Congress or be in violation of the law.

Moving to the next fiscal year, I am eager to learn about how the Department of Justice will continue to fulfill its mission with a proposed budget that significantly cuts our Nation's law enforcement agencies, key offices, and grant programs.

The President's proposed budget would impair and defund the core law enforcement agencies that keep our communities safe. In essence, you are defunding law enforcement.

It slashes funding for the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, limiting Federal efforts to help our State and local enforcement combat gun violence, drug trafficking, and organized crime.

The budget also targets DOJ's foundational legal divisions, cutting funding for civil rights enforcement, environmental protection, and even, yes, national security. It takes an axe to grant programs and other programs that support domestic violence survivors and local police departments.

It dismantles DOJ's Tax Division, which will only make it easier for prominent tax cheats to avoid prosecution, further increasing the burden on honest taxpayers who pay what they owe.

They pay what they owe. Our largest corporations do not.

And why on Earth does your budget slash the Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General by 30 percent? Does this administration want to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse or not?

Our government's Inspectors General are absolutely critical non-partisan offices that help Congress and the American people eliminate and prevent fraud and corruption. This administration has directly undermined and even removed over a dozen of these offices across our government.

Waste, fraud, and abuse are not the targets of President Trump's White House. They are the primary objectives. This budget does not put the safety and security of the American people first. It puts white collar criminals, drug traffickers, and violent offenders first, while eviscerating your Department's ability to stop them.

The Department of Justice exists to uphold the rule of law. The American people deserve assurance that everyone will be treated equally under the law. Instead, this administration breaks the law with reckless abandon.

President Trump, like every other American, must follow the law. Russ Vought must follow the law. Secretaries Noem and Kennedy and McMahon must follow the law. And we must understand why your Department is complicit in lawbreaking from the highest office.

I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. We want to say congratulations to the Attorney General on her selection to this very important post. But she brings a great record from her home State of Florida in her earlier part of her life.

So we are proud of you, and we welcome you to the subcommittee. And you are now recognized for an opening statement, which will be entered into the record.

STATEMENT OF HON. PAMELA BONDI

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you, Chairman.

Good afternoon, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member DeLauro, Ranking Member Meng, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am honored to appear before you today to present the President's fiscal year 2026 budget for the Department of Justice. I look forward to working with all of you to ensure continued support for the Department and our many critical missions.

President Trump's fiscal year 2026 budget proposal totals \$34 billion for the Department of Justice. That money will support Federal law enforcement as well as our State, local, and Tribal law enforcement partners.

My primary objective as Attorney General is to return the Department to its core mission of keeping Americans safe and vigorously enforcing the law. This budget will allow us to continue doing just that.

Since January 20, we have dismantled deadly fentanyl networks across our country. We have prosecuted MS-13 and TdA members using terrorism and RICO charges. We have seized thousands of illegal guns from cartels and extradited key cartel leaders into U.S. prisons.

Last month, the FBI arrested 205 child predators in a single operation, and the DEA executed the largest fentanyl bust in history across four States.

We have also surged FBI resources to investigate thousands of violent crimes committed against American Indian and Alaska Native people.

These are just a few examples of what we have achieved thus far. The budget will allow us to continue doing our crucial work.

We have also led the charge to enforce our immigration laws, rebuild our immigration system after 4 years of chaos, and help se-

cure our Nation's borders. Moreover, we must guarantee that our laws allow us to process, hold, and remove those who enter our country illegally.

Our U.S. Attorneys continue to effectively work with law enforcement at all levels to investigate and prosecute the increasing volume of immigration-related criminal offenses.

Additionally, the President and I have established and reinvigorated three task forces to enforce the administration's priorities.

The Homeland Security Task Force is enhancing Federal and State law enforcement cooperation to destroy criminal cartels, foreign gangs, and transnational criminal organizations throughout our country.

Joint Task Force Alpha will continue to specifically target the human trafficking and human smuggling networks that took root while our border was wide open.

And Joint Task Force Vulcan will continue successful efforts to arrest and prosecute members of TdA and MS-13.

We are also committed to making America safe again by reducing recidivism. The Bureau of Prisons has suffered mismanagement, lack of funding, and low morale. Throughout my confirmation process, BOP came up in every single meeting regardless of the Senator's party.

The President's budget proposal will address critical staffing shortages, enhance staff retention, and deliver positive changes to a system that has long needed improvements.

The resources made available through President Trump's proposal will also empower the Department to continue fighting our war on fentanyl.

Since January 2025, the DEA has already seized 41.5 million fentanyl pills and 4,470 kilos of fentanyl powder.

It is a historic rate, but it is not enough. We won't rest until this poison is off our streets.

And finally, the 2026 budget continues my commitment to find savings in the Department, reduce inefficiencies, and deliver value to the American taxpayer.

In fiscal year 2026, the Department will merge components that will work in overlapping areas and make our law enforcement and grant-making efforts more effective. We will emerge from this work as a leaner organization, better equipped to keep the American people safe.

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member DeLauro, Ranking Member Meng, it is my pleasure to highlight our efforts to be good stewards of these resources. I am working diligently to restore confidence and integrity to the Department and each of those components. Thank you for your continued support of the Department's financial needs and for the opportunity to present our budget request.

I also would ask all of us now to pray for our troops in Qatar.
Mr. ROGERS. Amen.

Attorney General BONDI. I look forward to working with you. And I am now happy to take any questions you might have.

[The information follows:]

STATEMENT OF ATTORNEY GENERAL PAMELA JO BONDI BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES

Good afternoon, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and other distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. I am honored to appear before you today to present President Trump's Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget for the Department of Justice. I look forward to working with you to ensure continued support for the Department of Justice and its many critical missions.

President Trump's FY 2026 Budget proposal totals \$34 billion for the Department of Justice to support our law enforcement priorities. During my confirmation hearing, I stated that my overriding objective would be to return the Department of Justice to its core mission of keeping Americans safe and vigorously enforcing the law.

This \$34 billion request reflects a commitment by the President and me to reduce crime, enforce our Nation's immigration laws, and support our local, State, and Tribal partners.

First, the Department of Justice is working hard every day to combat violent crime. With the extraordinary help of our Federal, State, local, and Tribal partners, the Department of Justice, in the first 140 days of the Trump Administration, has brought charges against MS-13 gang members all across the country. We have utilized terrorism and RICO charges to prosecute members of Tren de Aragua (TdA). We have arrested over 200 child sexual abuse offenders. We have moved resources to help solve thousands of open investigations into violent crimes committed against American Indian and Alaska Native people (AIAN). That effort involves providing more resources than ever to support Operation Not Forgotten on Tribal territory nationwide. To continue our successes, the President's Budget includes \$18.3 billion to our law enforcement components and the U.S. Attorney's Offices. These funds will enable the Department to dismantle the worst criminal organizations and continue to target the most violent offenders domestically and abroad.

Second, the crisis at the border continues to pose a serious risk to our national security. Enforcing our immigration laws is the Administration and the Department's top priority. To that end, the President's Budget proposes \$844 million for the Executive Office for Immigration Review. To ensure that our immigration system works properly, we must secure our Nation's borders, and we must guarantee that our laws allow us to process, hold, and remove those who violate our immigration laws. Through the President's Budget, the Department will improve its ability to enforce our immigration laws and combat illegal immigration.

The President has also proposed \$2.8 billion for the U.S. Attorney's offices, including additional funds to enable U.S. Attorneys to more effectively work with Federal, State, and local law enforcement to investigate and prosecute the increasing volume of immigration-related criminal offenses, particularly the serious immigration and border-related crime and apprehensions occurring along the Southwest and Northern borders.

President Trump and I have established or reinvigorated three Task Force that will enforce the Administration's priorities. The Homeland Security Task Forces, established in

Executive Order 14159, will work in every State to end the existence of criminal cartels, foreign gangs, and transnational criminal organizations and dismantle cross-border human smuggling and trafficking networks, particularly those involving children. Joint Task Force Alpha has been reestablished and will target human trafficking and human smuggling. And finally, Joint Task Force Vulcan, created during the President's first term, will target TdA and MS-13.

Finally, it is incumbent on Congress to pass the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. Under this bill, funding provided to the Department would be directed towards the hiring of immigration judges, attorneys, and staff, as well as state and local governments to aid them in incarcerating and removing illegal aliens. With the enactment of this bill, the Department can continue the important work enforcing our immigration laws and securing our border.

Third, the United States is in the midst of the deadliest drug epidemic in American history. Ending the scourge of dangerous opioids and other drugs is one of the Department's most pressing missions. To aid that mission, the Budget invests \$10.1 billion in anti-drug programming, of which \$4.9 billion supports federal law enforcement and prosecutors and \$788 million supports our State, local, and Tribal partners. These resources will empower the Department to identify and dismantle the drug trafficking organizations driving the opioid crisis and contributing to drug-related violence in our communities.

Our efforts thus far illustrate our capacity to translate funding into real results that keep Americans safe. Since January, the DEA has seized 37.4 million pills of fentanyl and 4,200 pounds of fentanyl powder. In February, the Department announced the conclusion of Operation Double Down, a successful operation that dismantled a major Sinaloa Cartel network on the West Coast and resulted in the seizure of 1.7 million fentanyl pills. In May, the DEA executed its largest single fentanyl bust in history, seizing over 400 kilograms of fentanyl in one operation spanning six states. These seizures represent lives saved and families protected. These are just two examples. Every day Department components are removing drugs from our streets and prosecuting those who facilitate their sale.

Fourth, as noted in my confirmation hearing, a strong prison system is necessary to make America safe again. The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) is not only responsible for keeping violent criminals off our nation's streets but also for providing those in prison the tools that are needed to break the cycle of recidivism. For years the BOP has suffered from mismanagement, understaffing, inadequate funding, and low morale. Under the President's and my leadership, we will do better.

The President's Budget requests \$8.9 billion for BOP's Salaries and Expenses including nearly \$227 million in additional program funding to address critical staffing shortages across the nation. In addition, the President's Budget will also build on the significant progress made by the First Step Act enacted during President Trump's first term. The President's leadership on criminal justice reform demonstrates what is possible when a President is unafraid to do things that have been deemed "too difficult," and to reach across the aisle to bring about real solutions.

Finally, the FY 2026 Budget continues my commitment, and the commitment of the President, to finding savings in the Department, reducing inefficiencies, and delivering value to the American taxpayer. The Department is expeditiously implementing its Agency Reduction in

Force and Reorganization Plan (ARRP) in FY 2025, and this budget request builds on those efforts. In FY 2026, the Department will merge components that work in overlapping areas. This will make the Department more efficient and make our law enforcement and grantmaking work more effective. We will also reallocate resources that support investigations into drug enforcement and organized crime organizations so that they are more directly in the hands of agents and prosecutors on the ground. The President has directed a transformation of the Federal bureaucracy, and the Department will emerge from this work with greater ability to focus on its missions that matter to the American people.

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, it is my pleasure to highlight our efforts to be good stewards of the resources and authorities bestowed on us as we strengthen the Department's ability to ensure safety, security, and justice for all Americans. As Attorney General, I am committed to making the Department of Justice run as efficiently and effectively as possible, without adding to the burden on the American taxpayer. I am working diligently to restore confidence and integrity to the Department of Justice and each of its components. Thank you for your continued support of the Department's financial needs, and for the opportunity to present our FY 2026 budget request. I look forward to working with you through the upcoming fiscal year to ensure that the Department of Justice remains on solid financial footing and can accomplish its mission of keeping Americans safe. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. We will proceed under the 5-minute rule, and I will yield myself the first 5 minutes.

As you know, Madam Attorney General, rural America, many parts of the country, including my district, continue to suffer from the lethal effects of illicit drug use and overdose deaths.

How does your 2026 budget propose to address drug crimes, such as trafficking and the influx? What are you doing differently than in the past?

Attorney General BONDI. Chairman, what we are doing, we are focusing all of our law enforcement agencies on getting these drugs off of our streets.

Since I was a State AG, I focused on the opioid crisis. I focused with all of our agencies—all of our agencies—working hand in hand on the drug crisis.

Securing our borders, I believe, was the first step. We will continue to do that.

On May 22, I believe, Chairman, we announced the success of Operation RapTor, the FBI-led DOJ operation that targeted fentanyl trafficking on the dark web. That has become a huge problem with added technology now.

We have seen drug trafficking increased not only across our borders, not only through the mail, but also on the web. And that is something I believe that we can all work together on. I believe that crosses party lines. That is something that we all need to work together on.

We have seized 144 kilos of fentanyl, 180 firearms, and over \$200 million in currency and digital assets, working with nine international partners and arresting 270 drug traffickers across four continents. And that was all because of Operation RapTor.

On May 6, we executed the biggest fentanyl bust in DEA's history. We dismantled a Sinaloa Cartel that trafficked across five States: New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Oregon, and Nevada. We seized 412 kilos of fentanyl pills, 11.5 kilos of fentanyl powder, and 49 illegal firearms. We arrested 16 accused drug traffickers.

These cartels, these gangs, are so organized that they insulate their leaders. The leader of this particular cartel was living in Oregon. Yet none of the drugs were with him.

This was incredible police work by all of our agencies, Federal agencies, working hand in hand to track them down. I met in conference rooms. We had charts.

And I would invite any of you Members, on both sides of the aisle, to come in and see these investigations of what we are trying to do to get these drugs off our streets. They are so complex. They are so complicated.

What our law enforcement have been doing is really second to none and I am so proud. They are some of the bravest in the world. And I am so proud at what they have been doing, working with all of our State and local partners to eradicate these drugs.

My point of that was in Oregon was the leader of this particular Sinaloa gang. And, again, he insulated himself. But we were able to catch him thanks to great police work, and we will continue to do that.

Mr. ROGERS. Well, congratulations.

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. And thanks for the invitation. I hope we can take you up on that.

During his hearing before us, FBI Director Patel indicated a lot of precursor chemicals that originate in China are now going to terrorist organizations that reroute the precursors into our country through the northern border.

What can you say about that?

Attorney General BONDI. Yes, Chairman, that is accurate. I have been fighting this fentanyl epidemic since I was a State AG when it really first came on the market.

Ironically, I was recently in Poland at a security conference with all of my counterparts around the world, and I will never forget something they said to me. My counterpart in Poland said, "Fentanyl isn't here yet." Yet. Because they protect their borders.

And, yes, the northern border is now a great concern to all of us, I would think to everyone on this committee. And, yeah, that is a great concern. But we will continue to do that.

We are fighting to protect those precursors from coming in, as we know. And what they keep doing is they are changing the precursors. And they continue to change them, and they continue to send them through Mexico, through Canada, on ships through our ports of entry into our country. But that is something we have to all work together on to stop.

I went to our DEA lab. I met with our DEA. It only takes—it looks like almost two grains of salt. I had them put sodium chloride in a little bottle so I could show people.

That is what it takes to kill you. And that is what our kids are taking. They don't realize that it is mixed. They think they are buying a Xanax, an Adderall—I can't say this enough—an oxycodone pill. They think they are buying something else.

And this junk is being laced—this poison—into these pills throughout our country. And that is something I feel like we can all work together on to try to stop.

But, yes. That was—sorry—a very long answer to, yes, it is coming in through our northern border, but we are doing everything we can to secure that. We are working with Homeland Security very closely, and they are doing an incredible job on that as well, Chairman.

Mr. ROGERS. Ms. Meng.

Ms. MENG. Madam Attorney General, I wanted to ask about a topic that is of great importance to many Americans, and especially my constituents, which is about hate crimes.

I am really troubled that your budget proposes to end the grant programs that may help prevent some of these hate crimes.

As you may know, I was the author of one of these programs, the Community-Based Approaches to Advancing Justice program, which was created in fiscal year 2022.

This program supported local groups working to increase hate crimes reporting, give community members resources in languages other than English, and to improve relationships between local law enforcement and the community.

It was a direct response to the rise in hate crimes targeting Asian Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic. You may recall

in March 2021, six women of Asian descent were tragically murdered in Atlanta, Georgia.

My Hate Crimes Act passed through Congress in May of that year with bipartisan support, including from several of my colleagues on the other side of the dais.

For years, I have been hearing from constituents about how scared they felt and have been hearing from members of these communities as well as experts who have told me that one of the best ways to combat hate in this country is to fund prevention programs. So not just prosecution but also prevention.

I have a letter here that hate crime survivors and family members wrote to you in May expressing their strongest concerns about the termination of these grants, signed by people like family members of Emmett Till, James Byrd Jr., Matthew Shepard, and survivors of the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting.

I ask unanimous consent to enter into the hearing record this letter from these survivors and family members to Attorney General Bondi regarding the termination of hate crimes-related grant programs.

Mr. ROGERS. Without objection.

[The information follows:]

May 15, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Bondi
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Bondi,

We, the undersigned victims and survivors of hate crimes, write to express our concern over the Department of Justice's (DOJ) deeply harmful and abrupt termination of hate crime-related grants. These grants play an essential role in both law enforcement and community hate crime prevention and response. We respectfully ask that you immediately reinstate these grants and prioritize addressing the increase in hate crimes against all communities.

In 2023, for the second year in a row, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported the highest number of hate crimes on record with 11,862 incidents.[1] Despite these alarming statistics, on April 22, 2025, the DOJ sent notices of termination to recipients of more than 300 grants, dozens of which funded hate crime prevention and response. The stated reason for termination was that the DOJ had "changed its priorities with respect to discretionary funding." [2]

The DOJ's apparent decision to de-prioritize initiatives to address hate violence, at a time when reported hate crimes are at an all-time high, is misguided, and it will have real impact on the lives of people targeted for violence because of their personal characteristics. These grants provide invaluable support to victims and survivors in some of the most devastating and traumatic moments of their lives, help law enforcement combat violent crime, and protect children and their families.

Indeed, many of the grants summarily terminated by DOJ were designed to build stronger and more resilient communities that reflect the strength of our loved ones impacted by hate. Among other things, the grants that were terminated funded the development of language accessible resources and support, improved access to victim services, improved crisis response, aided in the de-escalation of community tensions, improved capacity of law enforcement to respond to hate crimes, and established programs to strengthen relationships between communities most vulnerable to hate crimes and law enforcement.

Many of the terminated grants were authorized under the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act, and the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, which included the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer NO HATE Act[3] —

laws named after the loved ones of several signatories to this letter. Bipartisan majorities of both the Senate and House voted to appropriate funds for these grants.

As someone who has worked with and advocated for victims of crimes, we would have expected you to understand the need for targeted victims and their communities to have support that can meet their diverse needs. These funding streams are critical to ensuring all victims of hate crimes have access to support services.

We respectfully request a meeting with you and members of your staff to discuss the importance of these grant programs and the harmful impact of their summary termination. We ask that you reinstate these grants and prioritize addressing the increase in hate crimes against all communities.

Sincerely,

Ollie Gordon, Cousin of Emmett Till

Emmett Till was murdered in Money, Mississippi on August 28, 1955.

Jamie Byrd-Grant, Daughter of James Byrd, Jr.

Louvon Byrd Harris, Sister of James Byrd, Jr.

James Byrd, Jr. was murdered in Jasper, Texas on June 7, 1998.

Dennis Shepard, Father of Matthew Shepard

Judy Shepard, Mother of Matthew Shepard

Matthew Shepard was murdered on October 12, 1998 after an attack in Laramie, Wyoming.

Jennifer Rose Ferris, Hate Crime Survivor

Jennifer Rose Ferris is a survivor of the mass shooting hate crime against women in Collier Township, Pennsylvania on August 4, 2009.

Pardeep Kaleka, Son of Satwant Singh Kaleka

Satwant Singh Kaleka was murdered in Oak Creek, Wisconsin on August 5, 2012.

Victoria Jabara, Sister of Khalid Jabara

Rami Jabara, Brother of Khalid Jabara

Jenna Jabara, Sister-In-Law of Khalid Jabara

Khalid Jabara was murdered in Tulsa, Oklahoma on August 12, 2016.

Taylor Dumpson-Lippincott, Hate Crime Survivor

Kimberly Conway Dumpson, Mother of Taylor Dumpson-Lippincott

Jeffrey K. Dumpson, Sr., Father of Taylor Dumpson-Lippincott

Jeffrey K. Dumpson II, Brother of Taylor Dumpson-Lippincott

Taylor Dumpson was the victim of a hate crime in Washington, D.C. on May 1, 2017 and targeted by a troll-storm that began on May 4, 2017.

Dawn Collins, Mother of Lt. Richard W. Collins III

Richard Collins, Father of Lt. Richard W. Collins III

Lt. Richard W. Collins III was murdered in College Park, Maryland on May 20, 2017.

Susan Bro, Mother of Heather Heyer

Heather Heyer was murdered in Charlottesville, Virginia on August 12, 2017.

Carol Black, Hate Crime Survivor and Sister of Richard Gottfried

Carol Black is a survivor of the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting on October 27, 2018. Richard Gottfried was murdered in the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting on October 27, 2018.

Alan Mallinger, Son of Rose Mallinger

Rose Mallinger was murdered in the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting on October 27, 2018.

[1] Lynch, Sarah N. "US violent crime decreased in 2023, hate crimes rose, FBI reports." *Reuters*. Sept. 23, 2024. <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/us-violent-crime-decreased-2023-hate-crimes-rose-fbi-reports-2024-09-23/>.

[2] Emails received by grant recipients, on file with author. *See also* Stein, Perry, et al. "DOJ cancels grants for gun-violence and addiction prevention, victim advocacy." *Washington Post*. April 23, 2025. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2025/04/22/justice-department-grants-canceled/>.

[3] Pub. L. No. 117-13.

Ms. MENG. Thank you, Chairman.

Attorney General Bondi, I absolutely share your support for law enforcement and for the prosecution of hate crimes in a just way. But we must combat all forms of hate on all fronts, bringing together law enforcement and community leaders and members of the public, and these grant programs have helped many communities do exactly this.

So I just wanted to ask and hear from you why there is a proposal to eliminate the three largest sources of DOJ funding for hate crime prevention programs.

Attorney General BOND. Yeah. And, Ranking Member, can you list those three for me again? And I am sorry, I have not received your letter yet. But I would welcome working with you on any issue regarding hate crimes in the Asian-American community and any community. I welcome working with you on that.

Ms. MENG. Okay. Yeah. I would love to.

And this letter was sent May 15, and we will make sure that you and your team have received it.

Attorney General BOND. Thank you.

Ms. MENG. So the programs. One of them, for example, is named the Community-Based Approaches to Advancing Justice. Three programs have been cut. One of these programs literally helped support our law enforcement departments locally, like our NYPD, to train and respond to hate crimes.

Attorney General BOND. Let me see.

So we have 5,800 grants, Chairman, that come—Ranking Member, excuse me—that come through my office; 365 have been cut so far. That is approximately 6 percent.

What I will tell you is we have turned back on 13 of those so far because people have reached out to me. If you want to reach out and talk to me directly, I will give you my cell phone. I would love to sit down with you and see if we can work that out. I am sorry. I am not familiar with those three directly.

But, again, we will, if you have, on either side of the aisle, any grants that you believe should be back on, I would love to meet with you and work with you on that.

We are doing that on a case-by-case basis. And law enforcement is my top priority, especially hate crimes, violence against women, everything I have done my entire career as a prosecutor. I think we have a former prosecutor in the room too.

And I look forward to working with you on those and seeing what we can do to help you.

Ms. MENG. Great. We would love to work together, and we will flag all the programs that have been impacted, including those that directly support our local law enforcement, like NYPD.

And just to be more specific, the three programs mentioned are Community-Based Approaches, Jabara-Heyer NO HATE, and Shepard-Byrd. NO HATE, Shepard-Byrd.

Thank you so much.

Attorney General BOND. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Gonzales.

Mr. GONZALES. Thank you, Chairman.

And thank you, Attorney General, for being here today.

When the DOJ submitted their budget, the United States was a Nation at peace, and now we are a Nation at war. So my questions are going to be focused on national security.

How many Iranian sleeper cells do we suspect are in the United States?

Attorney General BOND. Congressman, I can't talk about that in this setting. But what I can tell you is I know Homeland Security, I know the FBI. They are focusing on doing everything we can to keep our Nation safe and they will continue to do that.

Yeah, it is a frightening time in which we live right now. But President Trump is committed to keeping all Americans safe. And we look forward to working with you on that.

Mr. GONZALES. Great. Thank you.

How many active cases of threats to the homeland does DOJ currently have open as of today?

Attorney General BOND. Countless. Countless. I can't talk about those in this setting either, obviously, anything pending regarding national security issues.

But there is not a day that goes by that we don't discuss the issues that you just brought up with me at the Department of Justice. But I also know that our counterparts at DOD, HSI, the State Department, and all of our agencies are working together to make America safe and, in turn, keep our world safe.

Mr. GONZALES. This is very much on my mind. I spent 20 years in the military. I spent 5 years in Iraq and Afghanistan. These aren't—

Attorney General BOND. Thank you.

Mr. GONZALES. Of course. These aren't dots on a board. And not only American lives abroad, what we saw today, are at risk, but it is also American lives here at home.

And I don't want us looking back and going: What if? I want us to, as much as we can, get ahead of it, to give you the resources, the instruments that you need to go out and make sure that we are preventing things from happening, not waiting until after the fact.

There was a report of over 1,500 Iranian nationals that have entered the country illegally over the last several years. Do we know, out of those over 1,500, how many of those have been convicted of a crime?

Attorney General BOND. Yeah, I don't have the number of the convictions. It is well over a thousand have entered, yes. I don't know if it is quite up to 1,500. But, yes, it is well over a thousand have entered our country. And I can tell you, we are on high alert, and everyone is looking at that very closely.

Mr. GONZALES. Some things just don't line up as far as us—I see the world as on fire now more than ever before. Once again, when this budget was submitted we were a Nation at peace, and now things have changed.

I look at this. I see law enforcement and national security has a reduction of \$645 million, over 1,500 positions. The notes I have: The FBI will implement cost-saving measures. The largest decreases will be in criminal, cyber, response, and service branches and national security branches.

FBI's criminal investigation, cyber, and international operations will reduce resources and support various investigations and partnership. Additionally, the counterintelligence, counterterrorism, threat screening, and weapons of mass destruction programs experience reductions.

I mention those things because those, in my eyes, those are the programs that we need more resources to, more manpower to.

And not everything is about money. I mean, you have alluded to this. A lot of times it is about being more efficient with the things that you are doing.

I would love to hear your thoughts on some of the ways you are looking to get ahead of any problem sets.

Attorney General BOND. Thank you.

And we can do more with less. Of course, you can always do more with more. But we are doing more with less. We are prioritizing. We are refocusing. And the budget request supports \$7.5 billion for national security.

Also, that is why it is very important, I believe, for all of you to support the Big Beautiful Bill. The One Big Beautiful Bill gives us a lot of additional funding at the Department of Justice to carry out our mission.

The Senate version gives us \$11.82 billion. Currently, the House version gives us \$3.3 billion. Hopefully, they will come to a compromise in there.

But that is where it will truly help Department of Justice combat all of the issues that you brought up and many others.

And thank you for your service to our country, especially now. I didn't realize that you had served in Iraq. Thank you.

Mr. GONZALES. Yeah. No. Of course. And thank you for saying that. I mean, resources matter. And the Big Beautiful Bill, we look forward to getting that to the President's desk as soon as possible, once again, to give you the resources and the tools you need to get ahead of these problems that we see so clearly coming through.

I represent nearly half of the southern border. The border is on my mind quite a bit.

One of the questions I have—I focus a lot on convicted criminal illegal aliens. Do we know how many illegal aliens have been convicted of a crime in the United States?

Attorney General BOND. Yeah. I can get you those specific numbers.

Mr. GONZALES. Great.

Attorney General BOND. I don't know. But many, I can tell you. Our prosecutors are indicting and charging illegal aliens constantly—violent crimes, rapes, thefts, many crimes throughout this country.

And, yes, our borders were wide open. And, Congressman, back in September, I went to our border at Yuma, Arizona. Not in Texas, but in Yuma. And at our border, what I saw firsthand, we saw IDs just dropped from every country you can imagine. El Salvador. Venezuela. China. Every country you can imagine.

And of course I didn't see Iranian driver's licenses, but they are coming into our country. Yes, we know. That is documented. But just walking into our country.

And that is why Homeland Security, that is why ICE, that is why the FBI, that is why all of our agencies, DEA, ATF, are all working hand in hand to combat that and to keep Americans safe. And that is what President Trump is committed to doing.

Mr. GONZALES. Thank you.

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you.

Mr. GONZALES. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Ms. DeLauro.

Ms. DELAURO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Just a quick note before I get to my questions.

Fentanyl seizures are down 30 percent compared to last year. And that data is coming from the Customs and Border Patrol, CBP. I don't make it up. But fentanyl seizures are down.

At your confirmation hearing you asserted that you will do everything in your power to prevent illegal gunrunners in our country. Your budget request for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, ATF, proposes a cut of 26 percent below the current level.

How can you justify such a massive cut without inevitably weakening ATF's ability to help our State and local law enforcement fight illegal gun trafficking?

How many ATF law enforcement officers and industry operations investigators do you anticipate will be lost to attrition as a result of this funding reduction you are proposing?

Attorney General BONDI. So I am a career prosecutor, and I believe in keeping America safe, making America safe.

First, what we are doing is ATF is going to be brought over with DEA. Everyone knows, everyone sitting up here, guns and drugs go together. They go together. We are going to make it more efficient.

What I will tell you will not be happening is ATF agents will not be knocking on the doors of legal gun owners in the middle of the night asking them about their guns. They are going to be out on the street—if I can finish—they are going to be out on the street—

Ms. DELAURO. Well, I have 3 minutes.

Attorney General BONDI. No, no, no. You asked me a question.

Ms. DELAURO. I did, and you haven't answered my question.

Attorney General BONDI. You asked me a question. Let me answer it.

So they are going to be out on the streets working hand in hand with DEA—

Ms. DELAURO. You haven't answered my question. You haven't answered.

Mr. Chairman, I would like an answer to my question. And the question is not being answered.

How many ATF law enforcement officers and industry operations investigators do you anticipate will be lost to attrition as a result of the funding reduction you are proposing? You are proposing a 26 percent cut to ATF for fiscal year 2026 as well as a 4.4 percent cut to DEA.

So you are going to merge the two agencies together, and then you are going to shortchange their resources so neither one of them will be able to do the job that they have been designed to do.

You have got a 34 percent cut to the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas program, no dedicated money at all for the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force.

So my view, it is fair to say that the Trump administration proposal shortchanges Federal efforts to stop illegal gun trafficking and Federal efforts to stop the flow of dangerous illegal drugs like fentanyl.

Attorney General BONDI. As I was attempting to answer your question very calmly, unlike you, what—what the—what I was saying—

Ms. DELAURO. Excuse me. Excuse me, Madam Attorney General. Answer yes or no. Tell me what the numbers are. I don't want to hear all of your filibustering about this. Go ahead. Please, tell us the numbers.

Attorney General BONDI. So we are reorganizing. ATF agents want to be out on the street working with DEA agents.

Ms. DELAURO. Okay. Let me answer the question for you. I am going to answer it for you. Page—

Mr. ROGERS. Let the witness answer the question.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Chairman, you give me a certain amount of time, and I have a high respect for you, but I don't have to listen, nor do my colleagues have to listen to a filibuster when it is a simple question.

But I have an answer to your question. It is page 146 of the Department's fiscal year 2026 budget. And the performance summary explicitly says, and let me quote, "ATF will eliminate 541 Industry Operations Investigators, reducing ATF's capacity to regulate the firearms and explosives industries by approximately 40 percent in fiscal year 2026. ATF will perform fewer regulatory inspections."

And the Department summary goes on to say, and let me quote, "ATF anticipates a reduction of approximately 284 support personnel and 186 agents, based on historical attrition patterns, and these personnel cuts will impact ATF across various functions," unquote.

If the capacity to regulate the firearms industry is reduced by 40 percent, if you are losing 186 ATF law enforcement agents on top of that, it is clear the direction you are headed with this budget. That is what it is, isn't it? The proposal will weaken our ability to stop gun trafficking, and it will greatly reduce ATF support for State and local law enforcement that helps them prevent and solve violent crimes.

It is a bad proposal.

Attorney General BONDI. Do you want to hear my answer in 3 seconds?

You mentioned regulatory functions. We will not be having ATF agents go to the doors of gun owners in the middle of the night, asking them about their guns. Period. They will be out on the street with DEA, guns and—

Ms. DELAURO. How many are gone?

Attorney General BONDI. They will—we are—it will be attrition. We are not firing agents who will be working—

Ms. DELAURO. How many have taken attrition?

Attorney General BONDI. Can I tell you that they all want to be on the street? They want to be doing their jobs. They want to be seizing guns.

Ms. DELAURO. But you are getting them off the street.

Attorney General BONDI. They want—

Ms. DELAURO. You are getting them off the street.

Attorney General BONDI. We are putting them on the street. They want to be working with DEA.

Ms. DELAURO. You are getting them off the street. There is no clear—

Attorney General BONDI. We will be efficient—

Ms. DELAURO. And, Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time.

Mr. ROGERS. Time of the gentlelady has expired.

Ms. DELAURO. I yield back my time. Let's get some answers here.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Clyde.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Attorney General Bondi, for being here today. You are, in my mind, a breath of fresh air to our Department of Justice.

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you.

So thank you for your dedication to the Constitution and for equal justice under the law. I am thoroughly impressed with your experience and how you have handled the Department of Justice so far.

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you.

Mr. CLYDE. As we all know, under the Biden-Harris administration the Department of Justice, FBI, and ATF were dangerously weaponized to target President Trump and everyday Americans, tactics more fitting of an authoritarian regime than a constitutional republic.

From politically persecuting President Trump, then-President Biden's chief political rival, to going after pro-life advocates, like Mark Houck, the actions of Attorney General Garland, Director Wray, and the DOJ leadership were unacceptable and unconstitutional, in my opinion.

That is why I was very encouraged to see the President's fiscal year 2026 budget commit to ending the weaponization within the Department of Justice and the FBI.

And so can you elaborate for me how has the Trump administration's DOJ shifted away from politically motivated investigations and refocused on its core mission, prosecuting the most dangerous criminals?

And you mentioned that a little bit in your opening remarks. So if you can focus on the moving away part, I would appreciate it.

Attorney General BONDI. Yeah. Thank you, Congressman Clyde, and thank you for that.

And also our budget includes \$1.2 billion and 2,444 agents for ATF, and those agents will be on the street with DEA. And thank you for letting me answer that question.

Mr. CLYDE. Yes, ma'am.

Attorney General BONDI. And we are prioritizing resources addressing illegal firearms and traffickers, and we will reduce unnecessary regulatory efforts, including what I just said about the

weaponization. That is how ATF, I believe, was weaponized in the prior administration.

Also, they were arresting peaceful protesters, the Biden administration, at abortion facilities. No longer. They targeted Catholics at church services. No longer. No longer will parents be arrested at school board meetings because they care about their children.

That has ended under this Department. That is why Donald Trump won the popular vote and the electoral college by overwhelming margins. He made that crystal clear, and that is what is happening now in our country.

That weaponization has ended. These ATF agents will be on the street fighting drugs. I have been a career prosecutor. ATF has taken thousands of guns off the streets since January 20, working hand in hand with DEA. Drugs and guns go together.

Core function. No more targeting and weaponizing our citizens by any of the agencies, Congressman.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you. Thank you for that commitment.

Attorney General BOND. Thank you.

Mr. CLYDE. I was delighted to see that the Department of Justice's fiscal year 2026 budget also included a dedicated fund for a firearm rights restoration initiative.

Can you describe this initiative a little bit and any other steps that your Department is taking to restore the Second Amendment rights to Americans who were unlawfully or unjustly stripped of them by prior administrations? Can you talk about that a little bit, please?

Attorney General BOND. Yes, Congressman. And that is a—the pardon power, of course, falls with the President. And he has been doing many pardons on that topic, and he will continue to do that, I am certain.

Also, one other thing about ATF is our seizure of firearms is up 33 percent from this time last year.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you.

Attorney General BOND. I wanted to add that. Thank you.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you.

I was going to ask you about the merger of DEA and the ATF and kind of if you would elaborate on that. You have talked a little bit about it already.

One thing that I think is very important is that the ATF and Federal firearms licensees work together, because truly FFLs are the front line when it comes to illegal purchases and just the information that is out there.

And we can help each other as long as we have a good relationship with each other. And during the last administration, it was a terrifying relationship. I mean, you had the zero tolerance against Federal firearms licensees.

I am sorry, we are all human. Everybody makes mistakes. And they are not intentional. They are just mistakes.

And when you can lose your livelihood and you can lose your business and your employees can lose their jobs over simple mistakes, that is a real problem, especially when, if you think about Federal firearms licensees, they are the pathway to the Second Amendment of the Constitution. They enable individual participa-

tion in the protection of liberty. I mean, that is what Federal firearms licensees do.

So I think it is really important to have that critical relationship between ATF and the Federal firearms licensees.

When the inspectors, when the ATF went from the Treasury to the Department of Justice and the inspection side of it, when the IOIs, when they were—industry operations inspectors—when they became industry operations investigators, when you investigate crime, you really inspect records. That was concerning to me.

So my thought was maybe we could move the IOIs to the Department of Commerce. But just would get your thought on that.

Attorney General BONDI. Yeah. And, Congressman, that is the first time I have heard about that. I would love to meet with you and learn more about that.

Mr. CLYDE. Great. I look forward to it.

Attorney General BONDI. And thank you for asking about the ATF-DEA merger.

In the world in which we live, bureaucracy has been around for a very long time, and just because things have been done one way for decades and decades doesn't mean that is the most efficient way to do them in the future.

And I am a career prosecutor. I care about ATF. I went to ATF's memorial service. We are doing everything we can to put those ATF agents on the street where they want to be.

Anyone in modern day history—the years of Prohibition are over. ATF, they want to be on the street. They want to be working hand in hand with DEA. That is what they do. No redundancy, no repeat of investigations. They are going to be working together. And that is what this reorganization does.

They are all going to be—it is going to be a great marriage between those two agencies. They are working hand in hand on task forces already. Now they will be working under one umbrella and it is going to be great for our country.

Mr. ROGERS. Time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CLYDE. Thank you very much.

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you.

Mr. CLYDE. I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Ivey.

Mr. IVEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wanted to follow up on what Congressman Gonzales raised with you with respect to the new environment that we are in now with the—essentially at war with Iran.

A few weeks ago, your FBI Director sat in the same chair and said that he thought in the budget that has been proposed they are about \$11.2 billion short. He wanted an additional 1,100 positions that were lost to attrition and 1,300 he wanted to have filled. That is before the scenario with Iran.

Now, I know you submitted the budget already and you want to stick with it. But please take another look. This is a new environment. I think the points that the Congressman raised are very valid with respect to the issue of sleeper cells and threats domestically here.

Taking FBI agents off the street now is a bad—there isn't a worse possible time you could do it. So please reconsider that and

move in a different direction on that, because we need more of them on the street, not fewer.

Ms. DeLauro was raising issues with respect to your budget, the IOI cuts and the 86 agents that are going to be cut, too. And the concern I have on that front, I know you are saying we need—they want to be on the street—but there are ATF agents that do things that aren't on the street.

So, like, for example, the NIBIN work where they match the cartridges to the guns is critical. And I am very concerned that some of the cuts you are going to make are going to impact that.

And the NIBIN pieces are critical for State and local law enforcement, like you used to be, because a lot of them don't have the resources to track it down. And the information that they can get, you can turn it around in 48 hours.

So the man who attempted to assassinate now-President Trump, the connection that was made was through this apparatus, this approach. Same thing with the Minnesota assassin.

So that is an area where we can't afford to have those kind of cuts, I don't think, at this time.

And the performance of fewer regulatory inspections. I had gun dealers in my district who needed those inspections to take place, and important findings have been made, certainly with respect to tracking crime guns and cracking down on gun dealers who are working illicitly.

I am not saying they all do. I mean, many of them operate in the right way. But the only way to track it down is through inspections that have to be aggressive.

And by the way, even under the current regime—or the previous regime—I think some of them didn't get inspections for maybe every 10 years or so. So it wasn't like it is a constant harassment piece.

But I have got some folks here in the corner of the hearing room who are from my district, Moms Demand Action, DMV Mothers Like Me, Women's Missionary Society. I met with them a few weeks ago, and the concern was the issue of gun violence on our streets and the desire to make sure that the Federal presence continues to push hard to make sure we close those cases.

You are reducing resources. You are taking—reducing the number of agents, as Mr. Patel said. That is moving in the opposite direction.

What response would you give to them with respect to the steps that you are taking to make sure not only that we stay safe, but we get even safer and do even more to get violent offenders off the street and get the guns off the street before the violent offenders get them?

Attorney General BONDI. So, first, Congressman Ivey, you are a former prosecutor, and I am smiling because I could see that in some of your questions. Thank you for those questions. I am going to try to answer them all in order of how you asked them.

You asked about the FBI. Our budget—and Director Patel clarified that in front of the Senate, I think, and our budget includes \$10.1 billion, 12,926 agents for the FBI.

Mr. IVEY. I think “clarification” would be gentle. It was a complete flip-flop on what he said when he was here.

Attorney General BONDI. So they prioritize——

Mr. IVEY. And he was asked three times by Ms. DeLauro, just to make sure that he was right about what he had said when he was testifying.

Attorney General BONDI. They prioritize realignment of personnel to the field to carry out national security, which you just talked about, intelligence, criminal law enforcement, and criminal justice missions.

The budget——

Mr. IVEY. Can I do this?

Attorney General BONDI. Can I just keep—I only have 34 seconds to answer you, and I really want to answer.

Mr. IVEY. I have got three quick questions for you, and I would love to get your answers——

Attorney General BONDI. You are asking three questions, and you haven't let me answer one.

Mr. IVEY. I would love to get your answers in writing.

Attorney General BONDI. I want to talk about NIBIN.

Mr. IVEY. Quick question.

Attorney General BONDI. NIBIN.

Mr. IVEY. When you were the attorney general in Florida——

Attorney General BONDI. Chairman, can I answer the question?

Mr. IVEY [continuing]. You offered after the Parkland shooting——

Mr. ROGERS. If the gentleman will suspend.

Mr. IVEY. I believe this is my time under the rules and I had——

Mr. ROGERS. If the gentleman will suspend momentarily.

Ms. DELAURO. Stop the clock.

Mr. IVEY. Can we stop the clock?

Ms. DELAURO. Stop the clock at a different——

Mr. ROGERS. Let's be respectful of each other.

Mr. IVEY. Mr. Chairman, what I just said was, if you could submit your answers in writing, that would be great. I don't think I have made any kind of statement that has been accusatory with respect to her or her professional reputation. There has been no attack on her. These were just questions that were asked. I am seeking the answers in writing, which would be great. But I have a couple others I would like to ask, too, and we will do them on——

Mr. ROGERS. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. IVEY. No, it hasn't. You cut me off when there were 30 seconds left. Yeah. So——

Well, that is true, too. A couple of you all went over, like, a minute and a half.

Ms. DELAURO. Congressman Clyde went over almost 2 minutes.

Mr. IVEY. I just would like my 30 seconds back. And then if she can submit answers in writing, that will be fine, but, you know—— but I want to get these questions in while she is here.

Mr. ROGERS. Submit your questions.

Ms. DELAURO. Go ahead. No, no, no.

Chairman——

Mr. IVEY. I want to ask the questions, and she can submit the answers.

This is my 5 minutes. I get to do it the way I want to do it under the committee rules and under the House rules. These are my 5

minutes. And as I said, I have not been disrespectful to this witness. I have not.

Ms. DELAURO. Go ahead.

Mr. IVEY. Okay. When you were the attorney general in Florida, after the Parkland shooting, my understanding is that you moved to ban guns—gun sales to people under 21. Is that a position that you would take now as the Attorney General? I have a bill, H.R. 2368, which does something like that. I would be interested if you would be willing to cosponsor—or support that bill.

You also moved to enact red flag laws, allowing a judge temporarily to confiscate weapons when he or she viewed that the person was at risk of hurting himself or someone else. Is that a position you would continue to support now?

And the last one is ghost guns. Ghost guns—I don't think you took a position on it back when you were the AG in Florida. But we have had two bills come through here in the Congress, all Democratic cosponsors. I think there is no argument that ghost guns have any, you know, appropriate use on the street. They only help criminals avoid prosecution. Would you support a legislative ban on ghost guns?

And, with that, I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. The gentleman yields back.

Mr. Strong.

Mr. STRONG. Thank you, Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Meng, for having this hearing today. I would also like to thank the subcommittee staff for their hard work.

Attorney General Bondi, thank you for being here today. I commend you for your efforts to prioritize President Trump's America First agenda and commitment to making America safe again.

As you know, I represent Alabama's Fifth Congressional District, which includes Huntsville and Redstone Arsenal. I am especially supportive of the FBI Director Patel's plan for the continued movement of FBI personnel to north Alabama. My district has repeatedly answered the call to support our law enforcement agencies with a second-to-none workforce, cutting-edge facilities, and room for growth.

Attorney General Bondi, do you support the FBI's plan to move additional personnel and programs to Redstone Arsenal and out of the Beltway?

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you, Congressman, for your question.

And, yes, we are moving 500 additional personnel from D.C. to Alabama to Redstone. Redstone is a state-of-the-art facility. It will enhance everything we do, training for FBI, training for other employees. And Huntsville provides the most cost-effective location with a distinct partnership opportunity, and we support all of that that is happening, and I look forward to visiting it one day.

Could I have a couple minutes to answer a couple of your fellow Congressman's questions?

Mr. STRONG. Please do. I will yield.

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you. He asked me about—he asked me about NIBIN, and yet he didn't want to hear my answer. NIBIN means National Integrated Ballistics Enforcement Network. I am very aware of that. We are not cutting that. ATF is receiving

\$66 million. It is an important program. And I know he would not intentionally attempt to mislead anyone by saying that I am trying to cut that, but that is not being cut.

I am a career prosecutor. I have used that, and I am sure he has used it as a prosecutor. It is an important program that provides critical support to 7,200 State and local partners we work with. It is a key element to combat violent crime and firearms. So I am a huge supporter of NIBIN, and we will continue to do that.

You asked me to talk to moms. I will always speak to moms in my office and any environment. Yes. And I lived the Parkland shooting. I still talk to and meet with all of those families, both Democrat and Republican alike. I will continue to do that as a career prosecutor.

Speaking of moms, I am sure you met with—I am sure you met with Patty Morin. She is the mom of a murdered woman in your district. I am sure you met with her. I am sure he met with Tammy Nobles. Kayla Hamilton—that was her daughter who got murdered. So yes, I am willing to meet with any mom from any side of the aisle.

And thank you, Congressman, for letting me correct that.

Mr. STRONG. Absolutely.

Mr. IVEY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. STRONG. I have got—I want to move to my questions.

In my district, we have the FBI, the ATF, and DHS working together to address bombing incidents and use of explosives. The FBI's Hazardous Devices School and Terrorist Explosive Device Analytical Center, effectually known as TEDAC, the ATF's National Center for Explosives Training and Research, and the U.S. Bomb Data Center are all located at Redstone Arsenal.

As mentioned, ATF's National Center for Explosives and Training Research is a world-class facility located at Redstone. The center provides remarkable training facilities and specializes in life-saving explosives and arsons training. Can you discuss how merging the ATF with the DEA will streamline their activities while ensuring their critical and unique capabilities are maintained?

Attorney General BONDI. Yes, absolutely. And, yes, the National Center for Explosives Training and Research at Redstone—it is pretty remarkable what they do. They oversee the canine operations, I believe, as well as the criminal profiling, the explosives, the arson investigations, and I look forward to working with you. I look forward to visiting that. I really want to go to that facility.

Yeah. There are no cuts planned for that. And that is where ATF and DEA, again, can partner together. The drugs and the guns go together. Those agents will be working hand in hand. The bureaucracy at the top will be gone. There will be no redundancy. They will be working hand in hand at that facility and many others throughout our country. Thank you.

Mr. STRONG. Ms. Attorney General, I just want to thank you for how you represent yourself and you represent this country. It is a hard task, what you have to do. You represent Democrats, Republicans. But what you have done in these first 5 months, have reestablished the American people's belief in what the DOJ is to do for the American people.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. The gentleman yields back.

Mr. Morelle.

Mr. MORELLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Meng, for holding this important hearing, and thank you, Attorney General Bondi, for appearing before us today.

Madam Attorney General, I serve, in addition to the Appropriations Committee, as the ranking member of the Committee on House Administration. I sent you a letter last week along with my Republican counterpart, Chairman Brian Steil, requesting an increase in Federal prosecutorial resources to address threats against Members of Congress, particularly in light of what happened last week in Minnesota—that tragedy.

In 2024, the U.S. Capitol Police identified and received nearly 9,500 concerning statements or threats against Members. Federal prosecutors have only secured eight convictions so far, and the heightened threat environment demands an all-hands-on-deck approach.

Will you commit to assigning an assistant U.S. attorney or special assistant U.S. attorney to each of the 94 Federal districts to, at least on a part-time basis, investigate and prosecute threats against Members of Congress?

Attorney General BONDİ. So thank you for bringing that up, and I take that very seriously. Not only what happened in Minnesota was horrible; I have spoken to Keith Ellison. I have spoken to Amy Klobuchar about that. It is horrible. We are involved in that. The FBI was involved. Our U.S. attorneys are involved.

Many of these are district-to-district. So the way we are doing that is—I will tell you my national security division is involved in all of those and assisting in those. We meet every single morning and we discuss that. But many of those—Minnesota—will be handled in the State in which it happened.

Another one is—

Mr. MORELLE. So, ma'am—

Attorney General BONDİ. I am sorry. If I could keep going. I am sorry. I don't mean to—

Mr. MORELLE. Quickly, though.

Attorney General BONDİ [continuing]. Filibuster.

Governor Shapiro and what happened in Pennsylvania with Governor Shapiro. I have spoken to Governor Shapiro. We are working hand in hand—our U.S. attorney with the district attorney there—hand in hand just like in Minnesota. I made sure our U.S. attorney and our district attorneys there were working hand in hand. Political party doesn't matter when something like this happens, and I also want to make sure all Members of Congress are safe as well.

Mr. MORELLE. Okay. And I would reiterate Chairman Steil and I—I think Chairman Steil and I agree that at least a part-time in each of the 94 districts would be appropriate.

Let me change topics for just a moment. As I said—I am sorry.

Attorney General BONDİ. And just really quick on that. Yes. We are doing that through our national security division, so I think that is already in the works. And I would be glad to meet with you in a secure facility to talk about that.

Mr. MORELLE. Very good. Thank you.

Continuing, in addition to my role here, the committee that I serve on as an authorizer oversees Capitol security as well as Federal elections, so I am closely following the aftermath of January 6. Recently, several defendants who received Presidential pardons related to that day are now arguing in court that the pardon covers crimes like, for instance, illegal firearm possession discovered in a search of an individual's home in California months after January 6.

What is your position on whether the pardons cover these separate offenses?

Attorney General BOND. Yeah. The pardon power rests with the President, not the Department of Justice. And some of that is pending litigation, and I cannot discuss pending litigation.

Mr. MORELLE. Well, I am not asking you about who has the right to a pardon. I think as the Department of Justice, in February, wrote, "The pardon is an act of grace which removes the punishment from a crime a person has committed."

It further said, "In its effect, the granting of a pardon is, in no sense, the overturning of a judgment of a conviction. It is an executive action that mitigates or sets aside punishment."

So, as the chief law enforcement officer, what is your opinion? Not the President's power of whether he can offer a pardon. That is pretty clear in the Constitution. But, for crimes committed unrelated to January 6, would you suggest that the pardons would cover activities or crimes potentially committed outside of that by the same person?

Attorney General BOND. Well, I don't know if you are referring to Joe Biden pardoning his son after he said he would not pardon Hunter Biden or the communization of all the——

Mr. MORELLE. No, I am actually referring to January 6. I am sorry.

Attorney General BOND [continuing]. All the sentences that—the people that were on death row. I have met with those families. All of those sentences were commuted. I am not going to comment on pardons on either side of the aisle.

Mr. MORELLE. So, well, I am not asking about either side. I am asking—you are the chief law enforcement officer in the United States. You have a responsibility directly. You swore an oath to the Constitution, not the President. I want to know what your views are on the extent to which pardons cover potential are crimes committed by individuals who have been pardoned but unrelated to January 6.

Attorney General BOND. Do you mean the ones that were done by the autopen? I am not going to discuss anything that could be or not be pending litigation.

Mr. MORELLE. All right. Mr. Chairman, I respectfully—you know, Ms. DeLauro accused you of filibuster, and I think that is the height of filibuster.

This is a serious, serious topic, and for you to suggest that you don't have an opinion or to divert to other things that had nothing to do with January 6 pardons, I think it is frankly demeaning to your responsibilities and your job.

With that, I will yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. Cline.

Mr. CLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Attorney General, thank you for being here today.

You know, when I am home in my district talking to my constituents, they are concerned about their safety. They are concerned about the safety of their communities, the safety of their neighborhoods. And, as we have spoken many times, under your leadership, the DOJ has taken decisive steps to restore the rule of law, to tackle violent crime, and to hold both foreign and domestic bad actors accountable.

I read your opening statement, and I just wanted to give you an opportunity to go back again and talk about—in light of 4 years of open borders, the drugs that are coming in, the sex trafficking, the human trafficking, the gangs that have moved in, the terrorism that has infiltrated the United States, the sleeper cells that may or may not be present in this country, the political prosecutions that we saw over the 4 years of the Biden Administration, the fact that we are restoring integrity to the office and the rule of law—can you restate for my constituents how the actions of the Department of Justice and your agencies are keeping them safe?

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you, Congressman. And we have also been working hand in hand on a task force with your governor, with Governor Youngkin, and we really—we started a task force with Governor Youngkin, and that is something that we would like to take to every single State, both Democrat and Republican. And that is how we have been able to fight these gangs, these transnational cartels, these organizations—these criminal organizations, and it was really remarkable. One of the top members of TDA was living 20 minutes from where we are sitting right now in Virginia.

And working hand in hand regardless of political party with State and local law enforcement officers throughout the State of Virginia, we were able to dismantle a major, major gang. And there are so many gang members, and he was another one who was living there. I think when he was arrested, he had multiple—and ATF was involved in that—multiple guns when he was arrested, but he did not have any of the drugs on him. He had insulated himself because he was one of the leaders of the criminal organization.

And so these task forces working together with the State of Virginia have been remarkable. So that is one way to break it down—what we have done, and we are just so proud of the partnership that we have had with your State dismantling the gangs, the guns, the drugs, and we will continue to do that.

Mr. CLINE. And, when you have that partnership, you can get a lot done.

Attorney General BONDI. You can get so much done.

Mr. CLINE. You can secure a safer community for the people living here. When you have sanctuary States like California who are preventing you from actually getting in there and actually getting the gangs off the streets, getting the drugs and the human trafficking off the streets, that hurts the people of those States.

You know, when the streets of Los Angeles descended into scenes more fitting of a failed State than a major American city—mobs

setting fire to police cruisers and looting entire city blocks, videos online showing American flags being burned and the flags of foreign nations being flown, some carried by riders proudly waving them through smoke-filled streets.

The Department of Homeland Security has revealed new data saying that ICE law enforcement is now facing a 500 percent increase in assaults while carrying out enforcement operations.

Can you describe what actions you have taken to hold these sanctuary jurisdictions accountable? And I have a couple questions after that.

Attorney General BONDI. Yeah. Thank you.

To California specifically—and we have made it very clear. If you spit—I believe it was an ICE officer. Someone spit on him. We charged them federally. We will charge you if you spit on a law enforcement officer. If you loot, under the Hobbs Act, that is a robbery, and we will charge you with robbery. We are going after the maximum penalty federally for anyone who touches a Federal agent, and we are also going to protect our State and local law enforcement agencies and officers.

The men and women every day around this country, whether it is a blue or red or purple State, are out there fighting crime. That is what they care about. They care about keeping every single one of us safe. That is what they are doing. They care about preventing drug abuse and drug overdoses throughout this country, and they jeopardize their lives every single day to keep us safe, and we are going to do everything in our power to fight for them.

Mr. CLINE. Do you think that these sanctuary jurisdictions—these cities or States should be receiving law enforcement grants if they refuse to uphold the law?

Attorney General BONDI. That is pending litigation, Congressman, and I can't discuss that right now.

Mr. CLINE. I think the answer should be no, but I will leave that to the judges and to this committee to decide. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Ms. Dean.

Ms. DEAN. Thank you, Chairman.

Thank you, Ranking Member.

Thank you and welcome, Attorney General Bondi. I just wonder—sincerely wonder—do you hear how hollow your last words sound in light of the pardon of all of the January 6 people day one of this administration? I believe you are sincere. You want to protect law enforcement. But your principal, the President, pardoned every single one on January 6.

It rings hollow when you say these words that if you spit on a police officer, we are going to go after you. Talk to my friends who are Capitol Police officers who were here, five of whom are no longer here. They are dead. And this administration—and I guess I want to ask you. Did you have any advice for the President when he came forward with the blanket pardon on January 20? What advice did you offer the President?

Attorney General BONDI. I am never going to talk about conversations, advice in any way—

Ms. DEAN. Were you asked for advice?

Attorney General BOND. I am never going to talk about discussions I have had or have not had—

Ms. DEAN. Because you will remember—

Attorney General BOND [continuing]. If I can answer—with the President of the United States.

Ms. DEAN. Yes or no. Did you give him any advice? Yes or no.

Attorney General BOND. I am not going to discuss any conversations—

Ms. DEAN. That is a no.

Attorney General BOND [continuing]. That I have had with—you just put words in my mouth. I am not going to discuss—

Ms. DEAN. No, I am going to reveal your own words.

Attorney General BOND. I am not going to discuss conversations—

Ms. DEAN. Please stop. Please stop. This is my time.

Attorney General BOND [continuing]. That I have had with the President of the United States. You asked me a question—

Ms. DEAN. Attorney General.

I would like to reclaim the last 20 seconds.

Attorney General BOND [continuing]. And you have asked me to answer.

Ms. DEAN. I have asked to reclaim my time. Please put 20 seconds back on the clock.

Mr. CLYDE. You can have an extra 30.

Mr. ROGERS. If the gentle—

Ms. DEAN. She answered and then answered it again and answered it again with a nonanswer.

Ms. DELAURO. It is a filibuster.

Ms. DEAN. I ask for your consideration of putting time on.

Mr. ROGERS. If the gentlelady will let the witness answer the question, we will resume.

Ms. DEAN. She answered it by saying no. Okay.

The three hallmarks of this administration are incompetence, corruption, and cruelty. I am going to focus today on corruption. And, in my mind, there are two types of corruption: personal, and then the other I am going to call public, governmental.

Attorney General, have you ever been registered as an agent of a foreign principal under the Foreign Agents Registration Act?

Attorney General BOND. I assume you are talking about when I represented the country of Qatar for a very short time—

Ms. DEAN. The answer is yes.

Attorney General BOND [continuing]. Hold on. Hold on. No. For anti-human trafficking for the World Cup. Anti-human trafficking for the World Cup.

Ms. DEAN. Yes or no. Attorney General—

Attorney General BOND. You can't put words in my mouth. If you want to talk about incompetence, you are the one that said Joe Biden on PBS was competent. You had to retract those words. So don't talk to me—don't insult me publicly.

Ms. DEAN. This is so discourteous. This is so outside the committee's guidelines. Taking a personal shot at me while swiping at Biden? Very strange and very unprofessional of you.

The answer is yes or no, and the answer is yes. You were registered as a lobbyist for Qatar. Is that correct? Yes. Never mind. Don't answer.

Did you disclose that when you went before the Senate for confirmation? Yes or no? No, it was not in your documents. The answer is no.

President Trump——

Attorney General BONDI. This was discussed at my confirmation hearings in detail.

Ms. DEAN. Well, it was discussed, but you failed to bring up the conflicts that you had.

President Trump recently announced he would accept that \$400-million Qatar airplane because it was just prettier than the one he was flying around in. Is it true that you gave advice that this was legally permissible? Yes or no?

Attorney General BONDI. I will not discuss any advice that my Office of Legal Counsel gives to the President of the United States on any matter.

Ms. DEAN. When you spoke before the Senate, you said you would ask for ethical advice. Did you recuse yourself from that issue?

Attorney General BONDI. And talking about unprofessional, you say the President wanted a jet because it is pretty? Come on. This is a Senate—this is a congressional hearing.

Ms. DEAN. He said it himself. He said it himself.

Let me go to April the 2nd. You are a part of this—you know, the President has dabbled in memecoin. He had you, the DOJ, disband the National Cryptocurrency Enforcement Team. His son recently launched the Executive Branch Club, a private club with \$500,000 memberships here in D.C.

Any of this seem like it might be a problem—might be profiteering from the office and maybe you and your ethics team might be concerned about these conflicts of interest, your own and the President and his family? Yes or no? Any concerns?

Attorney General BONDI. What I would be concerned about in Pennsylvania are all the child sex cases that we have prosecuted, and all the CSAM cases that we have prosecuted in Pennsylvania.

Ms. DEAN. Did you hear my question?

Attorney General BONDI. That is what I would be concerned about.

Ms. DEAN. I ask the witness to actually answer questions that are asked——

Attorney General BONDI. Congresswoman Dean——

Ms. DEAN [continuing]. Chairman.

Mr. ROGERS. Please let the witness answer the question.

Ms. DEAN. She didn't.

And I would like to ask you one more question. You are not just complicit in this. You are actively helping and profiting.

Isn't it true that on April the 2nd, the same day that Trump announced his chaotic tariff regime that plummeted the stock market, you sold more than \$1 million worth of your shares in Trump Media stock? Trump Media stock fell 13 percent in the following days. It seems you avoided that loss. Well done.

I yield back.

Attorney General BONDI. May I answer that, Chairman?

I complied with my ethics. And yeah, I would take a class in financial literacy if you think I profited from that because I lost a tremendous amount of money, Congresswoman.

And, also, on page 25 of my S.J. 2, it lists my involvement with Qatar for anti-human trafficking for the World Cup. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Moore.

Mr. MOORE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for holding the hearing.

Thank you, Attorney General Bondi, for being here.

You just mentioned this previously and—obviously, as you are aware about the recently uncovered information about the FBI's egregious, politically motivated, anti-Catholic field memo which was disseminated to more than 1,000 employees. The Biden Administration claimed that this memo only was circulated at the Richmond Field Office. It is now clear that this memo went much beyond just that one field office.

This was a memo that suggested that Catholics, based on their theological beliefs and practices, were radical and that their traditional parishes were vectors for extremism. The FBI went so far as to infiltrate and spy on Sunday masses.

So Attorney General Bondi, I am grateful for your efforts to combat anti-Christian bias, including the task force you recently stood up. It is clear from both the original leaked memo and the additional documentation that has been released that extremist Southern Poverty Law Center was the basis for this anti-Catholic bigotry coming from the FBI.

Will you commit to not use the Southern Poverty Law Center to determine who is a hate group?

Attorney General BONDI. Committed to working with you on that, Congressman. And thank you for bringing that up about—yeah, that was—that was horrible, what happened to Catholics, in that memo. It didn't just happen to Catholics, of course. It happened to parents at school boards. It happened to people who were peacefully protesting at abortion clinics. That is the end of weaponization under the Trump administration.

Mr. MOORE. Thank you for that, Attorney General Bondi.

What additional resources can this committee provide to further execute your efforts to eradicate anti-Christian bias in the Federal Government?

Attorney General BONDI. Yeah. We are committed to working with you. Our Civil Rights Division led by Harmeet Dhillon is doing an incredible job working on those issues and many more. Our Civil Rights Division—I met with her this morning. I talk to them almost daily. And they are working to protect people of all religions.

And, you know, especially now—I am actually surprised that hasn't come up yet this morning—but in light of everything happening with Israel, all of the anti-Semitic things that have been happening around our country. I went to the crime scene here in D.C. of two young people who were leaving a Jewish museum and were gunned down simply because of their religion. It was horrific. It was horrific. And then in Boulder, Colorado, when a Holocaust survivor was firebombed—lit on fire because she was Jewish.

And so, it is not only Catholics. It is every religion and even mosques that were slow-walked under the Biden Administration and not allowed to open. We will protect every religion in this country.

Mr. MOORE. Thank you for your commitment to that, and I truly appreciate, and I think everybody of faith in the United States appreciates that.

And I just want to switch gears real quick to just another topic. In 2022, the D.C. Metropolitan Police recovered the remains of five unborn children apparently from a D.C. abortion mill which appeared to be the victims—these five remains that were found—victims of a brutal partial-birth abortion. As you know, Congress passed a bipartisan law outlawing this gruesome practice in the early 2000s.

Public reporting suggests that the President—President Biden's DOJ directed the D.C. chief medical examiner to destroy the remains of the children without performing an autopsy, which the CME appears not to have done yet.

General Bondi, will you commit to working with me and this committee to conduct a full and fair investigation into the deaths of these children to ensure justice is served for the D.C. Five?

Attorney General BONDI. Yeah. And, Congressman, that is an ongoing investigation and pending; so I cannot discuss that in this forum.

But, on a collateral matter, the woman who retrieved those five fetuses was convicted and she was pardoned by President Trump. And they were—basically, unborn babies is what is alleged in the—but I can't discuss it any further.

Mr. MOORE. All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Attorney General Bondi. I yield back.

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Mrvan.

Mr. MRVAN. Thank you, Chairman.

Thank you, Ranking Member.

Attorney General, thank you for joining us today.

Our law enforcement officers, first responders, and local safety agencies are the backbone of our communities. In northwest Indiana, I have worked hard to bring critical Federal grant dollars home, funds that directly support the brave men and women who protect us every day. Unfortunately, funding for 2025 has been rescinded, weakening our public safety framework and making our neighborhoods less safe.

I firsthand have a positive impact in securing dollars and investments for Gary, Indiana, East Chicago, Lake County, and Michigan City that were force multipliers that were technology such as license plate readers and COPS grant. I am asking you today, what can we do to ensure that those funds are going to continue to flow to my district and in light of the HIDTA?

I am in northwest Indiana. Gary, Indiana. We are a HIDTA district. We have the Chicago traffic. That is vitally important to my district. I just need commitments that that funding will continue to be going forward and that our agencies will have that support.

Attorney General BONDI. Congressman, thank you for bringing that up. I am well aware of the HIDTA. I believe that is in Merrillville. Is that correct?

Mr. MRVAN. You are correct.

Attorney General BOND. And, yes, that funding will remain where it is. We do not intend on touching that funding. We want to protect HIDTA.

Mr. MRVAN. Very good.

So, in light of the escalation with Iran, part of our cybersecurity and our infrastructure when it comes to our electric grid, our banking systems—that is a new threat. Does this budget reflect increasing our cybersecurity protections, and how is the Department of Justice going to protect our infrastructure when it comes to bad actors such as Iran coming directly at our infrastructure in a cyber attack?

Attorney General BOND. Yeah. We have \$50 million for cybersecurity. And also, in the One Big Beautiful—

Mr. MRVAN. With an M? 50 million?

Attorney General BOND. Fifty million. Yeah.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay.

Attorney General BOND. But, also, in the One Big Beautiful Bill, it is also addressed to give us more resources. And, you know, it is not only Iran. As you well know, it is China as well.

Mr. MRVAN. Right.

Attorney General BOND. But yes, I wholeheartedly agree with you, Congressman.

Mr. MRVAN. In the reconciliation—tomato, tomato.

In the reconciliation bill, can you tell me what more resources are going to go towards cybersecurity? Because I was under the impression that was decreased.

Attorney General BOND. Can I get you—I will get you those numbers.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. Yes.

Attorney General BOND. And I want to do everything I can to help you protect cybersecurity—all of us in this country—not only, again, with Iran but also with China and all of our foreign adversaries around the world.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. And then just a question of curiosity that I have. Director Patel was here a couple weeks ago, and we talked about the emails that went to the FBI agents, meaning please tell us what you did at the end of the week. Give us five reasons why you did.

At first, Director Patel said that that didn't exist. Then he specifically said, Well, that came from the Department of Justice to the FBI agents and I—his words—I told them not to fulfill that obligation.

How do you manage that if you give a directive to your director of FBI and he chooses not to fulfill that, and where did that information go? So, when someone from the FBI—an agent fulfilled that obligation of giving you the information of what they were working on, where did that data go and how is it secured?

Attorney General BOND. Yeah. And, Congressman, I would be happy to see who answered that, but I have asked—I asked—when I learned about it, I asked that it be withdrawn, and it was—that email.

Mr. MRVAN. When you learned about the email going to the FBI agents, you asked them to withdraw it. Who did you ask to have it withdrawn?

Attorney General BONDI. My entire office, and it was.

Mr. MRVAN. So it is unknown who sent that email?

Attorney General BONDI. Well, the office—it came from my office. But, when I learned it went to the FBI, we asked that it be withdrawn.

Mr. MRVAN. Where is the gap of my understanding if it came from your office? You are telling me you didn't send it?

Attorney General BONDI. I didn't realize it went to the FBI. That email went out. And the purpose of that email was to make sure—just so you know, it wasn't—it was to make sure that these people were sitting at their desk and working and alive, that there were people actually responding.

Mr. MRVAN. Okay. And I agree.

Attorney General BONDI. It could have been I got up and got a cup of coffee. That was the purpose.

Mr. MRVAN. Sure. So, without going into that, the people that did answer it, where did that data go?

Attorney General BONDI. I will find out, and I will get you that information.

Mr. MRVAN. And I only ask as a national security issue—

Attorney General BONDI. Absolutely.

Mr. MRVAN [continuing]. As they are working on sensitive issues. And I thank you for joining us, and I yield back my time.

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. The gentleman yields back.

That concludes today's hearing. I want to thank our witness, Attorney General Bondi, for being here today. We would normally like to do another round of questions, but we don't have time.

Ms. DELAURO. Yes, we do.

Mr. ROGERS. The gentlelady, the Attorney General, has a meeting scheduled, I think, at 4:00.

Attorney General BONDI. Thank you.

Mr. ROGERS. So we will not be able to do a second round because of that.

Ms. DELAURO. Great to answer the question.

Mr. ROGERS. So, without objection, members may have 7 days to submit additional questions for the record. The subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:40 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

**THE HONORABLE HAROLD ROGERS
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES
BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD**

1. Attorney General Bondi, you briefly discussed how some of the FY25 grant funds have been temporarily delayed. Can you provide more information about when stakeholders should expect to see the solicitations for the Office of Justice Programs FY25 grant funds included in the FY25 Continuing Resolution? Can you provide a timeline for when the FY25 Youth Mentoring Grant solicitation will be posted publicly?

**THE HONORABLE GRACE MENG
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES
BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD**

1. Looking ahead to fiscal year 2026, will rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse, and ensuring the accountability of the Department and its employees, all be important goals for the Department? If the answer is Yes, why does the Department's budget request for fiscal year 2026 propose a 30 percent cut in the budget of the Justice Department's Office of Inspector General?
2. Why does the Department propose a cut of 29 percent below fiscal year 2025 in funding for Violence Against Women Prevention and Prosecution Programs, including cuts of 25 percent to Grants to Combat Violence Against Women (STOP Grants) and 24 percent to Sexual Assault Services Program grants?
3. The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) was established as a separate entity in 2003, following passage of the Violence Against Women Office Act of 2002 (VAWO). Congress recognized that OVW needed to be separate from the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), which had housed it since 1995, to sufficiently meet the unique needs of victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. The statute was subsequently amended by the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2022 to further specify that, in addition to being a separate and distinct office within the Department of Justice, OVW shall "not be subsumed by any other office." It is also not possible to separate the grantmaking work of OVW from the rest of the Office's work - VAWO specifically requires that OVW have sole jurisdiction over all duties and functions related to grantmaking under the DOJ portions of VAWA. However, the Administration's fiscal year 2026 budget request proposes to "consolidate the Offices of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and Violence Against Women (OVW) into the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) to improve State and local law enforcement partnerships by eliminating redundancies in Departmental outreach." Will the Department separately be sending Congress a specific legislative proposal to effectuate this change?
4. The Washington Post reported on February 9, 2025 that a new White House memo has changed the previous limits on interactions between the White House and the Justice Department. This memo explicitly specifies that the president is not prohibited from discussing any types of cases with the attorney general. How can the Department of Justice maintain its independence and fairness if the President is able to openly talk to the Attorney General and other DOJ officials about *any* types of criminal or civil cases? What is the Department doing to ensure that DOJ exercises its investigatory and prosecutorial functions free from any improper political influence?

5. In recent weeks, the FBI disbanded the Washington field office's elite federal public corruption squad. In addition, the Justice Department's prestigious Public Integrity Section, which is responsible for pursuing cases of fraud and corruption against elected officials, has seen its number of prosecutors dramatically reduced in recent months. Why have these steps been taken by the Justice Department? Do these actions indicate that the Department is de-prioritizing the prevention and prosecution of public corruption?
6. The Department proposes to completely eliminate the Community Relations Service, which received \$24 million dollars for fiscal year 2025. The Community Relations Service was established by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to act as a peacemaker in American communities experiencing conflict. It helps resolve disputes and advises communities on how to prevent future conflicts, particularly conflicts arising from racial or ethnic tensions. It serves as a neutral party, using training, mediation, facilitated dialogue, and consultation to help communities overcome differences and build trust. Why is the Department proposing to eliminate the Community Relations Service? Isn't this a worthwhile and noble use of the tax dollar? Isn't it helpful to have mediators from outside the community and state to facilitate the resolution and prevention of community conflicts?
7. In May 2025, DOJ, as part of a settlement agreement, announced it is now allowing the sale of so-called forced reset triggers, which allow semiautomatic rifles to fire more rapidly. DOJ is also returning to their owners these forced reset triggers that were previously seized. It is my understanding that possession of these forced reset triggers will not require any background check. Won't the wide availability of these devices greatly increase the risk of more frequent and more deadly mass shootings? Since forced reset triggers are different than bump stocks, why didn't DOJ continue to pursue litigation on this issue in order to prevent the wide availability of forced reset triggers?
8. On May 15, 2025, 19 Members of the House Judiciary Committee wrote to the Department requesting information and documents related to President Trump's desire to accept a \$400 million luxury airplane from the State of Qatar, despite the Constitution's Foreign Emoluments Clause, which explicitly prohibits the President from accepting any "present [or] Emolument...of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State" unless the President of the United States has "the Consent of Congress." Would the Department agree that particularly since the President himself has referred to this plane as a "gift" means that it is clearly an emolument that under the Constitution requires the consent of Congress? When can the Judiciary Committee signers of the May 15, 2025 letter to the Department expect responses from the Department regarding the questions posed in the letter?
9. In March 2022, former Attorney General Garland announced the launch of Task Force KleptoCapture, an interagency law enforcement task force dedicated to enforcing the sweeping sanctions, export restrictions, and economic countermeasures that the U.S. imposed, along with allies and partners, in response to Russia's unprovoked military invasion of Ukraine. In support of this task force, DOJ utilized prosecutors, agents, analysts, and professional staff to help bolster efforts to fight persons seeking to evade or

undermine the economic actions taken by the U.S. government in response to Russia's unprovoked military invasion of Ukraine. However, in February 2025, DOJ disbanded this task force. Why was this task force disbanded? Given the continued brutal assaults directed by Vladimir Putin against civilian targets in Ukraine, how can the disbanding of this task force be justified? Won't scaling back this DOJ enforcement work effectively help Vladimir Putin and hurt the people of Ukraine?

10. Does the Department believe that the executive branch must comply with Federal court rulings, including rulings by U.S. District Courts?
11. As of May 31, 2025, how many DOJ law enforcement officers are currently assigned to immigration enforcement efforts? Of these, how many are on temporary duty assignment? Please also show all of these numbers broken down by bureau, along with the estimated full-year costs of such assignments, also by bureau.
12. The DOJ fiscal year 2026 budget proposes to dissolve the Consumer Protection Branch and move its work to other parts of the Civil Division and Criminal Division. The Consumer Protection Branch leads in prosecuting cases of elder fraud, including spoofing—a deceptive practice where scammers impersonate trusted entities such as banks and government agencies to obtain sensitive information from their victims. How will the DOJ's proposal affect the Department's ability to continue prosecuting spoofing and elder fraud?
13. How much money will the Justice Department need to pay for contract termination settlements as a result of Justice Department contract termination actions between January 20, 2025, and June 23, 2025?
14. Are any persons associated with Elon Musk's DOGE organization still operating out of any offices of the Justice Department or its bureaus?
15. Are there plans to fire any more Justice Department employees? If so, how many Justice Department employees and in which bureaus/divisions, and which functions would be further impacted?
16. Please provide the full number of Federal civilian employees, including those in full and part-time status, employed by the Department, categorized by bureau/office of employment, occupation, probationary status, and duty-station location, for each week beginning January 20, 2025 through June 23, 2025.
17. Please provide the number of employees terminated by the Department, categorized by bureau/office of employment, occupation, probationary status, and duty-station location, for each week beginning January 20, 2025 through June 23, 2025.

18. What is the current employment status of Justice Department employees who were terminated but who have been ordered by a Federal court to be rehired (i.e., Are they on administrative leave? Are they getting paid?)?
19. Please provide the numbers of Department employees who participated in the Deferred Resignation Program, categorized by bureau/office of employment, occupation, and duty-station location.
20. Please provide the number of employees who are currently on administrative leave, categorized bureau/office of employment, occupation, and duty-station location.
21. Please provide detailed information on the impacts that terminations, administrative leave, and Deferred Resignation Program departures have had and are having on Department missions.
22. Please provide subsequent reports going forward on a monthly basis regarding the Department's Federal civilian employees, including, at minimum, the numbers of full and part-time employees, occupations, bureau/office of employment, and duty-station location. The reports should also include the numbers of federal employees who were separated and later reinstated, as well as the numbers of employees reinstated and put on administrative leave.
23. Please provide information on the extent of the Department's current use of voluntary separation incentives such as Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) and Voluntary Separation Incentive Payments (VSIP), including bureaus/offices and occupational categories of employees currently receiving such offers.
24. Please provide an accounting of all GSA-managed leases for the Department, broken down by bureau/office, as of January 19, 2025.
25. Please provide a list of any of the Department's GSA-managed leases that have been cancelled since January 20, 2025.
26. Please provide a list of any of the Department's GSA-managed leases that are or have been *considered* for cancellation since January 20, 2025.
27. Please provide information on the impact on Departmental missions of any terminated leases, as well as the potential impacts of any lease cancellations currently under consideration.

**THE HONORABLE BEN CLINE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES
BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD**

1. “The Department of Justice (DOJ) enjoys a robust working relationship with INTERPOL, but I understand there have been some grave abuses of INTERPOL’s diffusion notice system, particularly by autocratic governments that misuse of the world’s police organization to repress dissenting voices. However, INTERPOL has been silent and dragging their feet on any action to end this type of abuse. I would like to hear from you how you plan to address this highly problematic issue in order to mitigate future abuses of INTERPOL’s diffusion notice system. For example, could I get your commitment to develop a policy and procedure by which the DOJ evaluates INTERPOL diffusion notices targeting U.S. citizens, or similar requests by foreign countries for the arrest, detention, or extradition of U.S. citizens, and issues an official determination as to whether the diffusion notice or similar request is wrongful, akin to the wrongful detention determinations issued under the Robert Levinson Hostage Recovery and Hostage-Taking Accountability Act?”

THE HONORABLE JOSEPH MORELLE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES
BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

1. The Fiscal Year 2026 budget dissolves the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF). On May 7, 2025, I sent a letter to your office requesting more information about this decision. Can you explain in detail how the Department plans to redistribute the \$493 million provided to OCDETF and confirm that no ongoing investigations and prosecutions will be shuttered during this period?
2. In your confirmation hearing, you committed to properly enforcing federal laws that protect the right to vote, including the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965. Yet under your leadership, the Department has withdrawn from virtually every case it was pursuing enforcing the VRA and is instead pursuing cases that, if successful, could end up removing eligible voters of color and others from the registration roll.
 - a. Can you please explain the discrepancy between your commitment to this body and the Department's actions since?
 - b. With the DOJ now abandoning its decades-long commitment—and mandate—to enforce federal law to protect those rights against discriminatory state laws and practices, where should voters of color turn?
3. Machine guns are among the most lethal firearms, and criminals have long exploited loopholes—like forced-reset triggers (FRTs)—to access them. For years, DOJ classified FRTs as machine guns and defended that position in court. Yet last month, you announced a settlement allowing them to be sold again. What analysis did the Department perform or rely upon before ATF's previous determination was reversed and this case was settled?
4. During your confirmation hearing, you stated that you would oppose pardons for individuals accused of assaulting law enforcement officers on January 6th. On January 20th, the President issued a pardon for roughly 450 individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement.
 - a. I recognize that you were confirmed after these pardons were issued. As the nation's chief law enforcement officer, do you stand by that statement today that you oppose pardons for individuals accused of assaulting a law enforcement officer on January 6th?
 - b. Prior to the blanket pardons, roughly 60 additional individuals suspected of assaulting law enforcement on January 6th were still under investigation. Has the Department now abandoned those investigations?
5. The FY26 budget eliminates ATF as a standalone agency and merges its functions into the DEA—a move that significantly alters how the federal government handles firearms enforcement. In addition to merging the two agencies, your proposal cuts \$468 million from the ATF and \$112 million from the DEA. Given ATF's distinct expertise in gun tracing, explosives regulation, and

firearms trafficking, what specific assurances can you provide that this consolidation will not weaken our national capacity to prevent gun violence and regulate the firearms industry?

**THE HONORABLE TONY GONZALES
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES
BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD**

It was alarming when I learned that GAO found last December that the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) was not tracking or reporting data on whether respondents were appearing at their hearings—this means that we weren't able to accurately know how many illegal immigrants intentionally refused to show up for their day in court. I was pleased to see that EOIR swiftly responded to the recommendation that they update their recording system so that they can better track the reasons for individuals not appearing in court.

While we are making good progress, it will still take time to recover from Biden's disastrous border policies, and a quick, efficient immigration court system is critical to sending a strong message that we are a nation of laws with consequences.

- 1) How many illegal immigrants have failed to show up for their court dates for reasons beyond a waiver issued by an immigration judge?
- 2) More broadly, I know our immigration courts have an enormous backlog—what are the Department's efforts on cutting this number down? Does the budget reflect increasing efforts to address this backlog?

I have been very clear in my support for the President's border security agenda and have reiterated that in order to make our communities safer, we need to prioritize deporting convicted criminal aliens, TCO or gang-affiliated members and any other individuals that would pose a threat to public safety.

The FBI Laboratory is the primary component that processes and analyzes forensic evidence—including analyzing the DNA of those engaged at the southern border. Due to the disastrous border crisis of the past four years, the backlog of these samples has reached extremely high levels that may lead to many months before a sample is entered into the CODIS system.

- 3) Does the budget request include adequate funding for the FBI Lab division to continue its work in identifying those that were encountered at the southern border? What other efforts is the Department undertaking to identify who these illegals are that have entered our country?

One of the things I was encouraged to see in the budget request was an over \$41 million increase for the COPS Hiring Program. I've supported this program from day one and am committed to working with you to ensure your request is fully funded.

Over the past two years, with funding from the COPS Hiring Program, I have helped secure funding for 100 new officers for the San Antonio Police Department—which is a gamechanger for public safety.

I'm working with El Paso Mayor to make sure the City of El Paso applies for this program—because their officers deserve the same support. As you are aware, communities along the border face unique challenges, and they need all the help they can get.

- 4) How has the COPS Hiring Program improved public safety nationwide, and with this proposed funding increase, how does the Department plan to prioritize where those dollars go? Will there be special consideration for border communities, rural areas, or departments that are severely understaffed?
- 5) How will the Department make sure that small and rural communities aren't getting left out of these funding opportunities just because they don't have the same capacity as bigger cities?

I represent Uvalde, Texas, where just over three years ago, 19 children and two teachers were tragically murdered at Robb Elementary School. We owe it to their families, and to every student in this country, to do everything in our power to prevent such a tragedy from ever happening again—period.

That's why I am a little concerned that your budget request includes a \$18,000,000 reduction to the *Stop School Violence Act*.

- 6) What was the rationale behind this proposed cut? What specific steps is the Department of Justice taking to improve school security and ensure that communities like Uvalde are not left behind?

Youth Mentoring Grants implement cost-effective and evidence-based mentoring programs for youth across the country. The outcomes are proven to save meaningful taxpayer dollars in both the short and long term, reducing juvenile delinquency, truancy, drug abuse, victimization, and other high-risk behaviors.

- 7) When will the Office of Justice Programs release the solicitation for the FY25 Youth Mentoring Program?

**THE HONORABLE MADELEINE DEAN
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES
BUDGET HEARING FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD**

1. When will the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), release the grant application for the Regional Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) Program? The CAC grant solicitation was posted on January 17th, but was pulled down and applicants have not received any updates since.
 - a. Please provide a timeline. When will the solicitation be posted? How long will the application period be open?
 - b. What criteria will be used to review these grant applications? How will it differ from previous years?
2. The Department of Justice's Fiscal Year 2026 Budget and Performance Summary states that ATF will be incorporated into the DEA beginning in FY 2026. I'm concerned that this merger could weaken our ability to investigate and prosecute gun crimes, dismantle firearm trafficking rings, and keep illegal firearms off the streets.
 - a. The DOJ's FY2026 Budget Request gives little detail on how the merger will be carried out: please provide an overview of which ATF responsibilities the DOJ envisions transferring to DEA. Please provide a timeline for this.
 - b. What steps will you take to ensure that ATF's critical role in combating gun violence and supporting local law enforcement isn't lost in the process?
3. The Justice Department's Fiscal Year 2026 Budget and Performance Summary proposes eliminating two-thirds of ATF's industry operations investigators — the very personnel responsible for inspecting gun dealers and ensuring compliance with federal laws designed to keep guns out of the hands of traffickers and violent offenders.
 - a. How does DOJ plan to ensure that federally licensed dealers are not contributing to illegal gun trafficking in the absence of FFL oversight, a key component of ATF's mission?
4. Federal law prohibits people convicted of domestic violence from owning firearms. Studies show that survivors face much greater risks when their abusers have access to guns. Why is the DOJ using resources to restore gun rights to some domestic abusers?
5. This Administration is also proposing significant cuts to the Office on Violence Against Women, which plays a vital role in supporting survivors of domestic violence. What is the reasoning behind allocating resources this way?

6. Community violence intervention programs apply a data-driven, public safety approach that focuses on individuals at highest risk of involvement in violent crime—either as victims or perpetrators. These programs connect people to intensive support services, mediation, and credible community-based outreach. Cities investing in these strategies through the Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative (CVIPI) have seen remarkable results: for example, Baltimore’s homicides are down 40% since 2020, Detroit’s homicides declined 33% since 2022, and Newark is experiencing its lowest homicide levels since the 1940s.

Despite their success, on April 22, 2025, the DOJ abruptly canceled hundreds of active discretionary grants awarded under the Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative, as well as grants targeting crime-victim advocacy, opioid addiction prevention, hate crimes prevention, and community-based justice reform. Organizations in my district have shared that they were asked to submit appeals by email following the sudden grant cancellations, but they haven’t received any information about who is reviewing those appeals, what the process looks like, or when they might expect a response.

- a. Please provide a timeline for when these grantees can expect to receive an answer. How many appeals has the DOJ processed thus far? How many are waiting for an answer?
 - b. What criteria is the DOJ using to manage these appeals? Can you make that criteria public? Why or why not?
7. ATF’s gun tracing program is a vital tool for state and local law enforcement—not only to help solve individual gun crimes, but also to uncover and disrupt larger firearms trafficking networks that threaten community safety. Through the eTrace platform, agencies can submit recovered firearms to be traced back to the first retail purchaser, generating critical leads and intelligence. This process relies on the infrastructure and staffing of ATF’s National Tracing Center, and its success depends on the agency’s ability to manage high volumes of trace requests efficiently and accurately.
 - a. How would the proposed budget cuts to ATF impact the agency’s ability to process firearm trace requests and support trafficking investigations across the country which are critical components to the investigations run by state and local law enforcement?
8. The National Integrated Ballistic Information Network—or NIBIN—is a critical tool for solving and preventing gun crimes. It allows law enforcement to link shell casings from different crime scenes and connect recovered firearms to previous shootings using advanced imaging technology. The more casings entered into the system, the more actionable the intelligence it generates, making timely analysis and system-wide

participation essential to its success. Because NIBIN is administered by ATF, its effectiveness depends on the agency's capacity to process correlations and provide real-time leads to local and state law enforcement.

- a. How will the proposed budget cuts to ATF impact ATF's ability to operate NIBIN? How will this impact state and local law enforcement's ability to investigate and prevent violent crime given their reliance on NIBIN?
9. In Pennsylvania, multiple Second Chance Act grantees lost access to technical assistance and training. Technical assistance experts can audit programs to ensure they operate more effectively.
 - a. What steps will the Department of Justice take to ensure these grantees have access to technical assistance and training?
 - b. Why were these grants terminated?
10. There is a dire need for substance use and mental health treatment in our justice system—I was pleased to hear you highlight this during your Senate confirmation hearing when you expressed your support for the Second Chance Act. Second Chance Act programs connect participants to needed services, including regional victim resources; county mental health, probation and parole, and drug and alcohol departments; housing supports; and recovery groups. The Administration released six Drug Policy Priorities as a blueprint to reduce the impact of illicit drugs on American society, including reducing the number of overdose fatalities and providing treatment that leads to long-term recovery.
 - a. Why did the Department of Justice terminate funding that assists these programs, especially when so many Second Chance Act programs align with the Drug Policy Priorities of this Administration?
 - b. When will DOJ review grant terminations that fall under the Second Chance Act? Please provide a timeline.
 - c. When reviewing Second Chance Act grants on a case-by-case basis, what criteria is used to determine what grants are reinstated? Will this criteria be public?
11. During your time as Attorney General, have you ever recused yourself from any matter due to a conflict of interest? If so, how many? Please describe, to the extent possible, what matters you were/are recused from. Please describe the internal process for recusal that you follow.

[No Public Hearing Was Held for Outside Witnesses. Statements
are Provided for the Record.]

**Testimony Prepared by the American Society for Microbiology
Submitted for the record to the United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies**

May 7, 2025
Submitted on behalf of:
Amalia Corby
Director of Federal Affairs
American Society for Microbiology

The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) urges Congress to increase funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF) to at least \$9.9 billion in fiscal year (FY) 2026. This is consistent with the Coalition for National Science Funding, of which ASM is a member.

ASM appreciates the opportunity to submit outside witness testimony for the Fiscal Year 2026 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies appropriations bill. Established in 1899, ASM is one of the oldest and largest single life science societies with 37,000 members in the U.S. and around the world. Our mission is to promote and advance the microbial sciences, and our vision is to harness the power of microbes to solve humanity's most pressing challenges.

Supporting the Microbial Sciences at NSF

The microbial sciences encompass the study of microorganisms, ranging from bacteria and fungi to viruses and algae, whose roles are vital to life on Earth. The National Science Foundation plays a pivotal role in advancing scientific knowledge and innovation across a broad spectrum of disciplines including microbiology. NSF is a key supporter of microbiology research including foundational research supporting ecosystems and biodiversity, mapping the microbiome, and discovering emerging pathogens. Support for NSF will enable new discoveries and solutions using biotechnology to promote the bioeconomy, forecasting and mitigating the impacts of extreme weather events on essential ecosystem services, and predicting and preventing the emergence and spread of infectious diseases in plants, animals, and humans.

The NSF's Directorate for Biological Sciences supports research and education that advances understanding of all forms of life at all scales, from cells to ecosystems and across space and time. This includes support for research funding in the microbial sciences, which is essential for understanding both the fundamental biological processes of life and their applications in diverse sectors such as agriculture, biotechnology, healthcare, and environmental science. Research funded by the NSF has significantly advanced our understanding of how microbes contribute to the nitrogen cycle, a process critical for maintaining soil health and increasing agricultural productivity. An increased understanding of the characteristics of organisms through the

Directorate for Biological Sciences also has a profound positive impact on the key emerging industry of biotechnology.

NSF's Actions to Advance Microbial Biotechnology

NSF's impact on the microbial sciences extends beyond academic research and into the realm of biotechnology. Microorganisms are used in biotechnology for a variety of applications, including the production of biofuels, biofertilizers, and other biobased materials. The NSF has supported numerous projects that have led to the development of novel microbial technologies now translated into practical applications. This includes the creation of the BioFoundries program which supports user facilities that enable researchers to design, create, test, and streamline the development of tools and products to accelerate research to advance the bioeconomy such as through artificial intelligence and laboratory automation technologies.

NSF also supports microbial research in the development of bioremediation strategies. Many microorganisms can degrade pollutants in soil and water, and the NSF has funded research into identifying and optimizing these microbes for environmental cleanup. In addition, microbes also have the potential to revolutionize sustainable energy production. NSF supports research into microbial fuel cells, which use microorganisms to convert organic matter into electricity, providing another avenue to diversify America's energy portfolio. These programs advance the field through generation of biological data. Making the vast amount of biotechnology research data accessible to researchers will accelerate the field and assist with biotechnology transfer from lab to market.

Without investments into microbial biotechnologies, U.S. leadership and competitiveness will decrease on an international scale. The United States must ensure global leadership in critical technologies of the future, including biotechnology, through increased research investment at NSF. This will lead to the development of new technologies and innovation.

NSF's Role in Training the Microbial Science Workforce

A well-trained science and technology workforce at all education levels is necessary to innovate, solve complex problems, and secure the nation's competitiveness in science and technology. This includes programs broadening participation in STEM. We ask that Congress support workforce training and development programs at NSF, including training in bioprocess engineering, biofuel production, and biobased materials development. A well-trained bioeconomy workforce will stimulate economic growth and revitalize local economies. Programs such as the Research Experiences for Undergraduates, the NSF Innovation Corps, and the NSF Research Traineeship are crucial for the training and education of the next generation of STEM talent. As challenges such as antimicrobial resistance, extreme weather events, and emerging infectious diseases become more complex, Congress must support microbial sciences research and workforce development at NSF to develop innovative solutions.

Supporting NSF to Bridge the Gap Between Basic Science and Real-World Solutions

Congress must invest in research to accelerate breakthrough technologies to remain secure and competitive in science. Work by the NSF's Directorate for Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (TIP) bridges the gap between basic science and real-world applications through transitioning these technologies to the market. This includes supporting innovations that apply microbiological knowledge to areas like biotechnology, environmental sustainability, health technologies, and bio-manufacturing. Interdisciplinary collaboration through TIP encourages projects that combine microbiology with areas such as AI, materials science, and engineering to create novel solutions and jobs throughout the country. Congress must continue to fund TIP at no expense to the other directorates to support this endeavor.

We also ask that Congress continue support for the National Science Board at NSF. The National Science Board is the governing body at NSF and advises the U.S. government on science and engineering policy. By shaping NSF's strategic directions, the National Science Board influences funding priorities including support for microbiology through broader initiatives in life sciences and emerging technologies. The board advocates for federal investments in science, including microbiology, when they relate to national needs and ensure funds are allocated strategically and transparently. Support for the National Science Board is critical to shaping a national science strategy and assisting in groundbreaking innovations.

Conclusion

Our nation's ability to advance scientific knowledge and innovation will only be possible if Congress continues its commitment to robust and sustained funding increases for the National Science Foundation. ASM strongly believes that funding cutting-edge research, including prioritizing microbial sciences research and workforce training, will ensure U.S. global leadership in science and technology and drive economic competitiveness.



COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION

700 NE Multnomah Street, Suite 1200
Portland, Oregon 97232

(503) 238-0667
www.critfc.org

**Testimony of
Jeremy Takala, Chair
Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
Regarding NOAA's Fiscal Year 2025 Budget
Before the House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies**

May 9, 2025

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) is pleased to share our views on the Department of Commerce's FY 2026 budget and has identified the following needs:

1. **\$75.1 million for Salmon Management Activities** of which:
 - \$34 million supports Mitchell Act Programs operations and maintenance; and
 - \$41.1 million for the Pacific Salmon Treaty, of which \$41.1 million is annual operations for the implementation of the 2019-2028 Agreement.
2. **\$70 million for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund** to support on-the-ground salmon restoration activities.
3. **\$5.5 million for Columbia River Pinniped Management** to support implementation of the MMPA Section 120(f) permit issued by NOAA-F in 2019
4. **\$56 million for the Integrated Ocean Observing Systems (IOOS) program** to continue the study of estuary and near-shore environment for multiple purposes including restoration of treaty trust aquatic resources.
5. **Mitchell Act Programs operations budget administrative expenses rate** recommend reduce to 15% with long-term goal not to exceed 10%.

Background

The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC) was founded in 1977 by the four Columbia River treaty tribes: Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, and the Nez Perce Tribe. CRITFC provides coordination and technical assistance to the tribes in regional, national, and international efforts to protect and restore fisheries and fish habitat.

In 1855 the United States entered treaties with each of our four member tribes¹. We ceded millions of acres of our homelands to the U.S. and the U.S. pledged to honor our ancestral rights, including the right to fish at all usual and accustomed places. Since then, hydroelectric

¹ Treaty with the Yakama Tribe, June 6, 1855, 12 Stat. 951; Treaty with the Tribes of Middle Oregon, June 25, 1855, 12 Stat. 963; Treaty with the Umatilla Tribe, June 9, 1855, 12 Stat. 945; Treaty with the Nez Perce Tribe, June 11, 1855, 12 Stat. 9

**Testimony of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
FY 2026 Budget – Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies**

development, habitat destruction and over-fishing by non-Indians brought the salmon resource to the edge of extinction with many stocks extirpated and 12 salmon and steelhead populations in the Columbia Basin listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Today, the treaties are the bedrock of Columbia River fisheries management. The CRITFC tribes are among the most successful fishery managers in the country, leading restoration efforts and working with state, federal, and private entities. CRITFC's comprehensive plan, *Wy-Kan-Ush-Mi Wa-Kish-Wit* (Spirit of the Salmon) outlines principles and objectives to halt the decline of salmon, steelhead, lamprey, and sturgeon populations and rebuild them to healthy and abundant levels that support tribal ceremonial, subsistence, and economic needs as well as sustainable non-Indian sports, ocean, and commercial needs. To achieve these objectives, the plan emphasizes strategies that rely on natural production, healthy rivers, and collaborative efforts.

Several key regional agreements were completed in 2008 and continue to be pivotal in fish restoration efforts today. The Columbia Basin Fish Accords set out parameters for management of the Federal Columbia River Power System for fish passage. New agreements in *U.S. v Oregon* and the Pacific Salmon Commission established fishery management criteria for fisheries ranging from the Columbia River to Southeast Alaska. The *U.S. v Oregon* agreement also contains provisions for Columbia Basin hatchery management. We have secured other funds to support our efforts to implement these agreements from Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Department of Interior, the Southern Fund of the Pacific Salmon Treaty, and others. Continued federal support is needed to accomplish the objectives embodied in these agreements.

1. Salmon Management Activities

Columbia River (Mitchell Act) Hatchery Program: The Mitchell Act program was created in 1938 to mitigate for the impacts caused by the construction and operation of Bonneville Dam. Mitchell Act production fuels West Coast salmon fisheries from the Oregon Coast to Southeast Alaska, as well as the Columbia Basin. The fisheries generated from Mitchell Act are worth millions of dollars and support economies, communities, and cultures throughout the region.

Mitchell Act facilities operation and maintenance funding has been static for years. The eroded buying power has reduced fish numbers and health, resulting in fewer fish for harvest. An **increase in the annual Operation and Maintenance budgets to \$34 million** would help ensure these facilities reach operational capacity to the benefit of Columbia River and West Coast fisheries. It would also assist Mitchell Act programs to integrate modern fisheries management practices and incorporate the dual needs of fish production and ESA salmon recovery.

Pacific Salmon Treaty Program: CRITFC supports the U.S. Section recommendation of **\$41.1 million for implementation** of the revised Pacific Salmon Treaty (Treaty).

The Department of Commerce principally funds Treaty programs conducted by the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). However, the cost of programs conducted by the states to fulfill national commitments created by the Treaty continue to be substantially greater than the funding provided in the NMFS budget. Consequently, the states have supplemented the federal appropriations for Treaty implementation from other sources, including state general funds. Many of those funding sources are limited or no longer available.

2. Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Program

Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF): The PCSRF program was developed in 2000 by Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, and Alaska, and the treaty tribes to contribute towards the unmet needs for the conservation and restoration of salmon stocks shared in tribal, state, and international fisheries. Since that time, the number of entities eligible for receiving funding has grown.

PCSRF has funded 491 Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs, Nez Perce, and CRITFC tribal salmon recovery projects. These projects have contributed greatly to the efforts to avoid extinction of Columbia Basin salmon species and their habitat. Accomplishments include 440 miles of stream made accessible to salmon; 5,284 acres of riparian area improved; 13,959 acres conserved by acquisition or lease; 4,942 stream miles monitored and evaluated; and 2 million salmon fry/smolt released annually. PCSRF is a vital component in the region's effort to attain full salmon recovery, sustain critical fisheries, and maintain meaningful exercise of the treaty-reserved rights of the CRITFC member tribes.

The co-managers have developed an extensive matrix of performance standards which includes the use of monitoring protocols to systematically track current and future projects basin wide. PCSRF projects are based on the best available science, adequate monitoring, and addressing limiting factors affecting salmon restoration. Projects undertaken by the tribes are consistent with CRITFC's salmon restoration plan and the programmatic areas identified by Congress.

We recommend a **base funding level of \$70 million for the PCSRF FY 2026 allocation**. Long-term economic benefits are recognized by making on-the-ground investments through PCSRF to rebuild sustainable, harvestable salmon populations into the future.

3. Columbia River Pinniped Management

Columbia River Section 120 Pinniped Removal Program: Since 2002, sea lions roaming into the lower Columbia River have significantly impacted salmon, steelhead, Pacific lamprey, and sturgeon. Thirty-two wild salmon populations bound for the upper Columbia and Snake rivers are vulnerable to predation by sea lions immediately below Bonneville Dam. Other impacted ESA-listed salmon and steelhead populations include lower Columbia River chinook and steelhead, middle Columbia River steelhead, Snake River steelhead, and upper Willamette River chinook and steelhead. All six of these are listed as "threatened" under the ESA.

Despite non-lethal and limited lethal-take measures, the number of salmon and steelhead consumed by sea lions below Bonneville Dam more than doubled between 2006 and 2015. Management and federal authorization initially focused exclusively on California sea lions, however during this period, an influx of the much larger Steller sea lions began to take a higher toll on the salmon runs. In response, Congress amended the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) in December 2018 to provide state and tribal resource managers greater flexibility to manage sea lions. In August 2020, the CRITFC member tribes, Oregon, Idaho, and Washington received a MMPA Section 120(f) permit from the NMFS to actively manage pinniped populations on the lower Columbia River and its tributaries. As a result, co-managers have increased the number of trappings and lethal removals. To fully implement the program under the new permit, **the states and tribes are requesting \$5.5 million in federal funds**. This will supplement funds that the states and tribes are currently contributing.

4. Integrated Ocean Observing Systems (IOOS) Program

Fund IOOS at Authorized Level: IOOS is a NOAA-administered program that supports operational infrastructure for observation, data management, and engagement program for the study of the Nation's estuary and near-shore environment. IOOS provides critical insight to understanding not only the impacts to treaty trust resources but also actions needed to restore aquatic resources. CRITFC's Coastal Margin Observation and Prediction Program (CMOP) is an integral part of the Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems (NANOOS), one of the 11 regional associations supported by IOOS. The multi-institutional collaborative structure of the IOOS regional associations ensures that the tribes are integrated into IOOS governance and decision-making processes.

We strongly encourage a funding level of **\$56 million** (consistent with the level authorized under the Coordinated Oceans Observations and Research Act of 2020) to address critical issues facing our collective communities. Expansion of IOOS capabilities is important to CRITFC's interest in improving ocean conditions for salmon and allow regional partnerships to continue to address priorities for the Columbia Basin that also include navigation and storm risk management.

5. Mitchel Act Operations administrative expenses rate reduced from 25% to 15%

We encourage the inclusion of the following language:

The Committee also provides not less than \$34,000,000 for the operation and maintenance of Mitchell Act hatcheries and directs NOAA to continue genetic stock identification for salmon recovery and management. NOAA is directed to limit the amount of Mitchell Act hatcheries funding withheld for administrative expenses to 15 percent, with a long-term goal of not more than 10 percent.

Expertise and Capacity at Risk

CRITFC and our four member tribes are regional leaders in restoring and rebuilding salmon populations of the Columbia Basin—work that has taken decades of patient, dedicated effort to establish. We appreciate the collaboration and partnership we have with our federal and state co-managers, as well as Congressional leaders and their respective staffs who have invested years helping us develop the robust capacity and infrastructure that makes this vital conservation work possible. These collective efforts, built painstakingly over generations, protect our treaty-reserved fishing rights and have laid the groundwork for our regional goal of having healthy, harvestable salmon populations for all citizens to enjoy.

I must stress that the recent reduction in the federal workforce, especially at NOAA, presents grave concerns. As we are witnessing, what took years to carefully construct—institutional knowledge, expertise, and operational capacity—can be dismantled in mere months. Once this specialized workforce is disbanded, the expertise that supports all communities in addressing their short- and long-term needs around water supply, storm and flood risk, drought, navigation and healthy river and ocean conditions will require years, if not decades, to rebuild. We simply do not have the luxury of time for such rebuilding—many salmon runs throughout the Columbia Basin are already teetering on the brink of extinction. While destruction is swift, rebuilding would demand the same slow, methodical process that brought us to our current capabilities—time that our endangered salmon populations do not have.

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE,
AND RELATED AGENCIES**

TESTIMONY OF THE NEZ PERCE TRIBE

May 9, 2025

The Nez Perce Tribe (Tribe) appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony to the Committee as it evaluates and prioritizes FY 2026 appropriations for the Department of Commerce and the Department of Justice. This testimony addresses spending allocations for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund and Salmon Management Activities within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and funding or set-asides for the grants provided to tribes within the Department of Justice.

The Tribe is a federally-recognized Indian tribe with Treaty-reserved fishing, hunting, gathering, and pasturing rights in the Snake River and Columbia River basins. In its 1855 Treaty, the Tribe reserved, and the United States secured, “the right of taking fish at all usual and accustomed places in common with citizens of the Territory; and of erecting temporary buildings for curing, together with the privilege of hunting, gathering roots and berries, and pasturing their horses and cattle upon open and unclaimed land.”¹

The Tribe desires that all species and populations of anadromous and resident fish and their habitats be healthy and harvestable throughout the Tribe’s usual and accustomed fishing places. The Tribe has long had an interest, and played an active role, in restoring anadromous and resident fish runs—including fall and spring Chinook, steelhead, sockeye, lamprey, bull trout, and white sturgeon—throughout all of the areas where the Tribe reserved Treaty fishing rights. The Tribe is involved in these efforts to protect implementation of Treaty rights, to restore species and conditions consistent with the Treaty, and to protect the long-term productivity of their natural resources.

The Tribe’s Department of Fisheries Resources Management (DFRM) is one of the largest and most successful tribal fisheries programs in the United States,² with offices located at Lapwai, Sweetwater, Orofino, McCall, Powell, and Grangeville, Idaho, as well as Joseph, Oregon. The DFRM has an annual operating budget of over \$22 million and employs tribal and non-tribal employees, the majority of whom are full-time.

The DFRM manages its own salmon fish hatchery at Cherrylane, Idaho, as well as ten acclimation sites in Idaho and Oregon. In addition, the DFRM manages Kooskia National Fish

¹ Treaty with the Nez Perces, June 11, 1855, 12 Stat. 957. The Treaty with the Nez Perces, June 9, 1863, 14 Stat. 647, preserved the off-Reservation rights that the Tribe reserved in its 1855 Treaty.

² The Nez Perce Tribe’s DFRM received the 2015 Honoring Nations award with high honors from The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development.

Hatchery and Dworshak National Fish Hatchery. The DFRM also coordinates with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on production from other salmon and steelhead hatcheries throughout Idaho. The Tribe is committed to this work and requests that the United States properly fund the programs that are an instrumental part of the overall work on fish recovery.

Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund

The Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) was established by Congress in FY 2000 to protect, restore, and conserve Pacific salmonids and their habitats across rivers, watersheds, and coastal habitats in western states. The congressionally-authorized activities that have been funded under the PCSRF program are focused on maintaining populations necessary for exercise of tribal treaty fishing rights or native subsistence fishing. Since 2000, this program has compelled effective, collaborative approaches to salmon recovery across federal, state, local, tribal, and private sector partners. In Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Idaho, California, and Nevada, PCSRF investments have contributed to over 15,942 projects and have helped restore more than 12,043 miles of streams and over 1.2 million acres of fish habitat.

PCSRF has been used by the Tribe to restore coho (silver) salmon to the Tribe's Reservation in the Clearwater River, 500 miles from the ocean. Coho were extirpated from the Clearwater River over 40 years ago and most of these fish returned only as far as the lower Columbia River. Through the PCSRF (and Mitchell Act funds, discussed below), the Tribe was able to rear and release almost one million coho into the Clearwater River, restoring their presence in the Snake River Basin. The Tribe views these returns as a tremendous success.

In 2017, the Tribe worked with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation to also have the first release of coho in the Lostine River, a tributary of the Grande Ronde River. After decades of extirpation, these fish are being restored to some of the best habitat in the Columbia River Basin. Continued funding for the operation of these hatchery supplementation efforts through PCSRF funding is needed to maintain the populations of most species of salmon and steelhead in this "breadbasket" of salmon habitat, located upstream of eight Columbia River dams.

An increased federal investment of \$5 million, to a total of \$70 million, in FY 2026 is crucial to maintaining this progress, and to achieving the goal of full recovery and a healthy, sustainable Pacific salmon fishery. With the exceptions of funding also provided under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in 2022 through 2026, and under the Inflation Reduction Act in 2023 and 2024, PCSRF funding has been stagnant/remained flat since 2012.

Salmon Management Activities

The Mitchell Act provides for the conservation of the fishery resources of the Columbia River and is administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries). Funding for the Mitchell Act component of NOAA

Fisheries supports the operations and maintenance of Columbia River hatcheries through grants and contracts to the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, and to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to mitigate the loss of salmon on the Columbia and Snake rivers.

The Tribe believes that an increase of \$10 million over the FY 2024 enacted amount for a FY 2026 level of \$34 million for Mitchell Act within Salmon Management Activities is justifiable. The Mitchell Act allows federal agencies to work with Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and the lower Columbia River Treaty Tribes to operate and maintain a series of fish hatcheries and passage facilities focused on improving declining and imperiled salmon and steelhead runs in the Columbia Basin, ensuring conservation of these critical natural resources, maintaining economically viable Tribal, commercial, and recreational fisheries, and providing prey for endangered federal and state listed Southern Resident orcas.

The Mitchell Act currently funds 60 programs that produce approximately 40 million fish annually, nearly 30 percent of the total salmon and steelhead production in the Columbia River Basin. An increase is necessary to make up for over a decade of flat funding during a high inflationary period. As a result of this flat funding, the region's hatcheries have accrued a significant deferred maintenance problem. To address this and restore functionality, we are requesting an additional \$220 million to address deferred maintenance. Without full funding of the Operations and Maintenance budget, hatcheries in the Pacific Northwest will begin closing and this mitigation obligation will go unmet. We also suggest that report language be included to provide a ten percent limit on administrative costs from this line item.

In addition, the Pacific Salmon Treaty is critical to meeting the provisions of the federal Endangered Species Act, addressing tribal fishing rights, and maintaining sustainable U.S. fisheries. This Treaty, signed by the United States and Canada in 1985, provides a framework for the two countries to cooperate on the management of Pacific salmon. The Tribe supports \$41.1 million for implementation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty.

The importance of this funding cannot be overstated as the comprehensive, geographic nature of its application in the Pacific Northwest provides an integrated infrastructure for fish management. In addition, these funds allow for fish to be grown at other facilities that are used at Nez Perce Tribal production facilities. Other regional agencies also use the funds to grow fish that enhance Treaty fishing opportunities for Nez Perce Tribal members on the Columbia River.

The Tribe recommends that the Pacific salmon account in the National Marine Fisheries Service be funded at \$96 million, with no less than \$5 million for a new line item for pinniped removal. Congress amended the Marine Mammal Protection Act to provide states and tribes more flexibility to control pinnipeds like/including sea lions that are having a significant negative impact on ESA-listed salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon in the Columbia Basin. Federal funding is needed to augment state and tribal funds to fully implement the program and reduce predation on ESA-listed species. This program also funds salmon and steelhead hatcheries and habitat restoration in the Columbia Basin.

Department of Justice Tribal Assistance Grant Funding

Providing law and order is one of the fundamental requirements of any functioning government. However, tribes are limited in the resources available to commit to these programs as the United States has historically underfunded such programs in Indian Country. The Tribe relies on the grant programs of the Department of Justice to help grow the capacity of our Tribal Law and Order system.

In order to provide law enforcement, victims services, and Tribal justice systems to Indian and non-Indian residents on the Reservation, the Tribe has relied on funding received under programs such as the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation grants program, the Tribal Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court program, the Comprehensive Tribal Victim Assistance Program, the Tribal Justice Systems Infrastructure Program, Violence Against Women Act programs, and the Children's Justice Act Partnership program. These programs need to continue to be funded at the most robust level possible in FY 2026, given spending constraints.

The Tribe recommends full funding for programs authorized under the Tribal Law and Order Act. The Tribe also recommends either continuation of funding for "assistance to Indian tribes" at the level of \$50 million that was enacted in FY 2024 under the State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance account in the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), or in the alternative a seven percent tribal set-aside of OJP funds. The set-aside would provide a substantial increase for these programs and is the preferred method of funding. Under either funding scenario in FY 2026, there needs to be flexibility provided in program funding so that the funding is not narrowly allocated to tribes solely through competitive grant programs.

The Tribe strongly supports the continuation of bill language contained in Section 510 of several prior years' Appropriations Acts that provided five percent from the Crime Victims Fund for grants to Indian tribes through the Office for Victims of Crime to improve services for Native American victims of crime.

Finally, the Tribe urges this Committee to fund the Tribal Resources Grant Program under the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services programs at \$37 million and to maintain a level of \$6 million for the Tribal Access Program.



Outside Witness Testimony from: Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence

Submitted by:

Stephen Smith, President of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence

**Submitted to the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations, United States House of Representatives**

**Testimony on the Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations
for the National Science Foundation**

May 9, 2025

Summary: This written testimony is submitted on behalf of the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) to ask you to support the National Science Foundation (NSF) in fiscal year (FY) 2026 by providing NSF with at least \$9.9 billion. We urge you to scale emerging technology investments to meet our fundamental research needs. This includes strong funding for the Research and Related Activities Account (R&RA) that supports critical technology research and development at programming across the agency, especially at Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (TIP) Directorate and Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE). Further, support for the Directorate for STEM Education (EDU) is critical to addressing educational gaps in emerging technologies and challenges faced in building the future STEM workforce.

Full Statement: On behalf of AAAI, we submit this written testimony for the record to the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the U.S. Senate.

AAAI is a premiere scientific society that works to advance understanding of the underlying mechanisms of thought and intelligent behavior that are embodied in machines. AAAI is comprised of over 8,000 members who work in a wide array of research and development activities related to artificial intelligence (AI) across academia, government, and industry. AAAI is a 46-year-old organization that brings together AI researchers and practitioners through its conferences and convening events to promote research in and responsible use of AI, better public understanding of AI, and inform the future directions of AI research and development. As an organization that advocates for strengthening core research in AI, AAAI supports big investments in the US scientific enterprise, which

601 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004

info@aaai.org
1-202-360-4062
aaai.org



underpins rapid innovation in key technologies like AI. AAAI and its members work to advance AI research by promoting responsible development, deployment, and use of secure and trustworthy AI systems.

First, we would like to emphasize that AAAI appreciates your committee's recognition of the critical role of the National Science Foundation (NSF) and its support for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in enabling a strong U.S. economy, workforce, and society. We understand that Congress is facing a constrained fiscal environment, however, we are deeply concerned by the threat of potential cuts to NSF programming, which will harm NSF's critical research, infrastructure, and workforce investments and damage our research ecosystem.

Today, we submit this testimony to ask you to reconfirm Congresses support of NSF in FY 2026 and beyond. ***In particular, we join with the research and higher education community and request that you provide NSF with at least \$9.9 billion in funding for FY 2026.*** At least \$9.9 billion in funding is needed to ensure NSF can meet Congress's vision for the agency, launch new programs in priority technology areas such, especially artificial intelligence (AI), and invest in revolutionary breakthroughs and provide sustainable growth to the core research and education activities undergirding our science and technology ecosystem.

As we are reminded every day, the nation's health, economic strength, national security, and welfare are being challenged in profound and unprecedented ways. Many of these challenges are fueled by gaps in our understanding of complex technological systems. Fundamental research plays a foundational and cross-cutting role in understanding these systems through advanced modeling and simulation, developing techniques essential to designing new breakthrough technologies like AI, and providing new tools for managing resources and logistics. Progress in basic research also underpins advances across an array of fields and challenges in computing, materials, biology, engineering, and other areas.

NSF Technology, Innovation, and Partnership (TIP) Directorate

AAAI supports NSF's efforts to expand its mission towards transforming innovative ecosystems with the Directorate for Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (TIP) and encourages Congress to give NSF the resources it needs, enabling support for NSF priorities in AI and other emerging technologies. It is imperative that the rest of NSF see sustainable growth, such as programs funded by the TIP Directorate, which foundational investments underpin advances across many science and engineering challenges. New efforts such as the National AI Research Resource (NAIRR) can only be successful

601 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004

info@aaai.org
1-202-360-4062
aaai.org



when built on a strong foundational research enterprise that supports research, education, and infrastructure to sustain our science and technology ecosystem.

AAAI urges strong investment in the Research and Related Activities account (RRA) to enable robust funding to make new discoveries and advancements in emerging technologies like AI. This funding should support activities at the Technology, Innovation, and Partnership (TIP) and other core programs and crosscutting initiatives that are essential to AI basic research, workforce development programs, and early career researcher support.

NSF Office of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure

Advances in AI technology are critical to enabling effective use of the rapid advances in information technology and cyberinfrastructure. Programs in the NSF Office of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure (OAC) in the Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE) focus on providing research communities with access to advanced computing capabilities to convert data to knowledge and increase our understanding through computational simulation and prediction. AAAI endorses the efforts of OAC, the CISE directorate, and other Offices across NSF and the federal government to sustain the NAIRR pilot. The full NAIRR has potential to transform and dramatically scale AI innovations but must be paired with robust basic research as well as workforce funding to reach its full impact and enable a robust ecosystem. AAAI also supports OAC's broader role in advancing high performance computing to meet critical national security needs, fully leverage computing technology for economic competitiveness and scientific discovery and positioning the U.S. for sustained technical leadership.

Conclusion

We would like to thank you again for your support of NSF that enables the research and education communities it supports, including thousands of AAAI members, to undertake activities that contribute to U.S. health, security, and economic strength. Congress needs to provide NSF with sustained growth to maintain our competitive edge in science and technology. We ask that you provide robust support of these critical programs in FY 2026 and put us on track to dramatically scale emerging technology investments as bipartisan majorities have emphasized are critical to our national security and competitiveness. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to the Committee on behalf of AAAI.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen J. Smith', is written below the word 'Sincerely'.

601 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004

info@aaai.org
1-202-360-4062
aaai.org



Stephen F. Smith
AAAI President

601 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004

info@aaai.org
1-202-360-4062
aaai.org

Felice J. Levine, PhD, Executive Director
American Educational Research Association
Written Testimony
U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations for the
National Science Foundation and U.S. Census Bureau
May 9, 2025

Chair Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the American Educational Research Association (AERA). AERA recommends that the National Science Foundation (NSF) receive at least \$9.9 billion in fiscal year 2026. This recommendation is consistent with that of the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF), in which AERA is a long-term active member. AERA also recommends \$2 billion for the Census Bureau, aligned with the recommendation of The Census Project.

AERA is the major national scientific association of approximately 25,000 faculty, researchers, graduate students, and other distinguished professionals dedicated to advancing knowledge about education, encouraging scholarly inquiry related to education, and promoting the use of research to serve public good. Many of our members are engaged in STEM education research and work in a range of settings from universities and other academic institutions to research institutes, federal and state agencies, school systems, and nonprofit organizations engaged in conducting research in all areas of education and learning from early childhood through the workforce.

National Science Foundation

Although this testimony is being advanced in the context of FY 2026 appropriations, as the most major scientific society dedicated to advancing rigorous knowledge about education and learning across the lifespan, AERA would be negligent in our mission and responsibility if we did not register in the strongest possible terms our shock and concern about this administration's unbridled attacks on the NSF and its mission as an independent agency to advance science across all fields. The actions taken by the Department of Government Efficiency to terminate NSF grants and reduce the workforce of an agency well regarded across both sides of the aisle for its high-quality work, its scientific integrity, and its efficiency with a small staff necessitate Congressional oversight and review.

The cancelled grants have been awarded through a rigorous merit review process that take account of how funded research serves the national interest, which includes ensuring that our nation's students have the opportunity to participate in evidence-based formal and informal STEM education programs. NSF research also incorporates the expertise and methodologies from education science and the social and behavioral sciences that inform the safe and secure development and use of critical and emerging technologies.

While the impact of these terminations has been seen across all of NSF, these actions have disproportionately affected research funded by the STEM Education (EDU) and Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorates. Both of these directorates are central to

the mission of the NSF to advance fundamental knowledge and scientific breakthroughs and to ensure significant continuing advances across science, engineering, and education. EDU support is vital to research discoveries, capacity building, and methodological innovations directly related to STEM education and learning. Research and science supported by the EDU and SBE Directorates are also inextricably linked to the science and research of the other NSF directorates.

As indicated in the agency's budget request for FY 2025, 96 percent of appropriated funds directly supported research and STEM education through grants and cooperative agreements in FY 2023, with 78 percent of funding supporting research at colleges and universities. In addition, NSF estimated that nearly 168,000 K-12 students and 49,000 K-12 teachers were involved in NSF-funded programs that directly engage them in STEM experiences within and outside the classroom in FY 2024.

The outline of the president's FY 2026 budget request proposes a cut of more than 50 percent to the NSF top line. A decrease of this magnitude would significantly curtail innovation and progress across the whole scientific enterprise, with additional harmful impact on those who benefit from the research and evidence-based STEM education that NSF has supported. Investment in NSF is necessary to foster a STEM workforce that reflects the geographic, demographic, and economic diversities of the United States and to compete on a global stage. It is imperative for this subcommittee and this Congress to act as it has done consistently in a bipartisan fashion to ensure the vitality of NSF and the research that informs and supports the national interest, including in three important components.

STEM Education Directorate

The EDU Directorate at NSF is responsible for providing the research foundation necessary to achieve excellence in U.S. STEM education. EDU accomplishes this goal by supporting the development of a scientifically-literate citizenry as well as a STEM-skilled workforce. Advances in the industries of the future, including artificial intelligence and quantum information science, require building interest and engagement in STEM throughout the lifespan.

The EDU Directorate investment in STEM education research across all levels is essential to advancing STEM education outcomes and preparing the next generation of STEM professionals. EDU-funded researchers are asking key questions, that include how to engage students' interest in math and science, what is needed to promote and scale up evidence-based STEM teaching practices, and what aspects of instructional tools encourage the development of computational thinking. Understanding these and many other questions will help the United States build a well-educated and technology-literate workforce necessary for a prosperous economic future.

Key to advancing STEM education research is the EDU Core Research (ECR) program, an important resource to the field that builds fundamental knowledge and capacity to understand STEM teaching and learning and develop the STEM educator and workforce pipeline. Recent ECR grants are supporting research on early numeracy development, the factors that contribute to the recruitment and retention of STEM higher education leaders, and interventions to improve STEM teaching and learning for students with disabilities.

Two longstanding programs within the Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings, Discovery Research PK-12 and Advancing Informal Science Learning, have also made major contributions to building the evidence to improve STEM learning outcomes. We also applaud NSF for its investments in midscale research infrastructure, including addressing key needs such as building data infrastructure capacity and developing innovative diagnostic assessment tools.

Investment in EDU is critical to support research to inform an educational system that will continue to incorporate technology inside and outside the STEM classroom. This work includes investment in AI Institutes that focus on innovative STEM education curricula and measurement, as well as collaborative efforts with the Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (TIP) Directorate. Initiatives such as the Experiential Learning for Emerging and Novel Technologies (ExLENT) and the VITAL Prize Challenge have funded innovative learning opportunities to meet emerging technology education and workforce needs. Additional investment in NSF would enable the EDU and TIP Directorates to support partnerships and infrastructure investments to promote and scale evidence-based practices in STEM education drawn from community needs.

The EDU Directorate's focus on developing our nation's scientific workforce requires resources to ensure that early career scholars and graduate students remain in the STEM talent pipeline. Recent actions to terminate grants and the proposed 15 percent indirect cost cap would place significant challenges on the ability for the upcoming generation of STEM education research scholars to remain in the STEM education research workforce.

Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Directorate

In addition to the significant investments in education sciences provided by EDU, AERA values the important role of the SBE Directorate, in NSF's Research and Related Activities account, to fund important education research and in social, family, and peer contexts connected to learning.

The SBE Directorate supports research to better understand people and reveals basic aspects of human behavior and how they interact with activities of people's daily lives, including how people learn and act on information. SBE funded research contributes fundamental knowledge essential to promoting the Nation's economy, security, and global leadership. Understanding social organizations and the influence of social, economic, and cultural forces is important for informing evidence-based STEM education practices to encourage STEM engagement and attainment. Activities supported by SBE also promote a human-centered focus on key scientific priorities that include the development and use of critical and emerging technologies, the science of learning, and needs for the future of work.

The budget for SBE is 4 percent of the budget for Research and Related Activities, yet it provides approximately 63 percent of the federal funding for basic research in the social and psychological sciences at academic institutions.

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)

In addition, AERA has a strong interest in the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) located in the SBE Directorate. As one of the 13 federal principal statistical

agencies, NCSES provides invaluable statistical information about the science and engineering infrastructure and workforce in the U.S. and around the world. NCSES collects and analyzes data on the progress of STEM education and the research and development, providing valuable information on the trajectories of STEM graduates in STEM and non-STEM careers. Its landmark report in collaboration with the National Science Board, Science and Engineering Indicators, draws from key surveys that include the National Survey of College Graduates, the Survey of Doctorate Recipients, and the Survey of Earned Doctorates.

It is essential to maintain funding and staffing in FY 2026 for NCSES to support critical activities to develop new data techniques building on administrative data and to enhance data tools and visualizations to facilitate access to statistical resources. These methodological advances will be necessary for NCSES to continue implementing the Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act and to build the NSF data infrastructure to securely link survey data with administrative data in other federal agencies in further development of the National Secure Data Service.

In order for the United States to maintain its competitiveness in scientific research and to support the engagement, attainment, and development of a scientific workforce that includes those who have been historically underrepresented in STEM, Congress must maintain its track record of robust investment in NSF.

Census Bureau

We also wish to emphasize the importance of robust investment for the Census Bureau. AERA recommends funding the Census Bureau at \$2 billion in FY 2026. This amount of funding would provide critical resources for planning for the 2030 Decennial Census, including for the important 2026 Census Test scheduled to take place in six geographically and demographically diverse sites across the nation. This test is one example of needed investment to help ensure an accurate count of the nation's population.

The recommended funding amount would also allow the Census Bureau to incorporate innovations in additional Census surveys, including the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Current Population Survey (CPS). Increased investment would enable the Census Bureau to transform data infrastructure through the Enterprise Data Collection & Dissemination Systems initiative; conduct the Economic Census; restore appropriate sample sizes for the ACS, CPS and the Survey of Income and Program Participation; and improve population estimates.

On behalf of AERA, we want to thank you for the importance of your role and the seriousness with which you embrace the appropriations process. We very much value the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of at least \$9.9 billion for the National Science Foundation and \$2 billion for the Census Bureau in fiscal year 2026 appropriations. AERA would welcome the opportunity to work with you and your subcommittee to best further the significant scientific advances of the National Science Foundation and the important data provided by the Census Bureau.



225 Franklin Street, Floor 26
 Boston, MA 02110 | P: 617.303.4600
www.mentoring.org

Abbie Evans
 Chief Policy & Advocacy Officer
 MENTOR
www.mentoring.org

**Testimony in Support of the Part G Youth Mentoring Program
 House Committee on Appropriations
 Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies**

On behalf of MENTOR, our network of Affiliates, and youth mentoring programs across the country, I thank Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Meng for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of a critical federal investment in America's young people. I write this on behalf of MENTOR's Affiliate Network, thousands of mentoring programs, and millions of volunteer mentors that serve our communities each day. I'm also writing on behalf of the millions of young people across the United States still waiting to find the supportive, caring relationships they need to thrive – including an average of 63 youth per mentoring program on wait lists. **My testimony will focus on the Part G Youth Mentoring Program managed by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) within the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) at the Department of Justice (DOJ).** MENTOR and our youth-serving coalition of partners are calling on your committee to continue the strong bipartisan support of the Youth Mentoring Program with a robust investment in Fiscal Year 2026.

MENTOR is the unifying national champion for expanding quality youth mentoring relationships. At a time when 1 in 3 young people are growing up without a mentor – a data point that has grown in recent years among our country's youngest generation – MENTOR seeks to close this “mentoring gap” and ensure that all young people have the relational support they need to succeed, everywhere they are. We seek to leverage resources and provide the tools and expertise that local programs – whether in schools, nonprofit community-based organizations, faith-based institutions, or the private sector – require to provide high-quality mentoring for young people who need it most, build greater awareness of the value of mentoring, and positively inform public policy to bring opportunity to young people in need.

Quality mentoring through structured programs and relationships that form naturally with teachers, coaches, faith leaders, and other caring adults can have a profoundly positive impact on educational success, healthy development, and overall wellbeing. It is an innovative, evidence-based practice that is one of the few prevention and intervention tactics with the potential to support young people in all aspects of their lives.

The Benefits of Quality Youth Mentoring

Youth mentoring is a simple, yet powerful concept: a caring adult or near-peer mentor provides guidance, support, and encouragement to help a young person achieve success in life. Research confirms that quality, evidence-based mentoring relationships have positive effects on young people in a variety of personal, academic, and professional situations:

- Workforce Development: Mentoring helps develop the talent pipeline for our economy. Mentors prepare young people for the workforce through career exposure, skill-building,

social-emotional support, and goal setting. Mentoring can also lead to higher retention rates, wage increases, and professional development. Through their mentors, young people are introduced to resources and organizations they may not be familiar with, introducing them to new networks as well as methods to find jobs, apprenticeships, and internship programs.

- Educational Achievement: Many students find meaningful relationships during the school day. In fact, analyses of one prominent national data set from *Applied Developmental Science* suggest that teachers and other school personnel, such as counselors, coaches, or front office and cafeteria staff, are among the most cited sources of naturally occurring mentors. Youth mentoring fosters a sense of belonging and connection to school, a critical component to address chronic student absence. Mentoring can increase school engagement, improve scholastic efficacy, and prevent misconduct.
- Sub-Groups: Mentoring also offers a practical approach to supporting military-connected youth and youth from rural communities. Mentoring for these populations has been shown to improve academic performance and symptoms of depression, improving social support and parental ratings of stress in the home, and improvements in their physical and mental health.
- Reducing Unsafe or Risky Behaviors: As protective factors for young people, mentors serve as positive role models to help young people make healthy decisions and avoid high-risk behaviors. For example, young people who meet regularly with their mentors are less likely than their peers to use illegal drugs and alcohol. Mentoring can also reduce aggressive behaviors – such as fighting and bullying – and provide comprehensive support to youth at risk for committing violence or victimization. Research funded by OJJDP even found that mentoring programs potentially provide a benefit of three times the public expenditure for every day in jail that program participants avoid. Mentors help provide guidance to productive activities that support growth and development in a young person, such as sports and extracurricular activities.
- Mental Health and Belonging: Mentoring provides young people with a sense of belonging and promotes positive social attitudes and relationships. In fact, research has shown that the strongest benefit from mentoring is a reduction in depressive symptoms. Ultimately, mentoring provides pro-social activities, increased positive relationships, life skills training, and access to networks – helping lead young people to productive futures.

The National Mentoring Resource Center

Mentoring programs can effectively and safely provide these benefits when they are fully trained on the most up-to-date evidence-based mentoring practice and training. In 2015, through funds from the Part G Youth Mentoring Program, the National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC) was created to improve the quality and effectiveness of mentoring. MENTOR, its Affiliates, and other technical assistance providers supply tools, program and training materials, and no-cost, evidence-based technical assistance to mentoring programs, school districts, workplaces, and faith-based institutions across the nation through the NMRC. This important resource has bolstered the ability of mentoring programs to serve young people, including young people at-

risk of entering the juvenile justice system, youth in foster care, and victims of commercial sex trafficking.

The NMRC has proven to be both popular and effective in achieving its mission. The NMRC completed 759 requests with over 17,000 hours provided in FY23, an average of over 20 hours of dedicated help per program. After receiving services, over 96% of programs reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their provider's effectiveness and knowledge.

Closing the Mentoring Gap

While mentoring is clearly effective, mentoring organizations across the nation still face barriers in providing high-quality services. Thousands of young people remain on waitlists at organizations because of limited resources, funding for programs, and the lack of capacity to recruit and train quality volunteer mentors. Further, inflationary costs, workforce shortages, and reduced charitable giving have exacerbated challenges for nonprofit youth-serving organizations in recent years. These issues create many hurdles for mentoring programs. But with the combined support of private and public investment, mentoring programs can increase their capacity to meet their community's unique relational needs.

The Youth Mentoring Program, which touches every state, focuses on prevention and interventions for youth facing risks. These funds provide direct support for young people who could otherwise become involved in negative behaviors and activities causing harm to themselves and their communities. It is also popular with the public; in a recent survey, more than 80 percent of adults reported that they support at least some public investment in youth mentoring.

In a 2016 study conducted by MENTOR, it was found that 75 percent of youth mentoring programs have an annual budget of under \$100,000. Mentoring programs work far beyond their financial capacity to serve young people, but with additional resources, their reach expands exponentially, and the quality of their services can strengthen through improved training. Mentoring programs utilize federal support in part to better serve the large number of young people in their local communities who could benefit most from evidence-based mentoring.

The Youth Mentoring Program

The Youth Mentoring Program continues to be the only federal grant exclusively dedicated to providing funds for evidence-based mentoring activities. Youth Mentoring Program funds have been awarded to national, multi-state, and collaborative mentoring projects and programs who serve suburban, rural, and urban populations. The flexibility of the grant has allowed organizations to use these funds to specifically tailor programs to their community's unique needs. This provides local control and specialized concentration on results that work best for each young person and their community. These funds are simply invaluable in the ways that they support youth development, educational achievement, and safer communities.

In the most recent data available from FY22, an estimated 85,475 new mentor-mentee matches were made with funding from the OJJDP Youth Mentoring Program. Further, 29,785 new trained mentors were recruited, including adult volunteers, college students, law enforcement officers, active duty and retired military, athletic coaches, peers, teachers, and corporate professionals.

MENTOR's request for continued robust funding for the Youth Mentoring Program in FY26 – supported by over 400 direct service programs from every state in the country –

will allow more young people to access the important social, professional, and academic opportunities we all hope to provide for America's youth. The Youth Mentoring Program demonstrates a sound and effective investment in evidence-based programs that work. Strong mentoring programs weave together our communities, foster greater understanding, enrich the lives of both mentors and mentees, and efficiently leverage volunteers to drive impact backed by quality programs and practice.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of this critical federal resource supporting young people and for this subcommittee's long-standing, bipartisan support for the Part G Youth Mentoring Program.



May 7, 2025

Representative Hal Rogers
Chair
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Grace Meng
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Rogers and Ranking Member Meng,

AFS is the world's oldest and largest professional society of fishery and aquatic scientists and managers. The society seeks to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science, promoting the development of fisheries professionals, and advocating for the use of best-available science in policy-making.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for the Fiscal Year 2026 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act. We are writing today in support of robust funding for NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, \$19 million for NOAA's Office of Aquaculture, \$5 million for the Aquaculture Cooperative Institute established in Fiscal Year 2024, \$80 million for National Sea Grant Program, and \$18 million for the Sea Grant Aquaculture program in Fiscal Year 2026.

We urge you to maintain appropriate funding and staffing to ensure that NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service is able to sustainably manage our nation's fisheries. The very foundation of natural-resources conservation in this country rests on science to inform decisions and is supported by a strong workforce of professionals to ensure sustainable use and enjoyment for all citizens. Our continued system of federal investment in natural resource conservation returns enormous dividends for the country and the world and is an economic engine for our national, state and local economies.



NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service

We urge you to support robust funding for NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service. The proposed draconian budget cuts to the agency for Fiscal year 2026 coupled with the severe reduction in the agency's fisheries staff threatens the very foundation of sustainable U.S. fisheries.

Conducting stock assessments, development of annual catch limits, monitoring fisheries abundance and catch, researching into the impacts of our changing climate are all essential components of sustainable fisheries. The threatened 40% budget cut and continued layoffs and other attempts to reduce the workforce will cripple the agency and erode the knowledge, skills and experience needed to manage our nation's fisheries.

The U.S. system ranks among the most successful in the world at preventing overfishing and rebuilding overfished stocks. Our precautionary management system must take into account changes in the ocean environment, including warming and acidification, that are altering ecosystems, changing stock productivities, and causing widespread shifts in the distribution of many exploited species. We must continue to research changing ocean conditions and shifting species distributions and population dynamics in the face of these changes. We must also continue to support healthy habitats and associated ecosystems. Failure to do so will put future fish stocks at risk, threaten the livelihoods of the next generation of fishermen and women, and put our coastal economies at great risk.

NOAA Aquaculture Support

AFS supports responsible and sustainable development of open ocean aquaculture in U.S. federal waters as a mechanism to reduce pressure on wild capture fisheries and as a climate-friendly form of protein production to meet the projected increases in demand for protein world-wide. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)'s Aquaculture Program coordinates across agencies towards a comprehensive regulatory foundation for open ocean aquaculture. We support the important siting analysis for future Aquaculture Opportunity Areas (AOAs) in federal waters, interagency coordination on National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) review and Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), development of science-based tools and modeling, and associated economic development programs to support expansion of aquaculture into the Exclusive Economic Zone. We support \$19 million for NOAA Fisheries Office of Aquaculture for Fiscal Year 2026 and \$5 million for Fiscal Year 2026 for the Cooperative Institute (CI) provided for in the Fiscal Year 2024 CJS Appropriations. In addition, we fully support the work of the National Centers for Coastal and Ocean Science for its role in the development of the AOAs and the coastal planning tools it offers to assist managers, planners, and industry with



sustainable aquaculture development. We urge you to provide funding to maintain this program and support this important work.

National Sea Grant College Program and Sea Grant Aquaculture Program

The Sea Grant program is a federally funded network of 34 state- or territory-based programs that fund research and perform education and outreach work on coastal environmental and natural resource issues. Individual Sea Grant programs set research priorities based on local needs, often focusing on actionable science.

AFS supports this program due to its importance in addressing aquatic invasive species, aquaculture, and fisheries. The Sea Grant program has proven to be a cost-effective vehicle for leveraging local expertise and federal funds to address both theoretical and applied research in service of the public good.

We seek level funding of \$80,000,000 for the National Sea Grant program and \$18,000,000, for Sea Grant Aquaculture program, an increase to support developing sustainable marine aquaculture. We believe this program makes critical progress in advancing open ocean aquaculture in the U.S.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Jeff Kopaska
Executive Director

Ronald J. Regan, Executive Director
Public Witness Testimony on Behalf of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
National Marine Fisheries Service
May 9th, 2025

Thank you for the opportunity to submit recommendations for Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Congressional appropriations. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (AFWA) mission, since our founding in 1902, is to protect and enable state fish and wildlife agencies (states) to exercise their statutory authority to conserve and manage the fish and wildlife within their borders, including state waters. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands are members. We acknowledge the difficult budget climate in our modest funding requests, despite the growing need for additional funding in each of these priority areas.

Funding for Regional Councils and Interstate Fisheries Commissions (\$44.297M)

AFWA recommends no less than (NLT) the FY24 enacted level of \$44.297M for the Regional Councils and Interstate Fisheries Commissions line item. While states have primary authority for the management of fisheries within their own territorial waters, the management regime in one area often affects resource availability in another, necessitating a cooperative approach among the states and the federal government to ensure effective management and stewardship of these resources.

The regional fisheries management councils are a critical nexus for this cooperative management, bringing together members of the region's state fish and wildlife agencies; private citizens who are knowledgeable about recreational fishing, commercial fishing, or marine conservation; and non-voting members from the relevant interstate fisheries commission and from various federal agencies to develop fishery management plans and management measures for federally-managed species in the region under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. As partners of the federal government in these endeavors, the states are very concerned that significant staffing and budgetary cuts would negatively impact NMFS's ability to engage in cooperative management efforts and jeopardize the sustainable use of marine fisheries resources, with coastal communities bearing the brunt of the impacts.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission facilitate cooperation and coordination among the states in their respective regions to support sustainable use of shared fishery resources. The matching funds provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service to the interstate fisheries commissions are critical for cooperative activities including fisheries data collection and assessment, development of management recommendations, aquatic invasive species prevention and response, and coastal habitat restoration.

Interjurisdictional Fisheries Grants (\$3.575M)

AFWA recommends \$3.575M for Interjurisdictional Fisheries Grants in FY26. These grants provide 1:1 matching funds to states and the three interstate marine fisheries commissions for state activities that support the management of interjurisdictional fisheries resources, fisheries data collection and research on commercial and recreational fish stocks.

Fisheries Data Collections, Surveys, and Assessments (\$205.851M)

AFWA recommends NLT \$205.851M for Fisheries Data Collections, Surveys, and Assessments in FY2026. Managers need accurate data and assessments on which to base their decisions. Without this key information, fisheries managers would be unable to adjust the quotas, seasons, and other management measures that facilitate sustainable commercial and recreational use of the nation's marine fishery resources. These fishery resources support U.S. commercial and recreational fisheries that in 2022 supported 2.3 million jobs and generated \$321 billion in sales impacts and \$148.9 billion in value-added impacts. Reducing investment in the data collections, surveys, and stock assessments funded by this line item would jeopardize sustainable use of these resources and threaten significant harm to coastal communities around the country.

Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (\$65 M)

AFWA recommends NLT the FY24 enacted level of \$65M for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund in FY26. Established by Congress in 2000, PCSRF is a competitive grant program that provides funding to states and tribes to protect, conserve, and recover Pacific salmon populations. States match at least 33% of received federal funds and use this funding to leverage additional resources for salmon recovery projects. As of 2023, the \$1.8B appropriated by PCSRF had leveraged an additional \$2.2B in non-PCSRF contributions.

The program continues to make great strides: to date, nearly 1.2 million acres of spawning and rearing habitat have been restored, created, or protected and access to more than 12,000 miles of previously inaccessible streams has been re-established. These habitat improvements translate into better outcomes for threatened, endangered, and at-risk species; maintenance of populations necessary for the exercise of tribal treaty fishing rights; and greater recreational fishing opportunities for local communities.

Salmon Management Activities- Mitchell Act Component (\$23.5M)

AFWA recommends NLT the FY24 enacted level of \$23.5M for the Mitchell Act component of the Salmon Management Activities line item. Funding to Mitchell Act hatcheries supports the production of salmon and steelhead at national, state, and tribal fish hatcheries in the Columbia River Basin for harvest and conservation purposes.

Through grants and contracts to the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, and to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mitchell Act hatcheries mitigate the loss of salmon on the Columbia and Snake Rivers. The funds NMFS provides are critical to the annual operations of the hatchery programs and support roughly one-third of all the hatchery production in the Columbia River. The salmon smolts produced by hatchery programs funded through the Mitchell Act translate into the harvest of about 250,000 fish that add to commercial, recreational, and tribal fisheries each year.

Unfortunately, only 36 out of 60 Mitchell Act hatchery programs can operate under current funding levels and deferred maintenance remains a significant issue for many facilities. In acknowledgement of the current budget situation, we have not requested an increase in funding that is sorely needed, but we hope to revisit this in future years.

Protected Resources Science and Management- marine mammals, sea turtles, and other species (\$175.255M) and Species Recovery Grants to States (\$7.25 M)

AFWA recommends NLT the FY24 enacted level of \$175.255M FY24 for the Protected Resources Science Management- marine mammals, sea turtles, and other species line item. States have management authorities and responsibilities for protected marine species within their jurisdictions and they rely on services provided by NMFS's Office of Protected Resources to fulfill these.

These services include updated marine mammal stock assessments and distribution information, permits and authorizations under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and species recovery grants to fund state projects. Insufficient funding would create significant delays in the quality and delivery of these services. Given statutory mandates that are in place, delays in ESA consultations would slow progress on a myriad of economically important coastal and ocean activities. Delays in marine mammal permitting could affect activities ranging from port development and maintenance to commercial fishing operations to oil and gas exploration and development.

Additionally, AFWA recommends NLT the FY24 enacted level of \$7.25M for NMFS's Species Recovery Grants program in FY26. This program helps state fish and wildlife agencies design and implement conservation projects that improve understanding of current population status, identify and manage threats to species recovery, and trial innovative technologies and management approaches. For projects involving a single state, the state provides a non-federal match of 25 percent of the total project budget. In 2023 alone, this program funded projects for Atlantic and shortnose sturgeon in the Carolinas, North Atlantic right and fin whales off the coast of Maine, white abalone in California, and listed corals in the U.S. Virgin Islands.



Testimony of the
American Geophysical Union

Prepared by Brittany Webster, Assistant Director, Science Policy & Government Relations and Michael Villafranca, Program Manager, Science Policy & Government Relations

To the
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
9 May 2025

Regarding the
FY 2026 Appropriations Requests for the National Aeronautics & Space Administration, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, and National Science Foundation

The American Geophysical Union (AGU), a non-profit, non-partisan scientific society, appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the fiscal year (FY) 2026 appropriations request for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the National Science Foundation (NSF). AGU, on behalf of its global community of half a million in the Earth and space sciences, respectfully requests that the 119th Congress appropriate the following:

\$9 billion for NASA's Science Mission Directorate (SMD),
\$150 million for NASA's Office of STEM Engagement,
\$7.2 billion for NOAA, and
\$9.9 billion for NSF.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

AGU requests that Congress appropriate \$9 billion in FY26 for NASA's Science Mission Directorate. This ambitious request will support world-class Earth and space science research and ensure continued U.S. science leadership in the face of rapid advancement by other nations' space agencies. This request will allow NASA to continue steady progress on existing and new decadal missions across all divisions, ensure a robust STEM workforce, enable new opportunities for space commercial partners, and develop groundbreaking technologies for future space exploration and terrestrial uses.

Earth Science Division

Strong investment in Earth Sciences will support the development of the next generation of missions and satellites to expand our understanding of the Earth's systems, supplement national security intelligence, and inexpensively verify ground-based measurements and observations. NASA Earth Science supplies data essential for industries, such as commerce, aviation, agriculture, insurance, banking, and fishing, to plan, adapt, and be profitable in the face of weather, climate, and other changing Earth processes. This investment will also support Landsat Next, a reimagining of the Landsat mission that will create new user applications, such as water quality assessments, mineral mapping, and soil conservation. Increased funding will also enable NASA to continue developing tools and resources needed to protect lives and property in the face of disasters and hazards around the world. Furthermore, knowledge of our planet gives us the foundation to consider habitability, signs of life, and the evolution of planetary systems as we explore the solar system and beyond.

Planetary Science Division

Strong investment in Planetary Sciences will allow NASA to pursue several high-profile decadal missions and priorities, including Mars Sample Return and planetary defense measures, without inhibiting the budgets of other science mission areas. A robust budget will ensure that U.S. leadership in exploring other planets is not surpassed by other countries, ensure a thriving planetary science workforce, and prevent additional layoffs at NASA space flight centers – curtailing the loss of key U.S. human capacity that we may not be able to re-attract. Increased funding will also enable the research and analysis key to developing the next generation of space science leaders and maximizing our science return from all missions.

Heliophysics Division

Increased investment in Heliophysics will enable deeper understanding of the space environment needed to protect existing terrestrial and space assets and achieve our future space exploration ambitions. Increased investment in Heliophysics will allow further development of the flagship decadal Geospace Dynamics Constellation (GDC) mission as well as DYNAMIC, which, together, will fill critical gaps in our understanding of space weather, improve our space weather forecasting capabilities and enhance our abilities to track orbital debris and our space situational awareness. Increased funding will also ensure a robust research and analysis program to maximize the scientific return of large missions and foster a thriving heliophysics community through the support of early career scientists.

Office of STEM Engagement

AGU requests that Congress appropriate \$150 million for NASA's Office of STEM Engagement. Increased funding will support more unique, evidence-based K-12

learning experiences through the Next Gen STEM program, expand the number of internships offered through Space Grant, and increase MUREP programming at community colleges and for those not pursuing four-year degrees.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

AGU urges Congress to appropriate \$7.2 billion for NOAA in FY26 to meet growing demands for accurate forecasting, disaster preparedness, and economic support services that directly benefit the American public. NOAA's science, data, and services are vital to safeguarding American communities and supporting the U.S. economy. In 2024 alone, the U.S. faced 27 separate billion-dollar weather and climate disasters, resulting in more than \$182 billion in damages and 568 lives lost. NOAA's accurate, timely forecasts and early warnings help emergency managers, first responders and communities act faster—saving lives and limiting economic disruption. Robust funding will ensure NOAA's services continue to reduce federal and state costs while helping businesses and families recover more quickly.

From weather forecasts and fisheries management to satellite operations and navigation tools, NOAA supports more than one-third of U.S. gross domestic product. NOAA also strengthens job-creating industries across the country. In 2022, commercial and recreational fisheries supported nearly 2.3 million jobs and generated \$321 billion in sales. These sectors rely on NOAA's science-based assessments to operate efficiently and sustainably. NOAA's services are especially critical to rural and coastal communities, which are home to over 40% of the U.S. population and produce \$361 billion in annual economic output. These areas face growing risks from flooding, erosion, and severe storms—and depend on NOAA data to protect infrastructure, plan agriculture, and keep commerce moving, making sustainable funding for NOAA imperative for America.

NOAA's research and education programs build a stronger scientific workforce while advancing our understanding of Earth systems. The Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research leads foundational science and technology development, including through 17 Cooperative Institutes in 33 states. NOAA's Sea Grant program, with 34 locations nationwide, fosters early-career talent and delivers real-world impact—in 2023 alone, supporting nearly 1,500 businesses and generating over \$828 million in economic benefits. Strategic investment for NOAA in FY26 will ensure the agency can continue delivering groundbreaking research and building a scientific workforce to secure the nation's global scientific leadership.

National Science Foundation

AGU requests that Congress appropriate \$9.9 billion for NSF in FY26. NSF is the bedrock of the U.S. scientific enterprise, providing not only the core funding for fundamental and applied sciences across all disciplines, but also essential funding

and experiences for K-12, secondary, and graduate students as well as early career scientists. Funding for NSF is critical if the U.S. hopes to maintain its leadership in science and technology, maintain a robust and expansive STEM workforce and ecosystem, and reap the resulting economic and national security benefits.

Increased funding will allow NSF to meet the ambitions set by Congress, by further developing the Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships Directorate, expanding access to STEM education for rural and underserved communities, and funding the Regional Innovation Engines - without sacrificing core NSF research and STEM education programs. NSF currently supports almost a quarter of all basic research and funds more than sixty percent of fundamental geoscience research done at U.S. colleges and universities. Increased funding will allow NSF to expand support for STEM programs for all levels of students, as well as K-12 teachers, which are essential for our future STEM workforce. This funding also ensures that critical emerging scientific fields such as quantum, artificial intelligence, and biotechnology have the infrastructure and resources to thrive.

Increased funding will also allow the Office of Polar Programs, the manager of all U.S. activities in the polar regions, to continue maintenance and improvements for Antarctic facilities and ensure these facilities are made available for scientific use as soon as possible. The diminished opportunities to conduct science in Antarctica have impacted a wide swath of the scientific community, from space to climate sciences, and has been especially detrimental for graduate students who must now reimagine their career plans. Additionally, increased funding will support scientific infrastructure from telescopes to research vessels so that U.S. scientists do not have to rely on foreign countries to advance science critical to U.S. interests.

Conclusion

Now is not the time for the U.S. to step back from our investment and prioritization of the Earth and space sciences, to cut staff at agencies, slash funding for science missions and infrastructure or cut funding and support for STEM education at all levels. The U.S. has long been the global leader in science, setting the benchmarks for the rest of the world. This has enabled the U.S. to attract top talent, maintain a high standard of living, foster a thriving commercial sector and strong economy, and ensure our ability to protect our citizens and defend our country. Other nations, however, allies and adversaries, have caught up in many if not all areas of science. Without continued prioritization and investment in science and innovation - specifically the work done by NASA, NOAA, and NSF - we run the risk of losing our leadership all together. AGU appreciates the Subcommittee's leadership in supporting our nation's premier science agencies, as well as the opportunity to submit this testimony. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our requests.



**Outside Witness Testimony in Support of FY 2026 Funding for the
National Science Foundation**

May 7, 2025

Submitted by:

Jyotsna Pandey, Ph.D., Community Programs Director
American Institute of Biological Sciences
950 Herndon Parkway Suite 450
Herndon, VA 20170
E-mail contact: jpandey@aibs.org

Submitted to:

House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies

The American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of fiscal year (FY) 2026 appropriations for the National Science Foundation (NSF). We encourage Congress to reject the President's budget request and instead provide NSF with **at least \$9.9 billion** in FY 2026.

AIBS is a scientific association dedicated to promoting informed decision-making that advances biological research and education for the benefit of science and society. AIBS works to ensure that the public, legislators, funders, and the community of biologists have access to information that can guide informed decision-making.

Importance of Biological Research

Biological research is a national imperative. It deepens our understanding of the living world and drives innovative solutions to critical challenges. Advancing knowledge of genes, cells, organisms, and ecosystems is essential to improving the human condition. From food security and public health to national defense, economic growth, and environmental stewardship, the biological sciences provide a foundational framework for informed decision-making and meaningful progress. Importantly, biological research supports biodiversity and sustains healthy ecosystems that are vital to community livelihoods and resilience. NSF-funded research not only expands our scientific understanding but also fuels the development of new tools, technologies, and entire industries.

Biological research is also a powerful engine for economic growth. Research funding from NSF powers the expansion of the bioeconomy and has given rise to successful companies, such as Genentech, Ekso Bionics, and Ginkgo BioWorks, as well as new industries that provide more robust food crops or disease detection tools and techniques. The translation of biological knowledge into formal and informal education programs fosters the development of the

scientifically and technically skilled workforce needed by employers. Data show that employers continue to seek workers with scientific and technical skills. Over the past decade, the U.S. science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce grew both in number and in the percentage of the total U.S. workforce – from 22% to 24% between 2011 and 2021. In fact, in 2021, the U.S. STEM workforce comprised 36.8 million people in diverse occupations that require STEM knowledge and expertise, making up 24% of the total U.S. workforce.

Importance of NSF-Funded Biological Research

The cornerstone of NSF excellence is a competitive, merit-based review system that underpins the highest standards of excellence. Through its research programs, NSF invests in the development of new knowledge and tools that solve the most challenging problems facing society.

- **Combating emerging diseases:** NSF-funded research played a crucial role in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fundamental research supported by NSF led to the development of critical diagnostic tools and medical devices to combat the outbreak. NSF supported the discovery of bacteria from thermal pools at Yellowstone National Park that contain thermostable enzymes that allow for the rapid copying of genetic material through a process called Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR). This process was integral to manufacturing a widely used clinical test for determining whether a patient has been infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.
- **Mobilizing big data:** Access to and analysis of vast amounts of data are driving innovation. NSF enables integration of big data across scientific disciplines, including applications in the biological sciences. Digitization of biodiversity and natural science collections involves multi-disciplinary teams, which have put more than 147 million specimens and their associated data online for use by researchers, educators, and the public.
- **Enabling synthetic biology:** DNA editing has become more advanced and targeted with techniques such as CRISPR-CAS9, allowing scientists to modify genetic code and redesign biological systems. NSF funds research on how these techniques can be used to bio-manufacture new materials, treat diseases, and accelerate growth of the bioeconomy.

NSF is the primary federal funding source for biological research at our nation's universities and colleges, providing 65 percent of extramural federal support for non-medical, fundamental biological and environmental research at academic institutions.

Strengthening Biological Research Infrastructure

NSF is also an important supporter of biological research infrastructure, such as field stations, natural history museums, and living stock collections. These place-based research centers enable studies that take place over long periods of time and variable spatial scales to provide insights into our nation's most pressing issues.

Scientific collections are an important component of our nation's research infrastructure. Recent reports have highlighted the value of mobilizing biodiversity specimens and data in spurring new scientific discoveries that grow our economy, improve our public health and well-being, and

increase our national security.

In 2019, the Biodiversity Collections Network released their report, “[Extending U.S. Biodiversity Collections to Promote Research and Education](#),” outlining a national agenda that leverages digital data in biodiversity collections for new uses and calling for building an Extended Specimen Network.

A 2020 report by the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM), “[Biological Collections: Ensuring Critical Research and Education for the 21st Century](#),” argued that collections are a critical part of our nation’s science and innovation infrastructure and a fundamental resource for understanding the natural world. The NASEM report’s recommendations for establishing an action center for biological collections and requiring specimen management plans for research generating new specimens, underscore the importance of collections and have been supported by the CHIPS and Science Act.

Both reports articulate a common vision of the future of biological collections and define the need to broaden and deepen collections and associated data to realize their full potential to inform 21st century science. This endeavor requires robust investments in our nation’s scientific collections, whether they are owned by a federal or state agency or are part of an educational institution, free-standing natural history museum, or another research center.

While many federal agencies have a role in supporting the establishment of an action center for biological collections and the development of the Extended Specimen Network, NSF has a central role to play. The agency has been a leader in this space through the Advancing Digitization of Biodiversity Collections program, and is now supporting critical advancements through the Infrastructure Capacity for Biological Research: Biological Collections program.

Building the STEM Workforce

NSF supports recruitment and training of our next generation of scientists. Support for undergraduate and graduate students is critically important to our research enterprise. Students learn science by doing science, and NSF programs engage students in the research process.

NSF awards reached 1,850 colleges, universities, and other public and private institutions across the country in FY 2024. Initiatives such as the Graduate Research Fellowship and the Faculty Early Career Development program are important parts of our national effort to attract and retain the next generation of researchers. In FY 2024, nearly 358,000 people, including researchers, postdoctoral fellows, trainees, teachers and students, were supported directly by NSF.

Investing in NSF is Critical for U.S. Global Leadership in Science

Unfortunately, federal research and development (R&D) investments are shrinking as a share of the U.S. economy. In the mid-1960s, federal R&D spending as a share of the Gross Domestic Product was approximately 2%. Since then, that share has steadily declined to less than 1%. While our economy has grown, our country has not prioritized federal R&D as it once did.

The U.S. is still the largest performer of R&D globally, but our share of worldwide scientific activity has declined considerably over the past two decades, while countries in East and Southeast Asia, especially China, have been rapidly increasing their investments in science. From 2000 to 2020, China's share of total global R&D expenditures increased from 4.9% to 24.8%, while the U.S. share fell from 39.9% to 30.7%. Over the last decade, the annual rate of increase of China's R&D was almost double that of the U.S.

To remain at the global forefront of innovation and to fully realize the benefits of NSF-supported research, the government must make bold and sustained investments in NSF. Unpredictability in funding disrupts research programs, creates uncertainty in the research community, and stalls the development of the next great idea.

Enacting robust funding increases for NSF will allow for critical federal investments in scientific and educational research, as well as support for the development of the scientific workforce. For example, the prestigious Graduate Research Fellowship Program—widely viewed as a career-defining award for aspiring scientists—has supported more than 70,000 students since 1952. Unfortunately, due to ongoing funding uncertainties, only 1,000 early-career researchers received the fellowship this year—down from 2,037 in 2024 and a peak of 2,555 in 2023. New investments will allow NSF to increase the number of new graduate research fellowships it awards to nurture the human capital needed to ensure U.S. leadership in scientific innovation.

Conclusion

Providing NSF with at least \$9.9 billion in FY 2026 is necessary to undo the harmful effects of years of underinvestment in research. The requested funding will grow and sustain the U.S. bioeconomy and empower NSF to accelerate work on important initiatives at the frontiers of science and engineering. This investment will enable NSF to support research in a number of important priority areas such as biotechnology, artificial intelligence, climate change, and advanced biomanufacturing. Importantly, these increases will advance research on infectious disease emergence and transmission, prevent future pandemics, and fill gaps in our knowledge about the spread and evolution of biological threats.

Despite its essential role, NSF received an 8% budget cut in FY 2024 and only flat funding in FY 2025—figures that fall far short of the bipartisan vision outlined in the CHIPS and Science Act. That landmark legislation provided an exciting framework for growing federal investments in research and authorized NSF funding to grow to \$17.8 billion in FY 2026. Yet, current funding remains well below this target. Even more concerning, the President's FY 2026 budget proposal calls for a devastating 57% cut to NSF, along with plans to drastically reduce the agency's workforce and cap indirect cost rates at 15%. If enacted, these measures would severely diminish NSF's ability to support research and innovation, jeopardize decades of scientific progress, and weaken our global competitiveness at a time of mounting international challenges.

We urge Congress to reject the President's proposal and instead provide at least \$9.9 billion for NSF in FY 2026—restoring the agency to its FY 2023 funding level and reaffirming our national commitment to scientific excellence. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request and for your prior efforts on behalf of science and the National Science Foundation.

**American Psychological Association Services, Inc.
Public Witness Written Testimony
Submitted May 9, 2025
by Katherine B. McGuire, Chief Advocacy Officer**

Chair Hal Rogers, Ranking Member Grace Meng, and distinguished members of the United States House of Representatives, Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, the American Psychological Association Services (APA Services), Inc. appreciates and welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations.

APA Services is the companion organization of the American Psychological Association (APA), which is the nation's largest scientific and professional nonprofit organization representing the discipline and profession of psychology, as well as over 173,000 members and affiliates who are clinicians, researchers, educators, consultants, and students in psychological science. **APA Services urges Congress to provide the following funding levels for programs within the National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Census Bureau in FY2026.**

National Science Foundation (NSF)

APA Services joins the scientific community urging Congress to provide at least a \$9.9 billion appropriation for the National Science Foundation (NSF) in FY2026. As other nations continue to make dramatic increases in their investments in science, robust funding for NSF in FY2026 can help the United States maintain its global leadership and competitiveness in science and engineering. Increased support for NSF will also provide funding for the more than \$2 billion in high-quality proposals submitted to NSF each year that cannot be funded.

APA Services urges continued investments in core psychological science research at NSF. NSF is the only federal agency whose primary mission is to support basic non biomedical research and education across all fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Although psychological science receives funding from various directorates within NSF, most core psychological research is supported by the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate. SBE supports research that focuses on variables that influence human behavior across all ages, interactions among individuals and groups, and the development of social and economic systems. While SBE funding accounts for more than 60% of the federal funding for basic social and behavioral science research at academic institutions, SBE has historically received the lowest funding level of the seven NSF Directorates. In addition to the core behavioral research in cognitive neuroscience, human cognition and perception, learning and development, and social psychology, SBE continues to invest substantial funds to participate in special initiatives and cross-directorate programs that address vital national priorities, including emerging technologies in society.

APA Services request that NSF reinstate research support and funding for examination of the spread and impact of misinformation. APASI expresses significant concern regarding the NSF's recent decision to terminate hundreds of active research grants, including vital projects focused on misinformation, disinformation, and their impacts. These terminations, reportedly made without standard appeal processes and citing concerns about infringing on protected speech, fundamentally misunderstand the nature and purpose of this critical scientific inquiry. This abrupt halting of funding has widespread detrimental impacts, undermining foundational science essential to understanding how people process information, dismantling expert research infrastructure, leaving psychologists without evidence-based tools to help patients grappling with the mental health consequences of misinformation (a concern particularly acute for vulnerable populations, including individuals with disabilities and minority communities), and jeopardizing our ability to counter the real-world harms of misinformation on public health and education. APASI urges Congress to support the reversal of these cuts and ensure continued investment in this essential area of research.

In addition to the SBE Directorate, APA Services encourages continued support for the Biological Science Directorate (BIO) and Computer Science and Information Systems Engineering Directorate (CISE), both of which provide important support for psychological research at NSF. BIO provides support for psychologists who study the principles and mechanisms that govern life from the level of the genome and cell, to the whole family, individual, or species. Knowledge derived from psychological science is essential to the work in many of the CISE divisions, as human behavior plays a key role in the design and implementation of new technologies. Human factors psychology is relevant for the development and advancement of automated systems in autonomous vehicles, essential for the creation of fair, trustworthy, and explainable AI, and necessary for research on the future of work.

APA Services urges the Committee to help curb the potential loss of research talent likely to occur if early-career researchers are forced from scientific pathways due to economic or social circumstances which attenuate career progression and threaten their professional futures. While scientists across career stages have been upended by this monumental shift, early-career scientists, such as graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty, are particularly vulnerable. Early-career scientists are often just beginning to establish research independence. Destabilizing fluctuations in research productivity, faculty positions in academia, and funding opportunities will impact early-career scientists in the immediate and late phases of their careers.

Department of Justice (DOJ)

APA Services is committed to reforming policing and the criminal justice system, supporting those with mental illness within the system, meeting the needs of victims of violence, and ensuring that high-value research is funded, and the best scientific evidence is used to improve programs and policies. **APA Services urges the**

Committee to adopt a reform-minded approach for appropriations to the following Office of Justice (OJP) and Bureau of Prisons (BOP) Programs.

Within OJP, APA urges the Committee to provide at least \$42.5 million for the Bureau of Justice Statistics; at least \$35.4 million for the National Institute of Justice (including at least \$1 million in dedicated funding for gun violence research); \$125 million for the Second Chance Act including \$5 million to support Children of Incarcerated Parents demonstration grants; \$35 million for Justice Reinvestment; and \$12.5 million for Delinquency Prevention Program.

Though rates of domestic abuse have declined significantly since the enactment of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), exposure to violence remains common, with one in three women in the U.S. experiencing rape, physical violence, or stalking at some point in their lifetime. Flat funding for the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) would imperil progress made over the last three decades. When Congress thinks about VAWA, transgender and gender non-conforming people need to be considered. According to the Human Rights Campaign, at least 38 transgender and gender non-conforming people were killed in 2022, the overwhelming majority of whom were Black and Latinx transgender women. These figures are suspected to be incomplete because too often these cases go unreported — or misreported. The National Center for Transgender Equality reports that the toxic anti-trans rhetoric and efforts to weaponize disinformation about trans people have contributed to a deeply unsafe environment for trans people and their families.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, research has shown that traumatic experiences are associated with both behavioral health and chronic physical health conditions, especially those traumatic events that occur during childhood. Substance use, mental health conditions, and other risky behaviors have been linked with traumatic experiences. Crime victims may experience trauma, and APA Services strongly recommends fully funding the Victims of Crime Act Fund to ensure adequate resources for direct victim services.

APA Services urges the Committee to increase FY2026 appropriations for OVW and prioritize the prevention of violence across the lifespan— including domestic and sexual violence, dating violence, and stalking, as well as children’s exposure to family violence. Of the FY2026 funds made available to the OVW, APA Services specifically requests: \$255 million for Services, Training, Officers Prosecutors (STOP) Grants; \$12 million for Education and Training to End Violence Against Women with Disabilities; \$9 million for the Enhanced Training and Services to End Violence Against and Abuse of Women in Later Life Program (Abuse in Later Life Program); \$25 million for grants to assist tribal governments in exercising special domestic violence criminal jurisdiction; \$52.5 million for Rural Domestic Violence and Child Abuse Enforcement; \$16 million for the Consolidated Youth Oriented Program; and \$25 million for grants to reduce violent crimes against women on campus. Together, these programs are crucial in preventing further violence, helping victims find safety and support, and starting them on the path towards recovery.

Psychological research has revealed effective strategies to enhance law enforcement and community relations, improve public safety, and reduce the risks of violence and aggression. **APA Services urges the Committee to increase FY2026 funding for the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to support federal, state, and local activities as well as fully funding the programs and initiatives included in the Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act of 2022.** This includes \$20 million for Training on Racial Profiling and De-escalation, and Duty to Intervene Program. APA Services requests at least \$45 million for Community Policing Development/Training and Technical Assistance and at least \$10 million for the Training to Improve Police-based Responses to the People with Mental Illness program. To address the current crisis in law enforcement suicide and PTSD, APA Services strongly urges the committee to double funding for the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Program to at least \$15 million.

Protecting Congressional Authority

As the Subcommittee considers Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations, we urge you to reaffirm the constitutional authority of Congress over federal spending. Congress holds the constitutional responsibility to appropriate funds and exercise oversight to ensure that federal agencies disburse the funds as intended. Congress must maintain this authority and responsibility with fidelity to the law.

August 28, 2025

**From: Gregory C. Beroza, Wayne Loel Professor of Earth Sciences
Department of Geophysics, Stanford University
Stanford, CA, 94305-2215, USA**

**To: House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies**

I write to you in support of appropriations for the National Science Foundation. I am a seismologist who studies earthquakes. This topic falls under the Earth Sciences in the Foundation. I was recently elected to the National Academy of Sciences, which is an organization that provides scientific knowledge for the public good. Throughout my career I have been supported in my research by the NSF. I am very grateful for that support. Most of the funding I have received from NSF has been invested in graduate student education and research. Those students have gone on to serve the national interest by working in the national labs, academia, and the private sector. They have become global leaders in earthquake science in topics ranging from earthquake hazard assessment to mitigating human-induced earthquakes to nuclear test-ban-treaty verification. Their work is of great benefit to the nation.

Most recently, federally funded research has allowed me to improve earthquake monitoring for state and federal government and for the private sector. For government, this information is critical to quantifying earthquake and volcanic hazards and to mitigating the risks they pose to people and property. For the private sector, earthquakes induced by hydrocarbon development, geothermal energy production, and subsurface carbon dioxide sequestration all have the potential to undermine their ability to pursue important energy options for America in the 21st century.

It is in the *strategic national interest* that the risks from earthquakes be understood, managed, and mitigated. NSF plays a key role in funding the science that allows progress in this endeavor.

For my entire career, America has been the undisputed world leader in science, but that can no longer be taken for granted. It is widely understood that America's science leadership, and the diplomatic soft power that comes with it, is being challenged by other countries. Some of those countries are allies, and others are adversaries, but all of them appreciate the return on investment in the sciences and would like to accrue the benefits for themselves. Now is a strategic time for science – particularly with the rapid progress unfolding in artificial intelligence, for which the potential gains are just beginning to be realized. American scientists are working hard to compete internationally, but drastic cuts to NSF funding and to the funding of multiple other federal agencies, have the potential to hamstring US scientists such that we will be hard-pressed to compete. I urge you and your committee to do what you can to avoid what would be an unfortunate outcome by restoring the contemplated cuts to federal science funding.

Sincerely,

Gregory C. Beroza, Wayne Loel Professor of Earth Sciences
Department of Geophysics, Stanford University
Stanford, CA, 94305-2215, USA

Outside Testimony for the Record
Fiscal Year 2026
Submitted to the
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Dr. Jonathan A. Bagger, CEO
American Physical Society (APS)

Chairman Rogers, Vice Chair Strong, and Ranking Member Meng, the American Physical Society thanks the subcommittee for the opportunity to provide testimony on the importance of federal funding for the scientific agencies under your jurisdiction: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the National Science Foundation (NSF).

America's federal science agencies have enabled some of our nation's—and perhaps humanity's—greatest achievements:

- NASA, known globally for its accomplishments in space exploration, has provided us with a deep understanding of the cosmos and inspired generations of Americans to pursue scientific careers, while generating spin-off technologies like digital camera sensors and solar cells [1].
- NSF has enabled countless discoveries that are integral to our daily lives, from semiconductors and quantum technologies to MRI and LASIK eye surgery [2], garnering 268 Nobel Prizes, including for the recent observation of gravitational waves.
- NIST has pioneered innovations like the atomic clock [3], which is fundamental to the functioning of GPS, while supplying crucial measurement and calibration services, which support everything from blood oxygen sensors to the extreme ultraviolet lithography required for manufacturing semiconductors.

For decades, these agencies have made the United States the undisputed global leader in science, technology, and innovation. They have made unparalleled contributions to our nation's economic prosperity, national security, and well-being.

Today, all of this is at risk. Competitor nations have dramatically increased their investments in science [4], modeling their research and development (R&D) enterprises after our own.

In addition, the race for global talent has intensified. After decades of the U.S. being the premier destination for global talent—attracting top STEM students and world-class researchers with a dynamic, well-supported R&D ecosystem—recent reports [5,6] indicate that we are losing our draw. Other nations are revamping their immigration systems to attract talented young scientists, and there are new efforts by some countries allocating hundreds of millions of dollars to recruit U.S.-based researchers [7].

America is now faced with a decision—a fork in the road if you will. We can choose a future where the United States is no longer a global leader in science and technology; a world where the

first (all-purpose) quantum computer debuts in China; a world where the European Union wins the race to Mars; and a world where everyday Americans are forced to wait in line behind the citizens of other nations for access to breakthrough, life-saving medical technologies.

Or we can choose a different path for our country. One where we build on and take advantage of our scientific advances and innovations, where we aren't satisfied with the status quo, and where we are focused on improving the lives of and opportunities for all Americans. We can choose a path where America doesn't shy away from challenges—a path where America leads.

Ultimately, this choice rests with Congress. Congress holds the power of the federal purse. Congress will decide if America will continue to lead—or, for the first time in our nation's nearly 250-year history—if we are willing to simply follow.

Choosing leadership requires that Congress meet the moment. It requires sending a clear signal to other nations, along with their talented students, scientists, and engineers, that America's best years still lie ahead. That we are committed to funding ambitious research projects across the country, training the next generation of STEM talent, and catalyzing growth in the private sector.

Put simply, choosing leadership requires the House Appropriations Committee—and, in particular the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies—to champion sustained and robust investments in the federal science agencies that are responsible for making the American innovation ecosystem the envy of the world.

Why are strong, consistent investments in NASA, NSF, and NIST absolutely critical to America's future? Because there are no analogs, no substitutes, and no alternatives for their role—and the role of federal investment—in our R&D ecosystem.

From their inception, NSF, NASA, and NIST have supported ambitious, fundamental research that private industry cannot or will not pursue. For an individual company or industry, such research is often either too large-scale or too risky, or offers too diffuse or difficult-to-capture short-term economic returns [8]. Research supported by federal science agencies lays an indispensable foundation for American innovation that spurs further private investment [9].

Countries around the globe seek to emulate the American research enterprise, with its unique combination of public and private funding. Our world-class research infrastructure and fertile training ground have incubated breakthrough scientific discoveries and, at the same time, the world's most valuable companies. Federally-funded fundamental research is a long-term investment that provides exceptional returns—estimated to be 150 to 300 percent since World War II [10].

Federal funding provided by NIST, NSF, and NASA reaches all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories, supporting people and research infrastructure, along with local economies. To highlight just a few examples, in fiscal year 2023 (the most recently available data), higher education institutions in Kentucky received \$37 million from NSF and NASA, those in Alabama received \$117 million, and those in New York received \$555 million [11].

Beyond pioneering breakthroughs and boundary-pushing innovations, investments in the federal science agencies are essential to producing perhaps our most important resource—tomorrow’s STEM workforce. A core part of the NSF’s mission, for example, is supporting STEM education and the broader development of the nation’s talent pipeline. In FY 2023, NASA, NSF, and NIST together supported more than 21,000 graduate students and 4,500 postdoctoral researchers [11]. The federal science agencies recognize that without people, there is no research, no discovery, and no innovation.

In President Trump’s recent letter to Office of Science and Technology Policy Director Kratsios, the President alludes to the Manhattan Project, the Apollo Program, and the dawn of the Information Age. He seeks a new “Golden Age of Innovation” for the United States that echoes these achievements.

Each of these American achievements was the direct result of a commitment by Congress for the United States to lead. Congress chose to support these ambitious programs through sustained, robust investments in our federal science agencies. And, today, Congress has the opportunity to do so again.

We urge you to choose the path of innovation and scientific leadership. Doing so requires a commitment to America’s future. Doing so requires a commitment from the House Appropriations Committee to champion all of our federal science agencies. And doing so requires that the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Science, Justice, and Related Agencies allocate at least \$9.9 billion for NSF, \$9 billion for NASA’s Science Mission Directorate, and \$1.2 billion for NIST for fiscal year 2026.

We urge this Congress to open a new chapter in our nation’s journey—one that captures the imagination of today’s youth, inspires tomorrow’s leaders, and provides opportunities for all to participate in discovering the wonders of the universe.

The American Physical Society and its more than 50,000 members in universities, industries, and national laboratories across all fifty states thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

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**Testimony of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology to the House
Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related
Agencies**

Testimony in support of the National Science Foundation

Submitted by:

Ann West, Ph.D.

Chair, Public Affairs Advisory Committee Member
American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

May 09, 2025

The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) is a nonprofit professional society that builds and empowers a broad community of molecular life scientists to advance discovery. Its community comprises 11,000 members, including researchers and scientist educators, ranging from senior scientists to students. ASBMB strongly advocates for strengthening the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) workforce, and supporting sustainable funding for the U.S. research enterprise.

Our members conduct ground-breaking foundational research in all 50 states that leads to medical, agricultural, and technological advancements that make American lives better. With each basic science breakthrough, the scientific enterprise grows, adding new therapies, interventions, and solutions to the most pressing issues inflicting the country. To grow and sustain the American research ecosystem, **the ASBMB strongly recommends policymakers appropriate \$9.9 billion to the National Science Foundation** to maintain the agency's pivotal role in laying the foundational research needed to drive cures and innovation and secure this country's global leadership in science and technology.

Federally funded research, such as those conducted by our members, has led to the development of life-saving treatments and foundational discoveries that have propelled the scientific enterprise including:

- Studies on the connection between a [high fat diet](#) and atherosclerosis.
- Research on proteins involved in [Parkinson's Disease](#).
- Research that studies microbes involved in enhancing [heat resistance in plants](#).

Similarly, my research at University of Oklahoma focuses on studying foundational understanding of biochemical and molecular biological mechanisms that can lead to new discoveries. In my lab, we study the pathways in bacteria and yeast that are integral to microbial adaptation to environmental stress, which has been supported by an NSF grant. By studying these pathways, we seek to understand how proteins interact and regulate key processes within the cell, make these proteins potential targets for antimicrobial therapy development, which is desperately needed as we see the [rising toll of drug-resistant infections](#).

For biochemists like myself, NSF funding supports basic research into intricacies of biological systems and processes that lay the foundation for innovations in therapies, crop development, imaging, and computational algorithms. Basic scientific research is the first step in this process;

without it, scientists would not have the vital information to translate into cures or innovations that help the American people.

NSF plays a unique role in basic science as the only federal agency that funds research in all fields. These investments in foundational research led to many groundbreaking technologies including Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and LASIK eye surgery – all of which have a tremendous impact on the health and lives of Americans.

The agency is able to achieve such success through continued and sustained investments in high-risk research throughout the years.

Congress has recognized NSF's unique position as the epicenter for driving scientific breakthroughs through authorizing the [Technology, Innovation and Partnerships \(TIP\) directorate](#). TIP houses the America's Seed Fund programs that support small business research and development, the Innovation Corps (I-corps) entrepreneurship training program that empowers scientists to translate their discoveries to the marketplace, and other programs that foster partnerships and workforce development. To date, the TIP directorate [has](#) launched over 2,000 startups, created over 6,000 jobs, and trained over 14,000 future innovators.

Often initial funding from NSF leads to discoveries that are ripe for translational investment from other federal agencies and the private sector. For example, publicly supported investments such as the Dartmouth College-Generate Biomedicines, Inc., University of Alaska Fairbanks-Be Cool Pharmaceuticals and the Old Dominion University-Pulse Biosciences partnerships [all started from NSF funding](#).

Importantly, NSF funds research in [all 50 states](#), contributing tens of millions of dollars to state economies each year. The awards to research institutions support research personnel, small businesses, and laboratory supplies fueling the economies of surrounding communities.

In addition to bolstering the country's economy, a key strength of the NSF is the agency's role in training the next generation of scientists. NSF supports future innovators through summer research experiences (REUs) that prepare undergraduate students for graduate school, and merit-based Graduate Research Fellowships (GRFs) that support master's and doctoral students with exceptional potential. While the GRF program typically awards around 2,000 GRFs a year, in 2025 only 1,000 were announced.

These programs not only prepare the next generation for independent research positions, they train creative, innovative thinkers who drive change across sectors. It ensures that the next generation has the appropriate scientific fitness to succeed as productive scientists. Many scientists trained from the GRFP have gone on to create biotechnology companies that have expanded the U.S. scientific enterprise. For instance, [co-founders of Gingko Bioworks](#), a synthetic biology company, began their research careers with funding from the GRF program. The initial investment into their training positioned them to receive the necessary seed money [\(also from NSF\)](#) to build their now multi-million dollar company that provides over 600 jobs.

Without steady funding for these programs, talent will be lost and there will no future innovators to lead the country's scientific enterprise.

The value of investing in NSF goes beyond the careers of individual scientists and trainees. The NSF is uniquely equipped to fulfill the administration's ambitious goal to "revitalize America's science and technology enterprise." NSF brings together scientists from across disciplines through the Convergence Accelerators and other Center programs. In high-priority fields like

quantum science and AI, the TIP directorate is building bridges across the public and private sectors to promote research and development. The research conducted between these partnerships in fields such as cybersecurity protects the nation's digital infrastructure and keeps the country safe by mitigating the risks of cyberattacks by foreign adversaries.

Lastly, to stay ahead of foreign competitors, we must maintain US scientific leadership. NSF funding contributes to American competitiveness through training of a highly skilled workforce, discovery and commercialization of inventions, and by fostering international cooperation. Programs like the Global Centers and AccelNet encourage engagement with global peers and position American scientists as leaders on the global research stage.

To grow and sustain our scientific enterprise, we strongly urge appropriators to increase the NSF budget to the highest possible level to maintain global leadership, fuel the economy and train future innovators.

Testimony of the Association of State Floodplain Managers
Submitted by Chad Berginnis, Executive Director

Regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations for the
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Submitted to the
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

May 9, 2025

On behalf of the Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM), representing over 22,000 state and local officials, planners, engineers, academics, and private sector professionals committed to reducing flood risk and building more resilient communities, we appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on the **Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)**.

ASFPM is deeply concerned about proposed cuts to NOAA's overall budget and to specific programs that are vital to the nation's flood resilience and coastal sustainability. **We urge Congress to sustain and strengthen investments in the National Weather Service, NOAA's Coastal Zone Management Program, the Coastal Services Centers, Digital Coast, the Precipitation Frequency Atlas (Atlas 15) and the National Water Model.**

The 155-year old National Weather Service (NWS) is tasked with the lifesaving mission of issuing forecasts for every square mile of the United States. Every severe thunderstorm, tornado, and flash flood warning begins with an NWS forecaster. For \$1.3 billion in cost, the National Weather Service employs thousands of meteorologists at 122 offices around the country, each staffed with professionals who are experts in the local climate. The American Meteorological Association estimates the NWS provides \$102 billion annually in benefits, that is a 74:1 benefit cost ratio - the epitome of governmental efficiency.

Forecasters with the NWS routinely provide Impact-Based Decision Support Services (IDSS) for local, state, and federal officials during high-impact weather events - many of these being floods. This support ranges from telephone weather briefings to on-site decision support, such as deploying meteorologists to participate in Joint Field Offices and assist in post-disaster assessments and reviews. It's an invaluable link that helps key decisionmakers direct where and how to deploy resources and aid before, during, and after a storm.

For over 50 years, the Coastal Zone Management Act has been the bedrock of America's coastal policy framework. It fosters a dynamic partnership between federal and state agencies, driving nationally significant efforts such as the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Programs and the National Estuarine Research Reserve System

(NERRS). These programs are central to managing and restoring floodplains and coastal zones, particularly in the face of accelerating threats like sea level rise, storm surge, habitat loss, and more frequent and severe weather events.

The 34 federally approved CZM Programs operating in coastal states and territories have been highly effective. In recent years, these programs:

- Implemented over 2,500 projects directly enhancing community resilience;
- Partnered with 2,500 local governments to promote balanced coastal development;
- Created or improved 2,700 public access points;
- Protected or restored nearly 150,000 acres of coastal habitats; and
- Trained over 200,000 coastal professionals in critical areas such as hazard mitigation, public access, and community development.

These programs are not optional—they are essential infrastructure for resilience. They also represent an excellent return on investment. State match requirements mean that federal dollars are leveraged nearly one-to-one, maximizing taxpayer impact. We urge Congress to provide:

- \$64.7 million for the Coastal Zone Management Program;
- \$51.2 million for the Coastal Services Centers; and
- Continued full funding for the NERRS.

NOAA's Digital Coast platform is a national treasure that enables communities to make smart, data-informed decisions. Originally created to meet the growing geospatial and analytical needs of coastal planners and emergency managers, Digital Coast now offers:

- 37 terabytes of coastal imagery;
- 5.5 trillion LiDAR points;
- 800,000 miles of mapped land cover;
- Over 70 analytical tools and 140 case studies;
- More than 100 training modules.

The Digital Coast program, authorized by Public Law 116-223, plays an essential role in floodplain mapping, infrastructure planning, and natural resource management. We urge Congress to fully fund Digital Coast with an appropriation of \$4 million to maintain and enhance this critical capability for local governments.

The 2022 FLOODS Act directed NOAA to establish and maintain the Precipitation Frequency Atlas—commonly known as Atlas 15 and to update methodology for the Probable Maximum Precipitation, which is essential for dam and critical powerplant

safety concerns. These vital resource updates of in a number of cases woefully outdated rainfall frequency estimates will be used by communities, engineers, and planners to design safe, flood-resilient infrastructure.

Without current and accurate rainfall frequency data, our flood maps, building codes, stormwater systems, bridges, and dams are built or maintained on flawed assumptions. The cost of delay is profound—ranging from preventable infrastructure failures to loss of life and economic disruption. We urge Congress to provide at least \$3.5 million in FY 2026 to ensure timely development and future updates of Atlas 15. This is not merely a data product; it is a foundational investment that informs virtually every flood mitigation decision in the United States.

Finally, the National Water Model (NWM) is designed to provide more closely integrated water predictive capabilities to promote resilience to water risks. NOAA has been working towards an Integrated Water Prediction effort to deliver a suite of more holistic water intelligence products to help communities and industries make better-informed decisions about water management and how to prepare for and respond to extreme water events. NWM-based information will be particularly useful in headwater areas in support of NOAA's flash flood mission, such as those areas in the southern Appalachian mountains that were devastated by Hurricane Helene last year.

Recent actions have intensified our concerns. The proposed FY 2026 budget includes a 27% cut to NOAA's overall funding, targeting climate-related research and satellite programs. The Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) faces a 75% cut. These reductions will have significant consequences. Proposed budget cuts in addition to the reduction of approximately 10% of NWS staff that has already occurred will result in reduced flood and weather forecasting accuracy as well as other impacts, as pointed out by five former NWS Directors in their May 2nd [open letter](#). Curtailment of funding for research into climate change, ocean data collection and monitoring, and stalled research will lead to data gaps for updating and improving the NWM. Cuts in research will have an impact on our nation's disaster preparedness and will make communities more vulnerable to the effects of extreme weather events, including floods and droughts. .

With billions of dollars in coastal and other infrastructure being deployed under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), robust support for NOAA's planning and data programs is more urgent than ever. These programs help communities understand risk, prioritize resilience investments, and make sound, long-term decisions that will shape safety and prosperity for decades.

Reducing or eliminating these programs—especially at a time when natural disasters are increasing in frequency, severity, and cost—would be shortsighted and dangerous. It would shift costs and risk to future generations and reverse years of progress in flood risk reduction and environmental stewardship.

Hazard mitigation and coastal resilience are not abstract policy goals—they are real-world, cost-effective solutions that save lives, protect property, and support local economies. NOAA's NWS, CZM, Digital Coast, Atlas 15, and NWM initiatives are essential tools in this effort, and they deserve full congressional support.

Thank you for your continued leadership and for your consideration of these critical programs as Congress finalizes FY 2026 appropriations.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our recommendations with you and thank you for considering our suggestions. Please contact ASFPM Executive Director Chad Berginnis at CBerginnis@floods.org or Elizabeth Duffy, ASFPM Washington Liaison at Elizabeth@floods.org, or call our office at (608) 828-3000. Our website is: www.floods.org.

Sincerely,
Chad Berginnis
ASFPM Executive Director

Ilana Levinson, Senior Director of Government Relations

Written Testimony on Behalf of Boys and Girls Clubs of America

Before the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Addressing the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)

Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) would like to thank the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for soliciting the views and recommendations of public witnesses on Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 funding. The following testimony expresses our strong support for the Youth Mentoring Grant program managed by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

For 165 years, Boys & Girls Clubs have provided safe places where young people can learn and grow. We believe every young person deserves a great future, meaning every youth that enters our doors graduates on time and is college or career ready while living a healthy lifestyle and demonstrating good character and citizenship. Clubs offer young people an environment to build resiliency by developing the skills that make them ready for work and life. This out-of-school time (OST) programming is carried out at more than 5,500 Boys & Girls Clubs including over 2,700 school-based Clubs, 1,200 Clubs in rural areas, 700 Clubs in public housing or community-based facilities, over 450 affiliated youth centers on military installations worldwide, and 250 Clubs on Native lands. A large part of our success has been our commitment to support youth, which encompasses a strong commitment to mentoring.

As you develop the Fiscal Year 2026 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, **we respectfully request at least \$130 million in funding for the Youth Mentoring Grant, which is the only mentoring-specific line item in the federal budget.** This important program supports the implementation, delivery, and enhancement of evidence-based mentoring services to improve outcomes and ensure that underserved youth have the supports they need to thrive academically, personally, and professionally.

Youth mentoring is an evidence-based prevention and intervention strategy that enhances life outcomes for young people and mentors. It is a powerful way to reduce the number of youth disconnected from school and work, increase social and economic mobility, and create a more productive and prosperous nation. A meta-analysis found that mentoring had a positive effect on all youth outcomes included in the research, including mental and physical health, academics, and career planning and preparation.¹

While we have seen and continue to see success in the kids we are able to help, there is much more work to do. One in three young people in the United States will grow up without ever having a mentor during their childhood, constituting a “mentoring gap” that demonstrates the need for collaborative investment in mentoring services.² Recent research suggests that this gap

¹ Raposa, Elizabeth B., et. al. The Effects of Youth Mentoring Programs: A Meta-analysis of Outcome Studies. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 2019.

² Bruce, Mary, Bridgeland, John, and Civic Enterprises, in association with Hart Research Associates. The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring. MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, 2014.

is growing, with almost 70 percent of young people saying there were times growing up where they wanted a mentor but could not find an adult to support them in this way.³ Disadvantaged youth are especially likely to turn to formal programs to access highly impactful mentors,⁴ and are often the people who benefit from these programs the most. In fact, young adults who are at-risk but have a mentor are more likely to graduate high school on time;⁵ more likely to enroll in college; more likely to volunteer on a monthly basis; and more likely to hold leadership positions.⁶

With youth in America continuing to face serious challenges related to substance abuse, mental health, and the effects of trauma, a trusting relationship with an adult can help them manage a myriad of complex and difficult issues. Mentoring programs save federal dollars over the long-term by reducing rates of incarceration, bolstering student academic achievement, and enabling positive health and psychosocial outcomes for young people. The positive impact of mentoring on a number of issues makes the Youth Mentoring Grant program uniquely valuable for increased public investment:

- **Mentoring for military-connected youth.** Mentoring offers a practical approach to support military youth and their families and has been shown to improve academic performance and decrease symptoms of depression, while improving social support and parental ratings of stress in the home.
- **Mentoring and career exploration/workforce development.** Mentors support youth in career exploration and early employment experiences by providing support and hands-on skill development. Building intentional mentoring relationships with young employees has led to higher retention rates, direction in building a career or educational journey, wage increases, and employee satisfaction. It can also help offset feelings of exclusion that prevent some youth from considering certain career paths.
- **Mentoring to address loneliness.** There may be no more direct way to help reduce isolation and loneliness for a young person than by providing them with a relationship that is tailored to their needs and circumstances. Mentoring programs, by definition, are focused on connecting youth to not only individual relationships but deep engagement with program staff and other participants. Relationships with supportive adults are considered a key developmental asset; trusting relationships create a nourishing environment for adolescents to explore the world around them and engage in healthy risk-taking.
- **Mentoring and youth violence prevention and intervention.** Mentoring serves as one of the few prevention and intervention strategies that can effectively address multiple risk and protective factors simultaneously. Mentoring has also been found to reduce aggressive behaviors such as fighting, bullying, and delinquency. Effective services can help young people heal and can assist youth who have engaged in or are at risk of being

³ Garringer, Michael, & Benning, Chelsea. Who Mentored You?: A Study Examining the Role Mentors Have Played in the Lives Of Americans Over the Last Half Century. MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, 2023.

⁴ Bruce, Mary, Bridgeland, John, and Civic Enterprises, in association with Hart Research Associates. The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring. MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, 2014.

⁵ Boys & Girls Clubs of America. National Youth Outcome Initiative Report, 2023.

⁶ Bruce and Bridgeland. The Mentoring Effect, 2014. MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership.

offenders of violence by providing them with role models who support positive, prosocial behavior. Mentoring programs have successfully partnered with agencies, community-based organizations, and private sector entities to implement whole community approaches designed to address violence.

- **Mentoring and mental health.** Mentors have always been assets to young people when they are experiencing mental health challenges. Youth mentoring programs of all types have the ability to prevent and help youth cope with depressive symptoms. Strong mentoring services can help address the trauma that youth have faced, including those who lost a caregiver, and help reduce stigma and increase treatment entry and adherence. Having a mentor has also been found to be associated with life satisfaction and positive well-being in adulthood.
- **Mentoring and education.** Young people at risk of not completing high school but who had a mentor are more likely to enroll in college, participate in extracurricular activities, hold a leadership position, and volunteer. School-based mentoring programs also have a positive impact on a variety of outcomes, including reducing truancy and absenteeism rates and school-related misconduct and increasing scholastic efficacy and peer support.
- **Mentoring and opioid and other substance use.** Access to caring adult mentors is a protective factor for young people, lowering the likelihood of incidents of drug use and other harmful behaviors. This is especially true for youth who have a parent, caregiver, or other loved ones struggling with or dying because of drug misuse. Further, because mentoring programs can offer support at all three prevention levels (primary, secondary, and tertiary), practitioners are important resources in combating the opioid crisis. While primary prevention work is the most critical from a public health perspective, research demonstrates that caring relationships can bolster treatment and recovery.
- **Mentoring and character development.** Research has found that fostering a sense of belonging and forging a sense of personal character were among the most meaningful forms of support offered by mentors. Too many American youth are growing up without these core aspects of human development and, in their isolation, can drift into antisocial or even violent behaviors. Mentoring relationships are a cornerstone of a healthy society that allows all parties to contribute and find their positive path.
- **Mentoring for Youth in Rural Communities.** Low-income rural youth report some of the lowest rates of mentoring of any demographic group in the country. This presents an important directive for expansion, as studies show many acute benefits to young people in rural communities, such as health improvements, mental health gains, academic achievement, and reducing externalized negative behaviors.

The impact of the Youth Mentoring Grant is best exemplified by the **Boys & Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley (GA)**. In collaboration with mentors, the Club implemented impactful activities centered around giving back to the community and preparing youth for a successful new year. Club members, guided by their mentors, participated in service projects which fostered a spirit of gratitude and civic responsibility. Members also met with their mentors to reflect on their achievements, identify areas for growth, and outline personal and academic goals for the upcoming year. Together, they developed actionable plans, emphasizing accountability and forward-thinking. These activities not only highlighted the importance of giving back but also strengthened mentor-mentee relationships and equipped members with the tools to start the new year with focus and intention. As a result of this programming, members reported increased

confidence and clarity in their personal and academic goals, with several expressing that their mentoring sessions significantly contributed to their readiness for the new year.

The Variety Boys & Girls Club (NY) also continues to demonstrate the vital role the Youth Mentoring Grant plays in achieving great futures for youth. Utilizing its FY23 funding, the Club was able to offer a diverse array of programs and activities tailored to the interests and developmental needs of its youth. Mentors and youth engaged in a rich variety of pursuits, including but not limited to: visual arts, digital media, community service, reading, sports, swimming, substance abuse prevention, gardening, and numerous others. Several mentees even took an active role in community service projects at the Club, enhancing their leadership skills and building a positive self-image.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Chattahoochee Valley (GA) and Variety Boys & Girls Club (NY) are just two examples of the clear benefits provided by OST youth mentoring programs. Unfortunately, today the average mentoring program has 63 young people on their waitlist,⁷ and recent reports and studies have found that inflationary costs, workforce shortages, and reduced charitable giving have continued to plague the nonprofit sector. This increase in funding for the Youth Mentoring Grant Program will help close the mentoring gap and create meaningful relationships that will put them on track to academic, personal, and professional success.

As a youth-serving organization committed to ensuring young people are loved, supported, and set up for success in life, we recognize the unique capabilities of the Youth Mentoring Program grant to improve outcomes for young people facing risk, and its capacity to scale effective evidence-based practices and support. **To that end, we respectfully request at least \$130 million in funding for the Youth Mentoring Grant program.**

Thank you for your consideration of this critical request to support our at-risk youth. Please contact Pam Yuen, Boy & Girls Clubs of America's Director of Government Relations, at pyuen@bgca.org with additional questions.

⁷ Garringer, M., McQuillan, S., & McDaniel, H. Examining Youth Mentoring Services: Findings from the 2016 National Mentoring Program Survey. MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, 2017.

**Testimony on Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations for the House Committee on
Appropriations, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Concerning United States Marshals Service Appropriations for
Judicial and Courthouse Security
May 9, 2025
Christie Wentworth, Senior Policy Counsel
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington**

Chair Rogers, Ranking Member Meng and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding judicial and courthouse security funding for the United States Marshals Service (“USMS”).

The USMS’s “primary role and mission” is to provide security for and enforce all orders of the federal courts.¹ But the USMS—a bureau within the Department of Justice—is led by a presidentially appointed director, reports to the attorney general and ultimately retains “final authority” over the judiciary’s security needs.² As the marshals remain dually accountable to both the executive and judicial branches, and as the administration attempts to politicize the USMS,³ federal judges have started to worry that executive branch leadership could strip judges of much-needed security.⁴

¹ 28 U.S.C. § 566(a).

² *Id.* §§ 561(a), 566(i).

³ Ruth Marcus, *Pardon me: What were the folks at DOGE thinking?*, Washington Post (Jan. 23, 2025), <https://img.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2025/01/23/doge-jan-6-marshals-federal-judges> (directing the USMS to check on the status of federal cases related to the January 6th pardons); Statement of Elizabeth G. Oyer, Former Department of Justice Pardon Attorney, Before Members of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees, Hearing on Restoring Accountability and Attacks on the Rule of Law, at 3 (Apr. 7, 2025), <https://www.schiff.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/20250407-Liz-Oyer-Hearing-Statement-4.7.25.pdf> (reporting that the Department of Justice had directed “two armed Special Deputy U.S. Marshals” to serve a former federal employee a letter at her home on a Friday evening); Brianna Tucker, *DOGE staffers bring U.S. marshals to small federal agency that denied them access*, Wash. Post (Mar. 6, 2025), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/03/06/doge-us-marshals-usadf/> (explaining that U.S. DOGE Service employees, accompanied by “five U.S. marshals,” demanded access to the U.S. African Development Foundation’s offices); *Statement from a DHS Spokesperson on Directive Expanding Immigration Law Enforcement to Some Department of Justice Officials*, Dep’t of Homeland Security (Jan. 23, 2025), <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2025/01/23/statement-dhs-spokesperson-directive-expanding-immigration-law-enforcement> (authorizing USMS to enforce immigration laws).

⁴ Mattathias Schwartz and Emily Bazelon, *Judges Worry Trump Could Tell U.S. Marshals to Stop Protecting Them*, NY Times (Apr. 25, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/25/us/politics/trump-judges-marshals-threats.html>.

This is not the time to wait and see if judges lose this critical protection.⁵ As Chief Justice John Roberts stated in his 2024 Year-End Report, in the past ten years the volume of hostile threats against judges has “more than tripled.”⁶ And in a highly politicized environment, judges face an increasing wave of bomb threats, swatting calls, calls for violence and threats against themselves and their families.⁷

The USMS has “assured” the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts that “security of the Judiciary and the staffing of judicial proceedings remains the USMS’s top priority.”⁸ Indeed, USMS would risk violating its statutory duties if it declined to prioritize such protection.⁹ But the USMS relies on its lump-sum salaries and expenses appropriation to cover more than this judicial security function.¹⁰ And in 2021, a Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General

⁵ Letter from Amy J. St. Eve, Chair, Committee on the Budget, and Robert J. Conrad, Jr., Secretary, Judicial Conference, to House and Senate Appropriations Committees, at 2 (Apr. 10, 2025), <https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/document/fy-2025-funding-request-letters-to-congress.pdf> (outlining concern “about the impact of hiring freezes and staffing losses at the U.S. Marshals Service . . . on courthouse security and the personal safety of judges”).

⁶ Chief Justice John G. Roberts, *2024 Year End Report on the Federal Judiciary* 5, <https://www.supremecourt.gov/publicinfo/year-end/2024year-endreport.pdf>.

⁷ See Mattathias Schwartz & Abbie VanSickle, *Judges Fear for Their Safety Amid Wave of Threats*, NY Times (Mar. 21, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/19/us/trump-judges-threats.html>; see also Luke Barr, *Threats to Federal Judges Increasing, US Marshals Service Warns*, ABC News (Mar. 21, 2025), <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/threats-federal-judges-increasing-us-marshals-service-warns/story?id=120019609>; Peter Eisler, Mike Spector, Ned Parker, and Nate Raymond, *Judges face rise in threats as Musk blasts them over rulings*, Reuters (Mar. 5, 2025), <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/judges-face-rise-threats-musk-blasts-them-over-rulings-2025-03-05/>; Clarissa Jan-lim, *Judges Face Rising Threats of Violence and Impeachment as Trump Attacks the Judiciary*, MSNBC (Mar. 20, 2025), <https://www.msnbc.com/top-stories/latest/trump-judges-threats-violence-impeach-boasberg-rcna197325>.

⁸ Josh Kovensky, *EXCLUSIVE: Judicial Branch Scrambles To Limit Spillover From Trump’s Executive Branch Rampage*, TPM (Feb. 13, 2025), <https://talkingpointsmemo.com/news/judicial-branch-scrambles-to-limit-spillover-from-trumps-executive-branch-rampage>.

⁹ 28 U.S.C. § 566(a).

¹⁰ *FY 2026 Congressional Budget Request, Court Security Appropriations Request* 7.7, https://www.uscourts.gov/sites/default/files/document/section_07_-_court_security_fy2026.pdf (explaining that USMS relies on its “operating funds” to secure prisoners, investigate threats, provide protective details and provide security for witnesses and high threat trials, and that the judiciary transfers funding from its Court Security appropriation to USMS to provide secure facilities for the judiciary); see Pub. L. No. 118-42, div. C, tit. II, 138 Stat. 25, 137 (2024) (providing amounts for “necessary expenses of the United States Marshals Service”); Facts and Figures: 2024, U.S. Marshals Service (Oct. 1, 2023), <https://www.usmarshals.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/2024-Facts-and-Figures.pdf>; United States Marshals Service FY 2025 Performance Budget, President’s Budget, Salaries and

audit found that USMS suffered from “inadequate” resources to “fully meet its protective services obligations to judges,” and that “competing agency priorities” had hindered the USMS’s “ability to fund . . . judicial security enhancements.”¹¹

In light of rising threats against judges, the potential for politicization of the USMS and this evidence of past deficiencies in the USMS’s provision of judicial security, Congress must provide adequate funding to the USMS for the personal security of judges, explicitly require that the USMS use a minimum amount of that funding to fulfill this statutory function, require that the USMS regularly report on its use of these funds and mandate that the Judicial Conference of the United States inform Congress if the USMS fails to provide adequate judicial security.¹² Accordingly, we urge the subcommittee to provide the highest funding level for judicial and courthouse security and adopt the following language for the USMS’s salaries and expenses appropriation:

For necessary expenses of the United States Marshals Service, \$[], of which not to exceed \$[] shall be available for official reception and representation expenses, and not to exceed \$[] shall remain available until expended: *Provided*, That not less than \$[] shall be for Judicial and Courthouse Security, including the personal security of judicial officers, the assessment of threats made to judicial officers, and the protection of all other judicial personnel, *Provided further*, That the Director of the U.S. Marshals Service shall provide a quarterly report to the Committees on Appropriations and Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate for these funds showing, by object class, obligations and expenditures made and the purposes therefore, *Provided further*, That the Judicial Conference of the United States shall provide a quarterly report to the Committees on Appropriations and Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate showing its requests for judicial security under 28 U.S.C. § 566(i) and the Conference’s determination whether the U.S. Marshals Service has allocated sufficient resources to fulfill the Conference’s requests.

Thank you for your efforts to increase judicial security and maintain judicial independence. If CREW can provide any additional insight into questions regarding USMS funding and judicial security, we are always happy to assist.

Expenses Appropriation, USMS (Mar. 2024), <https://perma.cc/6PVT-N6LB> (outlining other uses of salaries and expenses appropriation).

¹¹ *Audit of the U.S. Marshals Service Judicial Security Activities*, Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General i (June 2021), https://oig.justice.gov/sites/default/files/reports/21-083_0.pdf.

¹² U.S. Gov’t Accountability Off., *U.S. Commission on Civil Rights—Availability of Funds for the Commission on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys Act*, B-332530, at 6 (Feb. 18, 2021) (explaining that an appropriation may establish “a minimum amount for a specific purpose by including a phrase such as ‘not less than’”).



May 9, 2025

**Dan Lips, Senior Fellow, Foundation for American Innovation
Written Testimony for United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies**

National Science Foundation

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and Members of the Subcommittee:

My name is Dan Lips. I am a senior fellow with the Foundation for American Innovation. I respectfully request that the Subcommittee support education research and development (R&D) programs within the National Science Foundation (NSF) budget. In addition, I recommend that the Subcommittee include report language aimed to increase the return on investment from federally funded education R&D activities, including: 1) publishing the outcomes of research projects, 2) establishing a national strategy for mobilizing effective research evidence for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) instruction, and 3) creating a research evidence hub to inform parents, teachers, and other stakeholders about evidence-based best practices. Finally, the Subcommittee should direct NSF to convene a national panel on mathematics instruction, with a focus on early numeracy.

* * *

The need for evidence-based best practices in the classroom has never been greater. The 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress revealed that only 39 percent of 4th-grade students scored proficient in mathematics.¹ International test scores show that American students struggle in mathematics relative to their peers around the world.²

American economic and national security requires that the nation train the next generation of students in critical and emerging technological fields. As the U.S. Intelligence Community assessed, “The next decades will see increasing global competition for the core elements of technology supremacy, such as talent, knowledge, and markets, potentially resulting in new technological leaders or hegemonies.”³ A recent Aspen Strategy Group report described the challenge in clear terms: “The United States faces a looming talent gap in many industries that

¹ National Center for Education Statistics, *The Nation's Report Card: 2024 Mathematics Assessment – Grade 4*, accessed May 1, 2025, https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/reports/mathematics/2024/g4_8/?grade=4.

² Jill Barshay, “What the New PISA Results Really Say About U.S. Schools,” FutureEd, December 18, 2023, <https://www.future-ed.org/what-the-new-pisa-results-really-say-about-u-s-schools/>.

³ National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2040* (2021), https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/GlobalTrends_2040.pdf.

are critical to our technological competitiveness. Without a stronger education system, capable of preparing our youth for the jobs of the future, our national security is at risk.”⁴

For more than half a century, the United States government has been funding education R&D activities aimed at improving American students’ learning opportunities and maintaining the nation’s competitiveness in STEM and related fields. However, the American public education sector has often ignored or overlooked evidence-based best practices developed through federal education R&D.⁵

Today, there is a new opportunity to promote the use of evidence-based best practices to ensure that children receive a high-quality education by informing growing parental demand for high-quality education options. Historic changes are underway in American education to provide students and parents with new learning opportunities, notably by expanding parental choice in education. Following Texas’s enactment of a broad education savings account program, more than 22 million students across the country have access to ESAs or scholarships to attend a school of their parents’ choice. Newly empowered parents can now question schools’ approaches to classroom instruction and choose learning environments with high-quality teaching that applies best practices.

However, federal education R&D is at a crossroads in 2025. The Trump administration has proposed significant budget reductions to the NSF.⁶ This follows substantial reductions at the Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES).⁷ While the administration and Congress should pursue opportunities to increase efficiency within NSF, IES, and other federal agencies, the administration and Congress have an opportunity to modernize federal education R&D programs to increase their return on investment. With thoughtful reform, the U.S. can apply the findings and best practices identified through decades of federally funded R&D and make that information more available to school leaders, teachers, and parents.

To that end, I respectfully request that the Subcommittee support education R&D programs within the NSF budget. The Alliance for Learning Innovation has recommended “at least \$1.246 billion for the STEM EDU Directorate at NSF and continued support for scaling and sustaining

⁴ Brienne Bellavita et al., eds., “Fortifying America’s Future: Pathways for Competitiveness,” Aspen Strategy Group, Walton Family Foundation, Federation of American Scientists, and Alliance for Learning Innovation, (2024), <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Fortifying-Americas-Future.pdf>.

⁵ Dan Lips, “The Case for Reforming and Strengthening Federal Education R&D,” Foundation for American Innovation (2022), <https://www.thefai.org/posts/the-case-for-reforming-and-strengthening-federal-education-randd>.

⁶ Carolyn Y. Johnson and Joel Achenbach, “Amid DOGE-Induced Turmoil, National Science Foundation in Crisis,” *The Washington Post*, May 1, 2025, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/science/2025/05/01/science-funding-nsf-cuts/>.

⁷ Associated Press, “DOGE cuts \$900 million from agency that tracks American students’ academic progress,” *AP News*, February 11, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/ies-musk-doge-education-cuts-4461d7bdbe9d55c5a411d8465999b011>.

STEM education research.”⁸ In addition, I recommend the Subcommittee include report language aimed to increase the return on investment from federally funded education R&D activities in the following ways:

First, Congress should require NSF to publish the outcomes of all current and recent federally funded research projects to help the American public learn lessons and identify best practices for improving students’ learning opportunities. For example, in the report accompanying the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and related agencies funding bill in 2024, the subcommittee included the following language that required the Department of Education to publish outcomes of projects funded through the Education Innovation and Research program:

The Committee specifically encourages the Department to showcase those programs that have demonstrated, through rigorous research as required by the ESEA, that their innovations show specific evidence of achievement in educational outcomes.⁹

The Subcommittee should require similar transparency from NSF.

Second, the Subcommittee should encourage NSF, in consultation with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, to establish a national strategy for mobilizing research evidence to promote effective learning in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. This national strategy should be written to inform students, parents, teachers, and other education stakeholders about best-practices.

Third, the Subcommittee should direct NSF to create a STEM education research evidence hub, including by leveraging artificial intelligence, to synthesize research findings and inform parents, teachers, and other stakeholders about evidence-based best practice. In a recent essay, Learn Capital’s Matthew Barry presented a vision for an AI tool to make education research findings more accessible. He described a Learning Science Evidence Hub as a “next-generation knowledge platform that democratizes access to learning science research. It transforms dense academic findings into practical, actionable insights for anyone making educational decisions—from classroom teachers to product developers, parents to policymakers.”¹⁰ Akin to this vision, Congress should require the NSF to create an evidence hub for STEM education research.

⁸ For example, see: Alliance for Learning Innovation, *ALI FY 2026 Appropriations Letter*. Accessed May 5, 2025. <https://www.alicoalition.org/publications/ali-fy-2026-appropriations-letter/>.

⁹ U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations, *Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2025*, 118th Congress, 2nd Session, Report 118–XXX, July 10, 2024.

<https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP00/20240710/117503/HMKP-118-AP00-20240710-SD002.pdf>.

¹⁰ Matthew Barry, Venture to Learn, “Can AI Bridge Education’s Research-Practice Divide?” Substack, April 17, 2025, <https://venturetolearn.substack.com/p/can-ai-bridge-educations-research>.

Fourth, the Subcommittee should direct NSF to convene a national panel on mathematics instruction focused on early numeracy and to issue a report by July 4, 2026, on recommendations for national best practices for mathematics instruction. In 1997, Congress directed the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the Department of Education to convene a National Reading Panel, which analyzed around 100,000 studies and found strong support for the “science of reading”—an approach emphasizing phonemic awareness phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.¹¹ These findings of this report have informed a national movement to use evidence-based practices for early reading instruction.¹² In Louisiana, the state superintendent of education credited the state’s use of the “science of reading” as a reason why the state achieved progress on NAEP reading test scores compared to other states across the country.¹³ In 2008, the Department of Education issued a report from the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, which was created by executive order, to provide similar guidance on evidence-based strategies for mathematics instruction.¹⁴ However, to date, there has been no successful “science of math” movement. A new national panel focused on early numeracy could revisit the 2008 panel’s findings, review available research on early numeracy development, and issue new guidance on improving mathematics instruction.

¹¹ Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, NIH, NIH Publication No. 00-4769 *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications for Reading Instruction*. (2000), <https://www.nichd.nih.gov/sites/default/files/publications/pubs/nrp/documents/report.pdf>

¹² Theara Coleman, "How the 'science of reading' movement took over US schools," *The Week*, January 17, 2024, <https://theweek.com/education/science-of-reading-battle>.

¹³ Rick Hess, "How One State Improved Its NAEP Scores," *Education Week*, April 3, 2025, <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/opinion-how-one-state-improved-its-naep-scores/2025/04>.

¹⁴ National Mathematics Advisory Panel. *Foundations for Success: The Final Report of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel*. U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC, March 2008. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED500486.pdf>.



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170 Jennifer Road
Suite #230
Annapolis, MD 21401
301-731-4535
www.entsoc.org

Testimony of
Christopher J. Stelzig, CAE, Executive Director
Entomological Society of America
On
Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations for the National Science Foundation
Submitted to the
Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
United States Senate

May 9, 2025

The Entomological Society of America (ESA) respectfully submits this statement for the official record in support of funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF). **ESA joins the research community by requesting a robust fiscal year (FY) 2026 appropriation of \$9.9 billion for NSF, including strong support for the Directorate for Biological Sciences (BIO).** Through activities within BIO, NSF advances the frontiers of knowledge about complex biological systems at multiple scales, from molecules and cells to organisms and ecosystems. NSF BIO is the nation's primary funder of fundamental research on biodiversity, ecology, and environmental biology. In addition, the Directorate contributes to the support of essential research infrastructure, including biological collections and field stations.

For 75 years, the NSF has been the only federal agency that supports basic research across all scientific and engineering disciplines, outside of the medical sciences. Each year, the Foundation supports over 350,000 researchers, scientific trainees, teachers, and students, primarily through competitive grants to nearly 2,000 colleges, universities, and other institutions in all 50 states. NSF also plays a critical role in training the next generation of scientists and engineers through programs like the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP), ensuring that the United States will maintain global leadership in research. Additionally, NSF offers a highly prestigious award supporting early-career faculty known as CAREER. This NSF-wide activity is for early career faculty who have the potential advance research and education, lead advances in the mission of their department or organization, and serve as role models and mentors.

NSF-sponsored research in entomology and other basic biological sciences, primarily supported through BIO, provides the fundamental discoveries that advance knowledge and facilitate the development of new technologies and strategies for addressing societal challenges related to economic growth, national security, and human health. Because insects constitute two out of every three species, research on their biology has provided foundational insights across all areas of biology, including cell and molecular biology, genomics, physiology, ecology, behavior, and evolution. In turn, these insights have been applied toward challenges in a wide range of fields, including conservation biology, habitat management, food and livestock production, pest management, engineering, and policy.

In addition to funding research, NSF BIO plays a critical role in the curation, maintenance, and enhancement of physical-biological collections. These collections and their associated data sets serve a variety of purposes, and while they are particularly important to entomology, their value to the broader scientific enterprise cannot be overstated. Physical

collections enable the rapid identification and mitigation of costly invasive pests that affect agriculture, forestry, and human and animal health. This is only achievable because such collections are continuously being updated to reflect environmental changes, evolutionary developments, and shifting migratory patterns of invasive species around the world. Furthermore, new and emerging technologies enable scientists to gain novel insights from physical historical samples in an ongoing manner.

NSF BIO has supported critical research at the intersection of entomology, technology, and data science to advance our understanding of insect populations and their ecological impact. In 2023, NSF awarded a \$3 million grant to Penn State University to integrate entomology with cutting-edge computational tools to improve data collection and analysis in the field.¹ This work has the potential to enhance monitoring efforts for insect and arthropod species that spread diseases, providing insights that could inform better vector management and control strategies. Additionally, NSF has funded efforts to strengthen America's research infrastructure, such as adding a world-class flea collection to the Terrestrial Parasite Tracker (TPT) Network.² This project expands the TPT network, a large-scale program to increase the amount of digitized data on insects and arthropods that spread disease with the intent of increasing access for all scientists, and this expansion will incorporate a significant flea collection and improving access to historical and contemporary data on parasitic insects. Such digitization efforts contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of insect-borne diseases and their transmission dynamics, supporting basic science that contributes to broader efforts to protect public health and biodiversity.

While collections-focused awards are encouraging, ESA is concerned by the inconsistent federal support for biological collections. Recent advancements in imaging, digitization, and data collection and storage technologies have caused some to question the necessity of continued support for existing biological collections. ESA recognizes that technological development is spurring substantive discussion about the future of biological collections. However, while these new developments and advancements will hopefully yield new benefits for biological research, they are not a replacement for physical biological collections. Furthermore, new and emerging technologies enable scientists to gain novel insights from physical historic samples in previously unanticipated ways. Given their continuing relevance and broad application to domestic homeland security, public health, agriculture, food security, and environmental sustainability, ESA firmly supports continued federal investment in programs supporting collections such as NSF's Infrastructure Capacity for Biological Research. ESA also appreciates NSF's commitment to infrastructure and support for long term ecological studies like National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) and the Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) Network.

Research supported through NSF's Center for Environmental Sustainability through Insect Farming (CEIF) will be critical to developing new methods to enhance and accelerate the feasibility of using insects as feed for livestock, poultry, and aquaculture.³ CEIF brings together leading industry and academic experts from across the United States to address research gaps that are necessary to explore in for insect-based products to become a sustainable alternative for

¹ https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=2243979&HistoricalAwards=false. Accessed April 11, 2025.

² https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=2101926&HistoricalAwards=false. Accessed April 11, 2025.

³ Center for Environmental Sustainability Through Insect Farming, available at: <https://iucrc.nsf.gov/centers/center-for-environmental-sustainability-through-insect-farming/>. Accessed April 11, 2025.

feed and food production. This work, which is being conducted through a partnership between Purdue University, Indiana University, Texas A&M University, and Mississippi State University along with private sector partners, not only plays a critical role in workforce training but also has the potential to transform the global food system.

Continued support of entomology research funded by the NSF is essential to preserving the health of our ecosystems and economy. Pollinators, such as bees and moths, play a vital role in ensuring the productivity of our agricultural sector, contributing an estimated \$18 billion to crop production annually.⁴ Research supported by NSF's Division of Atmospheric and Geospace Sciences (AGS), along with the U.S. Air Force and National Institutes of Health (NIH), has uncovered critical insights into the effects of air pollutants on pollinators. Studies have shown that pollutants, like ozone and nitrates, interfere with the chemicals that insects use to locate flowers, ultimately reducing their visitation and the distances over which they can detect blooms.⁵ Given the importance of pollinators to our food security, continued investment in research to understand and mitigate the impact of human-made pollutants on these species is essential for safeguarding our food supply and economy.

NSF also supports the development of technologies and methods that directly impact economic sectors that are highly dependent on entomology. For example, recent GRFP recipients have explored innovative approaches to managing pest-induced agricultural damage to commodity crops and insects' behavioral responses to external stimuli, with significant economic and human health implications. A recent study led by an NSF GRFP recipient investigated the effectiveness of post-harvest cold storage in spotted-wing drosophila control. Spotted-wing drosophila is a uniquely devastating pest of small fruits like blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries owing to its ability to lay eggs in ripening fruit. The estimated revenue losses of wild blueberries due to spotted wing drosophila amounted to nearly \$7 million in the state of Maine alone.⁶ The study found that storing fruit at or near freezing temperatures for 3-5 days resulted in decreased pest survival. After accounting for slight daily cost depreciation from holding the crop and the initial investment of purchasing a cold storage system, farmers could realize individual net profits of \$88,000 to \$483,000 over 20 years by utilizing these post-harvest cold storage protocols.⁷ This practice also has the potential to reduce the need for pesticides and could prevent unintentional spread of the pest through shipment and trade.

NSF has also supported work directly relevant to biodiversity conservation. Monarch butterflies, renowned for their stunning migrations, are struggling due to increasing parasitic infections, among other threats. Monarch caterpillars feed on milkweed, which contain toxic

⁴ Keel, C.C.. (2022). Blog: The Buzz About Pollinators. U.S. Department of Agriculture. Retrieved from <https://www.usda.gov/about-us/news/blog/2022/06/22/buzz-about-pollinators#:~:text=Honey%20bees%20are%20America's%20primary,to%20crop%20production%20every%20year>. Accessed January 23, 2025.

⁵ Chan, J.K., S. Parasurama, R. Atlas, R. Xu, U.A. Jongebloed, B. Alexander, J.M. Langenhan, J.A. Thornton, J.A. Riffell. (2024). Olfaction in the Anthropocene: NO₃ negatively affects floral scent and nocturnal pollination. *Science* (383)6683:607-611. DOI: 10.1126/science.adi0858

⁶ Yeh, D. A. *et al.* The Economic Impacts and Management of Spotted Wing Drosophila (*Drosophila Suzukii*): The Case of Wild Blueberries in Maine. *Journal of Economic Entomology*, 6 Jun. 2020, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31943106/>.

⁷ Kraft, L.J. *et al.* Determining the effect of postharvest cold storage treatment on the survival of immature *Drosophila suzukii* (Diptera: Drosophilidae) in small fruits. *Journal of Economic Entomology*, 11 Sept. 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jee/toaa185>.

cardenolides that not only protect monarchs from vertebrate predators,⁸ but which have also been found to provide protection from the virulent protozoan parasites.⁹ However, the concentration and composition of cardenolides needed to effectively reduce protozoan parasite infections is unknown. A new study, funded in part by support through the NSF GRFP, found that diverse mixtures of cardenolide compounds, even at low concentrations, performed better than individual cardenolides at high concentrations to reduce parasite infections in monarch butterflies.¹⁰ This breakthrough suggests that selecting and planting milkweed species that produce diverse cardenolides can better protect monarch butterflies from protozoan parasite infections.

Given NSF's critical role in supporting fundamental research and education across science and engineering disciplines, ESA supports an overall FY 2026 NSF budget of \$9.9 billion. ESA requests robust support for the NSF BIO Directorate, which funds important research studies and biological collections, enabling discoveries in the entomological sciences to contribute to understanding environmental and evolutionary biology, physiological and developmental systems, and molecular and cellular mechanisms.

ESA, headquartered in Annapolis, Maryland, is the largest organization in the world serving the professional and scientific needs of entomologists and individuals in related disciplines. As the largest and one of the oldest insect science organizations in the world, ESA has over 7,000 members affiliated with educational institutions, health agencies, private industry, and government. Members are researchers, teachers, extension service personnel, administrators, marketing representatives, research technicians, consultants, students, pest management professionals, and hobbyists.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer the Entomological Society of America's support for NSF research programs. For more information about the Entomological Society of America, please see <http://www.entsoc.org/>.

⁸ Brower, L., and C. Moffitt. 1974. Palatability dynamics of cardenolides in the monarch butterfly. *Nature* 249: 280–283.

⁹ Lefèvre, T., L. Oliver, M. D. Hunter, and J. C. de Roode. 2010. Evidence for trans-generational medication in nature. *Ecology Letters* 13: 1485–1493.

¹⁰ Hoogshagen, M., A. P. Hastings, J. Chavez, M. Duckett, R. Pettit, A. P. Pahnke, A. A. Agrawal, and J. C. de Roode. 2023. Mixtures of milkweed cardenolides protect monarch butterflies against parasites. *Journal of Chemical Ecology*: 1–11.

**Testimony of Humane World Action Fund
and Humane World for Animals
from Aimee Collins-Mandeville, Senior Legislative Specialist, Humane World Action Fund
to House Committee on Appropriations,
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
May 9, 2025**

Chair Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony on matters of importance to our organizations and to our millions of supporters. We thank you for your support and investment in animal protection in the Subcommittee's Fiscal Year 2025 appropriations bill. We appreciate your continued consideration for the following requests in the Fiscal Year 2026 Departments of Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies budget:

- DOJ report language supporting Animal Welfare Act enforcement activities.
- DOJ report language supporting activities to enforce federal animal fighting prohibitions.

Department of Justice – Animal Welfare Act Enforcement

The Animal Welfare Act (AWA) requires research facilities and animal exhibitors, breeders, and dealers to meet basic standards of animal care. The law is crucial to protecting over one million animals from inhumane treatment, yet many facilities get away with flagrant abuse. Without strong enforcement, facilities such as puppy mills and roadside zoos have no meaningful deterrent to violating the law.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), which enforces the AWA, has only three Administrative Law Judges for the entire agency, severely limiting how many enforcement actions are able to go through the system. However, foreseeing that USDA would need help, Congress included a provision in the AWA that allows the Department of Justice (DOJ) to bring certain cases in federal court.

In 2020, the Trump Administration was the first to use this power when the DOJ brought forward a civil case against a big cat exhibitor (Jeffrey Lowe and Tiger King LLC) for chronic AWA and Endangered Species Act violations. The federal government seized sixty-eight big cats, including lions and tigers, and sought civil forfeiture pursuant to the ESA forfeiture provision. This case is an important victory for deterring bad actors in exotic animal exhibitions.

In May of 2022, DOJ filed a lawsuit detailing shocking AWA violations at a breeding facility owned by a company called Envigo. Government inspectors found beagles being killed instead of receiving veterinary treatment for easily treatable conditions; nursing mother beagles denied food; the food that they did receive contained maggots, mold, and feces; and over an eight-week period, twenty-five beagle puppies died from cold exposure. Other dogs suffered from injuries when they were attacked by other dogs in overcrowded conditions. DOJ sought action through an injunction against Envigo and a federal court enjoined Envigo from conducting activity at the Cumberland facility. Envigo entered into a settlement agreement leading to the transfer of roughly 4,000 beagles to animal adoption organizations.

Additionally, in July 2023, the DOJ brought a case against Zachary Keeler, doing business as Even Keel Exotics, alleging AWA violations of and the Endangered Species Act (ESA), seeking preliminary and permanent injunctive relief. Keeler had various violations, including failing to provide access to USDA inspectors and maintain complete and accurate records; failing to provide potable water, veterinary care, safe and sanitary conditions, and to meet minimum standards for handling animals; and placing the health of certain animals in serious danger. Keeler also allegedly violated the ESA by unlawfully separating a lemur prematurely from its mother and forcing the baby to interact with the public, continuing to possess the unlawfully taken ring-tailed lemurs, and attempting to sell a taken lemur. In August 2023, consent decrees were issued in the case brought by DOJ and in the USDA administrative case with Keeler agreeing to surrender the animals in his possession to USDA and permanent revocation of his AWA license, respectively. Without the consent decree, DOJ may have only been able to seize the endangered ring-tailed lemurs covered by the ESA instead of all animals in Keeler's possession.

On March 9, 2024, following congressional appropriations requests in both FY 2023 and FY 2024, the USDA and DOJ announced a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to help better prepare for and coordinate potential civil enforcement actions relating to AWA violations provided through Animal and Plant Health Service (APHIS) reports. This MOU ensures that USDA provides DOJ with information about the most severe animal welfare violators promptly. We are grateful that the Committee voiced support for the MOU in its FY 2025 Report and urge that you continue support for the MOU and DOJ strengthening its enforcement of the AWA to protect animals. Indeed, even if the department only brings a handful of animal cases annually, it sends an important signal to the regulated community.

As such, we urge the inclusion of this report language:

Animal Welfare Act Enforcement.—The Committee supports the Department's and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Memorandum of Understanding and joint commitment to enforcing the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). The Department is directed to continue coordinating and collaborating with USDA on AWA enforcement cases to ensure the Department receives necessary information regarding AWA violators, who have multiple citations that seriously or adversely affect the health or well-being of an animal, in a timely manner.

The Department shall report to the Committee within 90 days of enactment of this Act on its AWA enforcement actions.

Department of Justice – Animal Fighting Enforcement

Congress first prohibited most interstate and foreign commerce of animals for fighting in 1976, established felony penalties in 2007, and has continued to strengthen the law through legislation. Enforcing these laws is critical not only to protect animals from extreme cruelty and suffering, but also to address the broader societal harm associated with animal fighting. These ventures are frequently linked to other serious crimes, including drug trafficking, illegal gambling, and gang violence. Moreover, exposure to animal fighting can desensitize children to brutality and reinforce violent behavior, contributing to a cycle of criminal activity. Animal fighting – and the

interstate commerce that supports it – is inherently cruel and depraved. Dogs forced to fight in professional dogfighting operations are specifically bred and conditioned for fighting, which is only the beginning of a lifecycle of abuse and mistreatment. Typical dogfighting injuries include severe bruises, deep puncture wounds, and broken bones, and many are denied veterinary care after injury. Indeed, dogs used in these events often die of dehydration, infection, blood loss, exhaustion, or shock hours or even days after the fight.

Cockfighting is another inherently cruel practice that poses significant public health risks through the spread of avian diseases. One major concern is the existence of gamefowl yards, where hundreds or even thousands of birds are raised outdoors, often without adequate protection from contact with wild birds. The birds are also frequently subjected to violent, bloody fights and transported across state and international borders with little to no regulatory oversight. In such unmonitored environments, dangerous pathogens such as the H5N1 strain of highly pathogenic avian influenza can spread rapidly and without containment, threatening both animal and human health.

DOJ, often through U.S. Attorneys' Offices and in coordination with agencies like the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the USDA Office of the Inspector General, investigates and prosecutes individuals and organizations involved in animal fighting ventures.

In 2021, DOJ convicted three individuals, Chester A. Moody, Jr., Emmanuel A. Powe, Sr., and Odell S. Anderson, Sr., for their involvement in an interstate dog fighting network across the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and New Jersey. The prosecution was part of Operation Grand Champion, a coordinated effort by DOJ to combat organized dog fighting across multiple jurisdictions. These individuals sponsored and exhibited dogs, as well as participated in the selling, buying, possessing, training, transporting, delivering, and receiving dogs so that those dogs could be used in dog fighting ventures. Dogfighting equipment, such as dog treadmills, medical veterinary kits, breeding stands used to forcibly immobilize female fighting dogs, dog collars with embedded weights and chains weighing several pounds used to restrain the dogs were also found in the three individual's possessions. Humane World for Animals assisted in the care of the seized dogs.

We commend the Administration for its strong and forceful enforcement actions against animal abusers, including those involved in dog fighting ventures. On March 25, 2025, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Oklahoma unsealed a grand jury indictment charging Leshon Eugene Johnson of Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, with violating the dog fighting provisions of the federal Animal Welfare Act. Utilizing its seizure authority, the federal government rescued 190 dogs from Johnson's operation, which the Department believes is the largest number of dogs ever seized from a single individual in a federal dog fighting case. Although Johnson previously pled guilty to state animal fighting charges in 2004, his operation continued to expand until federal intervention brought it to a halt. This case underscores the critical role of federal resources and authorities in dismantling entrenched and brutal animal fighting enterprises.

Because DOJ's investigation and prosecution of animal fighting cases upholds the rule of law, disrupts criminal networks, and protects both animal welfare and community safety, we strongly urge the inclusion of this report language:

Animal Fighting Enforcement.—The Committee is concerned about illegal animal fighting activity that subjects animals to extreme cruelty and suffering, and is often linked to international drug trafficking, organized crime, and money laundering. Cockfighting also has the potential to spread illnesses such as avian flu.

The Attorney General is encouraged to combat this illegal activity and to increase its efforts to investigate and dismantle dogfighting and cockfighting operations as soon as there is any evidence of such illegal activity, including collaborating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies.



**Statement of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium
Prepared for the U.S. House of Representatives – Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
on the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget**

May 9, 2025

On behalf of the nation's 34 accredited Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), which collectively comprise the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), we thank you for the opportunity to share our Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 funding requests. The following is a list of recommendations, including the Department, programs, and funding requests.

National Science Foundation (NSF)

Education and Human Resources Directorate (EHR)

- Tribal Colleges and Universities Program (TCUP): \$27,607,840

Tribal Colleges & Universities: Raising and Training the Nation's Native STEM Workforce

Currently, the TCUs operate more than 90 campuses and sites in 16 states. These institutions serve students from over 250 Federally Recognized Tribal Nations and embody a vital component of Tribal higher education.

Over 80 percent of Indian Country is served by TCUs. Tribal Colleges not only serve students, but they also serve over 160,000 American Indians, Alaska Natives, and other rural residents each year through a wide variety of academic and community-based programs. Despite funding challenges, TCUs are responding to the STEM workforce needs across the country. In fall 2023, 1,762 TCU students were enrolled in one of 164 STEM programs at TCUs. TCUs have established programs in high-demand fields: 230 students were enrolled in pre-engineering or engineering programs across 12 TCUs, 408 students were enrolled in Natural Resources and Conservation programs across 19 TCUs, and 416 students enrolled in Computer and Information Sciences programs across 19 TCUs. These efforts are preparing American Indian and Alaska Native engineers who contribute to a robust pipeline of STEM professionals in Indian Country. TCUs also train professionals in other high-demand STEM fields, including agriculture, information technology, and natural resource management.

Funding cuts of any amount to even one TCU program would force TCUs to scale back vital programs and services that students rely on to complete degree and certificate programs needed to succeed in their chosen career paths. Any reduction in funding will threaten TCU accreditation status and further stretch overtaxed faculty and staff or result in cuts to faculty and staff. The following are justifications for TCU FY 2026 funding requests.



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION (NSF)

Education and Human Resources Directorate (EHR) – Tribal Colleges and Universities Program (TCUP): *AIHEC requests the Subcommittee to provide \$27,607,840 for the NSF-TCUP grants.* The NSF-TCUP, administered by the NSF Education and Human Resources Directorate, is a competitive grant program that enables TCUs and Alaska Native Serving and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions to develop and expand critically needed STEM education and research programs relevant to their Tribal communities.

Since the program began in 2001, NSF-TCUP has become the primary federal program for building STEM programmatic and research capacity at TCUs. For example, NSF-TCUP funding supported Navajo Technical University (NTU) (Crownpoint, NM) in developing its electrical and industrial engineering programs, which received accreditation from the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology (ABET) in 2018. This marked a significant milestone, with NTU leading the way as the first TCU to receive ABET accreditation. From Spring 2020 to Spring 2024, NTU has conferred 50 degrees or certificates through its numerous ABET-certified programs, with its most successful program being Information Technology (IT).¹

Community-based Research

TCUs use NSF-TCUP funding to provide students valuable research experience in STEM fields. Through these opportunities, students conduct place-based research that serves their communities and can have national and international impacts.

Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College (NHSC) – Full Circle Engineering Center of Excellence

With NSF-TCUP funds, Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College (New Town, ND) will establish an academic and professional pathway to increase the number of engineers from and employed by the Mandan Arikara Hidatsa (MHA) Nation and local industry. The project builds upon the successful pre-engineering collaborative that developed the pre-engineering program of study at NHSC, allowing students to transfer to North Dakota State University for upper-division preparation. The Full Circle Engineering Center of Excellence will prepare and provide students with internships during their junior and senior years and then facilitate the Tribe or industry's hiring them as junior engineers, with the ability to rotate among several departments as they find their preferred niche. The junior engineers will work with professional engineers to learn non-classroom aspects of engineering practice, such as safety and communication. The Center will also conduct community outreach events to demonstrate the role that engineering plays in the quality of life of the community, and the role of the Center in providing engineers for that contribution.

Aaniiih Nakoda College (ANC) – Tataga (Buffalo) Research and Education Center

The environmental science program at Aaniiih Nakoda College (Harlem, MT) is based on an effective model of place-based instruction that combines rigorous coursework, internship placements, and undergraduate research experiences focused on student learning. ANC students

¹ A.B.E.T Programs Conferred Graduates at Navajo Technical University. (n.d.) Retrieved from: <https://www.navajotech.edu/academics/abet-accreditation/>.



are using their education and research skills to help support the management and protection of the local Buffalo herd.

Aaniih Nakoda College embarks on an extensive and interconnected set of studies to learn about and restore and sustain the native ecology of the Fort Belknap Indian Community (FBIC). Working with partners from FBIC, the Smithsonian's Conservation Biology Institute, the World Wildlife Fund, and Little Dog Wildlife, the TCU Enterprise Advancement Center will study the impact of reintroducing several native species to the reservation. Key among these studies is the effect of buffalo (American bison) on the ecology of the plains, including flora. This study is paralleled by studies on the curlew, black-footed ferret, swift fox, and prairie dogs. Project personnel will conduct ecological research on the Fort Belknap buffalo herd and its associated grassland habitat and species. Research projects will address identified needs and priorities of the FBIC and support the sustainable management and protection of the buffalo herd and surrounding prairie landscapes – now and in the future. The project will provide academic training and community education to prepare future caretakers of Tribal wildlife and associated natural resources and increase community knowledge of, and support for, sustainable management of Fort Belknap's buffalo herd and its habitat.

Context and Impact

These success stories notwithstanding, many American Indian and Alaska Native students are disadvantaged from pursuing STEM-centered careers from an early age. Those who do pursue postsecondary education often require developmental classes before taking on a full load of college-level courses. Placement tests administered at TCUs to first-time entering students in the academic year 2022-2023 showed that 22 percent required remedial math. Our data indicates that while 34 percent will successfully complete the course, many will take more than one year to do so.

Through NSF-TCUP grants, TCUs and Alaska Native Serving and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions are actively working to address this problem by developing strong partnerships with their K-12 feeder schools to engage students in place-based STEM education and outreach programs. For example, Salish Kootenai College, located on the Flathead Indian Reservation (Pablo, MT), created a two-year STEM Academy to prepare junior and senior high school students for college. Participating high school students engage in collaborative work with STEM researchers, conduct culturally relevant research, and take courses to earn college credit.

Report Language Change

While a number of TCUs have achieved significant advances and success, only a portion of the TCUs have been able to benefit from this transformative program, due in part to limited funding. This program was intended, and named, to be TCU-specific, but the NSF allows Alaska Native Serving and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions to compete for funding under NSF-TCUP. This allows funds intended to address disparities in TCU STEM programming to be used by larger state-supported institutions that are not resource-challenged. AIHEC requests that Alaska Native Serving and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions be removed from the NSF-TCUP and, instead, that a separate program be established for these institutions.

**Conclusion**

TCUs provide thousands of American Indian and Alaska Native students access to high-quality, place-based, postsecondary education opportunities, including STEM-focused programs. The modest federal investment in TCUs has paid significant dividends in employment, education, and economic development. We ask you to renew your commitment to help move our students and communities toward self-sufficiency and request your full consideration of our FY 2026 appropriations requests. Thank you.

Ms. Shannon Colbert, Senior Vice President of External Affairs
National Marine Sanctuary Foundation
Written Testimony Submitted to the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
FY 26 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Appropriations
 May 9, 2025

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding appropriations for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026. As supporters, stakeholders, and partners of America's National Marine Sanctuary System, we strongly urge the committee to:

1. Appropriate at least \$106.5 million for Sanctuaries and Marine Protected Areas, within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Operations, Research, and Facilities (ORF) account;
2. Appropriate at least \$8.5 million for Marine Sanctuaries Construction, within NOAA's Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction (PAC) account.
3. Direct NOAA to prioritize conservation, education, mapping, and research efforts across the agency in the National Marine Sanctuary System.
4. CAP NOAA and National Ocean Service corporate fees to no more than 5 percent of the annual appropriations.

National Marine Sanctuary System

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) serves as the trustee for a network of underwater parks that encompass over 620,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters. Most are accessible to nearly 10 million coastal citizens living in adjacent counties. The National Marine Sanctuary System conserves some of the Nation's most critical natural, historic, and cultural resources. National marine sanctuaries are economic anchors in coastal communities, conserve wildlife and preserve America's cultural and maritime history, and promote access for exploration and world-class outdoor recreation. By balancing conserving natural and cultural treasures with public access and economic development, sanctuaries underpin thriving tourism industries while also benefiting community well-being by maintaining healthy marine ecosystems.

Marine sanctuaries anchor marine and coastal economies, jobs, and advance American prosperity and community health. According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, the marine economy accounted for \$432 bn of US GDP in 2021, with a 7.4% growth over 2020 that outpaced the national economy. National marine sanctuaries drive economic growth by promoting visitation and bolstering tourism and outdoor recreational industries. Their national recognition elevates coastal communities as destinations, fostering investment in attractions, hospitality, and local businesses. Marine sanctuaries generate billions annually in local economies and support numerous jobs and businesses in the fishing, tourism, recreation, and scientific research sectors. Sanctuary visitor centers, vessels, and facilities are key assets for communities; stimulate public-private partnerships on emerging technologies, cutting edge science, and hands-on education and workforce development, and attract millions of visitors each year.

The conservation and sustainable use of marine ecosystems are vital to maintaining world-class fishing grounds in the ocean and Great Lakes, underpinning productive coastal economies. National marine sanctuaries partner with commercial and recreational fishermen, businesses, charters, and education partners to connect families and youth to our ocean and Great Lakes through activities such as recreational saltwater fishing, fostering a sense of stewardship and responsibility for America's great outdoors. Marine sanctuaries support world-class fishing by preserving marine ecosystems and enhancing fish stocks. These areas help wildlife thrive, rebuild fisheries, and strengthen ecosystem health. The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary remains one of the top five global recreational fishing destinations, supporting jobs and local coastal economies. Visitor spending related to ocean recreation in the Florida Keys contributes approximately \$4.4 billion to Florida's economy each year. Sanctuary management also mitigates invasive species and strengthens coastal resilience to protect habitats, public safety, and economic stability.

Marine sanctuaries honor America's military history and maritime heritage. As the U.S. approaches its 250th anniversary, the National Marine Sanctuary System offers a unique opportunity to celebrate history and heroes while protecting underwater treasures. Many of the greatest relics representing America's past as a seafaring nation lie at the bottom of the sea and lakes in our national marine sanctuaries. Marine sanctuaries preserve America's maritime heritage, safeguarding shipwrecks, naval battlefields, and sacred cultural sites that tell our nation's rich history. They honor the past, from Revolutionary War shipwrecks to the USS Monitor, showcasing American innovation.

Sanctuaries serve as innovation hubs for new ventures and technology applications. ONMS has a prestigious history of science and research expeditions, including a half-century of new discoveries that inspire, educate, and awe. Marine sanctuaries foster exploration and discovery through partnerships with researchers and adventurers, uncovering new artifacts, wildlife, and stories. Leading universities and research centers conduct aquaculture studies and test innovative technologies that advance sustainable ocean enterprise solutions. Private-public collaboration among investors, businesses, and research institutions develop solutions such as new fishing gear that balances conservation and industry needs. These initiatives help to restore critical habitats, produce jobs, and enhance community well-being.

For Sanctuaries and Marine Protected Areas ORF account, we urge Congress to provide at least \$106.5 million. Providing increased and robust funding to the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) is an investment in America's national treasures and the communities, local economies, and public-private partnerships that rely on them. **National marine sanctuaries are of the People, by the People, and for the People.** Public service and participation are hallmarks of marine sanctuaries; from nomination to day-to-day operations, communities are at the core of sanctuaries. Decisions about how to best manage each of these nationally significant places continuously utilize the best available scientific data, as well as extensive public input, including community-based advisory groups that advise on the unique resources and needs of each sanctuary's respective community. Robust funding will ensure sound, community-centered management of these treasured waters and allow ONMS to strengthen its research, monitoring, restoration, community engagement, and interagency partnerships, to better inform locally driven

management decisions. This is an opportunity to invest in America's waters and the communities and businesses that depend upon them.

For Marine Sanctuaries Construction (PAC) account, we urge Congress to provide at least \$8.5 million. ONMS operates a fleet of ships equipped for mapping, monitoring, buoy maintenance, and rapid emergency response, enhancing public safety and resource protection. Maintaining investment in recapitalizing aging vessels in addition to upgrades, retrofits, and life-cycle extensions is mission critical. Increasing demands on an aging fleet lead to higher operating costs and challenges to maintaining safe, efficient, and effective operations. Increased PAC funding would support the replacement or repair of vessels, drive shipbuilding construction, and allow for better monitoring, research, emergency response, and enforcement efforts. Funding would also support improvements for visitor centers, facilities and signage, that anchor tourism and recreation in communities. These centers educate visitors, showcase local heritage, and drive economic growth. Alpena, Michigan, home to Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, exemplifies this impact—with a population of just over 10,000, its Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center attracts over 100,000 visitors annually. Funding such community centers is essential for sustaining productive coastal economies.

Prioritizing National Marine Sanctuaries

National marine sanctuaries protect nationally significant areas in our ocean and Great Lakes akin to national parks on land. Because of their special designation and NOAA's responsibility to hold them in trust for all Americans, the Department of Commerce and the agency should prioritize investment in these areas. We appreciate Congress recognizing the importance of sanctuaries and including report language in the FY 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act "the Committee directs NOAA to prioritize conservation, education, mapping, and research efforts across the agency in the National Marine Sanctuary system". We greatly appreciate this and request the subcommittee again include this report language for FY 2026.

Cap for NOAA and NOS Administrative Costs

We urge the subcommittee to cap NOAA's and NOS's corporate and administrative costs at five percent of total ORF appropriations for the account. In FY 2024, ONMS paid over \$9 million in administrative overhead costs to NOAA. This includes a NOAA wide direct bill assessment, NOS Assessment, facilities assessment, and a \$1 million deobligation. ONMS shoulders a disproportionate share of corporate expenses and direct bills because other programs are exempt from such fees. Rather than ONMS and other non-exempt programs shouldering these costs, we urge the subcommittee to cap costs and require NOAA to budget for these expenses directly. Direct accounts for NOAA's and Line Offices' Administration, management, and corporate services would be transparent and allow Congress to appropriate actual costs for these expenses. More importantly, it ensures NOAA has the necessary and deserved budget for administration and management without impacting program and mission delivery.

National marine sanctuaries connect people and communities through recreation, education, U.S. history, science, and stewardship and inspire community-based solutions that help people understand and conserve the spectacular underwater wildlife, archaeological resources, and

cultural seascapes of the United States. Providing increased and robust funding to the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) is an investment in America's national treasures and the communities, local economies, and public-private partnerships that rely on them.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony. **We must all be stewards of our ocean and Great Lakes—for the communities that rely on them, wildlife that depend on them, and for future generations.** We strongly encourage you to invest in America's community-based national marine sanctuaries by supporting the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries at no less than \$115 million in Fiscal Year 2026. Your support for marine sanctuaries will send a powerful message about the benefits of a healthy ocean and Great Lakes and underscore the continuing ecological, economic, and historical value of America's underwater national treasures. Through national marine sanctuaries, we can work collectively to conserve these resources for all Americans to enjoy. We thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with the subcommittee during the FY 2026 appropriations process.



American Society of Plant Biologists

Cultivating a better future through plant biology research

Official Written Testimony in support of the National Science Foundation's and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Fiscal Year 2026 Budgets

Submitted to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies

May 9, 2025

Submitted by:

Crispin Taylor, PhD, Chief Executive Officer
American Society of Plant Biologists

On behalf of the American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB), I submit this testimony for the official record to support \$9.9 billion for the National Science Foundation (NSF) for fiscal year (FY) 2026, consistent with FY 2025 levels, as well as robust funding for National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). ASPB recognizes the difficult fiscal environment our nation faces, but we believe that sustained investments in scientific research are required for economic recovery and continued global competitive innovation for our nation. ASPB would also like to thank the Subcommittee for its consideration of this testimony and for its strong support for the research missions of NSF and NASA.

ASPB, founded in 1924 as the American Society of Plant Physiologists, was established to promote the growth and development of plant biology, to encourage and publish research in plant biology, and to promote the interests and professional advancement of plant scientists. ASPB members, as representatives of the Society, work to disseminate information and to excite future generations about plant sciences, especially through ASPB's advocacy, outreach activities, conferences, and publications.

Food, Fuel, Environment, and Health: Plant Biology Research and America's Future

Plant biology research is at the foundation of a robust American bioeconomy. Plant science has become the backbone of agricultural innovation, and a thriving agricultural sector is a cornerstone of America's economic success. Agriculture and related industries comprise 6 percent of the U.S. GDP, contributing nearly \$1.53 trillion and 19.6 million jobs to the economy.¹ In fact, despite persistent U.S. trade deficits, there has been a surplus in agricultural trade since 1960. Dramatic increases in yield have made these surpluses possible, even in the face of sustained global population growth. These increases were not due to increasing areas of farmland. On the contrary, they are directly tied to agricultural innovations that rely on sustained research in crop science and plant biology. For these increases in yield to continue, critical investments are needed in basic biological sciences, as well as the translational science that brings the fruits of basic science to real-world applications.

¹ <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/ag-and-food-statistics-charting-the-essentials/ag-and-food-sectors-and-the-economy/>

Plant biology is at the nexus of numerous scientific breakthroughs. NSF has supported high throughput experimental approaches that facilitate extraordinary syntheses of information, and plant biologists are using computer science and bioinformatics to make tremendous strides in our understanding of complex biological systems, ranging from single cells to entire ecosystems. Ultimately, understanding how plants function will enable biotechnological and synthetic biology approaches toward more nutritious and more productive crops, new sources of fuel, and the development of novel medicines to treat diseases like cancer.

Robust Funding for the National Science Foundation

ASPB encourages strong support for the Directorate of Biological Sciences (BIO) across all the scientific disciplines NSF supports. NSF funding for plant biology enables the scientific community to address cross-cutting, fundamental, and translational research questions that could ultimately solve grand challenges related to a steady food supply, energy security, and improved health and nutrition.

For example, NSF supports basic research to better understand photosynthesis, which underpins the production of food, textiles, building materials, and other essential plant products. The agency also supports research on how to convert plant biomass into energy and biomaterials. Reducing the NSF F&A rate to 15% would cripple these ongoing projects, preventing breakthroughs that could enhance crop yields for America's farmers and enable the growth of new industries to convert America's agricultural abundance into high-value, American-grown products. *ASPB urges the committee to support science through negotiated F&A rates based on the needs of the institution(s) conducting research.*

BIO's *Plant Genome Research Program (PGRP)* is an excellent example of a high impact program that has laid a strong scientific research foundation for understanding plant genomics as it relates to energy (biofuels), health (nutrition and functional foods), agriculture (impact of agronomic ecosystems), and the environment (plants' roles as primary producers in ecosystems). Recent changes to personnel leading this program, precipitated by staff reorganization at NSF, have introduced uncertainty around the continued viability of the program. By adequately funding and staffing PGRP, scientific advances and critical innovation will be made. *ASPB asks that support for PGRP continues throughout the coming year.*

China, Brazil, India, the EU, and other major trade partners have considerably increased their investments in research on today's pressing scientific challenges. As we fall behind other countries in our support for basic research, we undercut the innovations that keep our industries ahead. Studies report² that China has surpassed the U.S. in the number of scientific publications made per year in the past five years, with vast differentials in plant science research. To compete internationally, the U.S. and NSF must invest in quality research and grow the scientific backbone for innovation.

² Irene Finocchi, Andrea Ribichini, Marco Schaerf, A large-scale temporal analysis of scientific production across disciplines and countries, *Journal of Informetrics*, Volume 19, Issue 2, 2025, 101665, ISSN 1751-1577, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2025.101665>.

ASPB supports the Directorate for Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (TIP) and its goal to advance science and engineering research and innovation. This Directorate accelerates basic and translational research to solve national problems. TIP supports use-inspired research in biotechnology, among other areas, and would propel NSF's discoveries to new levels of innovation. TIP also funds activities in priority areas such as infrastructure resilience and energy sufficiency, biotechnology, AI, and quantum sciences. Programs that broaden participation in STEM would also see major growth, and ASPB strongly supports NSF programs that build research capacity at emerging research institutions.

Support for NSF Education and Workforce Development Programs

A strong plant science workforce is crucial for addressing the many challenges facing our world, and training opportunities funded by NSF are as important for this mission as research-focused efforts. ASPB supports the expansion of funding opportunities targeted towards undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral scholars, as well as additional policies that improve NSF's training ecosystem and quality of life for early-career plant biologists. Of particular importance is the need for NSF-funded fellowships to provide a living wage for recipients, especially in geographic areas with high costs of living.

To more systematically assess the impacts of recent executive actions on our scientists, ASPB surveyed our membership, asking what changes plant scientists are seeing in their communities. More than 50 percent of the respondents have seen or experienced job losses, disruptions to graduate and doctorate recruiting, and disruptions to long-term research projects. To help alleviate these issues, *ASPB urges the Subcommittee to support NSF's fellowship and career development programs – such as the Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology (PRFD), the Graduate Research Fellowship (GRF), the Research and Mentoring for Postbaccalaureates in Biological Sciences (RaMP), and the Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) programs* – thereby providing continuity in funding opportunities for the country's most promising early career scientists. ASPB is extremely concerned about the 50 percent reduction in GRF grants and the archiving of the PRFD and RaMP programs. Losses in project funding and fellowship opportunities can and will harm the scientific workforce as we enter an increasingly competitive global economy.

NSF funding is crucial for long-standing programs such as the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program at the Boyce Thompson Institute, headed by an ASPB member; this program has been highly successful in preparing and inspiring undergraduates to pursue science, as 70% of past program participants continue to graduate school. The REU program is crucial, but it is not enough. While the number of Ph.D. degrees awarded in the U.S. in the biomedical sciences in the last two decades has increased substantially,³ the number of plant science doctoral degrees, both basic and agronomy-related, has remained stagnant during this period.⁴ Students gravitate towards fields with reliable and robust career and earning

³ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2018. *The Next Generation of Biomedical and Behavioral Sciences Researchers: Breaking Through*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25008>.

⁴ National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Earned Doctorates. <https://ncesdata.nsf.gov/builder/sed?type=chart&convert=1>

opportunities. The academic plant sciences are bleeding talent because grants are small and unreliable, early career funding is being cut, and salaries are uncompetitive. Sustained funding increases for the NSF will allow for increased salaries that will retain talent.

The Importance of NASA Space Biology Programs

ASPB also supports the *Space Biology Program in the NASA Division of Biological and Physical Sciences* and requests the Subcommittee's support for continued investment in NASA for plant biology research that will grow our nation's agricultural sector and extend our reach in space.

NASA supports fundamental plant research that improves crops on Earth even as it pushes the frontiers of space. For example, NASA research developed the concept of using Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs) as a power-efficient approach to growing plants. The impact of this work has been wide ranging. LEDs now support crop production in situations as varied as urban agriculture and commercial greenhouses, and they are ubiquitous tools for the home gardener.

ASPB is particularly concerned about the President's Budget Request proposal to cut NASA's Science programs by 50 percent. The request outlines priorities to take humans to the Moon and Mars, but in addition to building the equipment to get there, we must also learn how to live in space for extended periods of time. Any hope for human habitation on the Moon and beyond, as well as travel into deep space, is completely reliant on our ability to grow food and use plants for regenerative life support. Beating China to the Moon and Mars will ultimately depend on the fundamental space science that supports these innovations. Further, the proposal to eliminate the *Office of STEM Engagement* will decrease the number of students studying space science, hurting both our research competitiveness and, very soon, our aeronautics workforce. This office supports scholarships and internship opportunities for ASPB members and others, creating student and workforce opportunities that are found nowhere else.

Space science is also uniquely poised to answer questions about human health that cannot be answered on Earth. For example, the ends of chromosomes, called telomeres, are related to human longevity. In NASA's astronaut twin study, researchers found that astronauts' telomeres were long in space but shortened upon return to Earth. This instability is concerning, with respect to long-term spaceflight. Curiously, telomeres in plants grown aboard the International Space Station stayed the same as those grown on Earth, but researchers also found an increased level of telomerase, the enzyme that lengthens telomeres. Could telomerase keep astronauts healthy on long space missions? Plant biologists are evaluating genome stability on the ISS, at the NASA Space Radiation Laboratory at Brookhaven National Lab, and in the radiation facility at Colorado State University. This work could have implications for not only plant growth and development but also for human space exploration and astronaut health.

Thank you for your consideration of ASPB's testimony. For more information about ASPB, please visit www.aspb.org.

Testimony on the FY 2026 Appropriations Bill for the House Appropriations Commerce, Justice,
Science Subcommittee
Concerning Transparency and the Public Availability of Opinions Issued by the
Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel,
May 9, 2025
Debra Perlin, Vice President for Policy
Gabiella Cantor, Senior Policy Associate
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) and Congressional oversight of the Executive Branch.

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization committed to promoting ethical governance, ensuring the integrity of our government institutions, and protecting our democracy. We firmly believe that an open and transparent government is necessary to address the threats our democracy faces today. To advance this mission, CREW has taken legal action to shed light on OLC's secret interpretations of the law and has supported efforts to compel OLC to proactively disclose records memorializing those opinions.¹

Since 2016, CREW has filed 14 FOIA requests to obtain OLC documents, but to date has only received four of these records. CREW has yet to receive any OLC memoranda we requested years ago on presidential pardons,² executive orders,³ and other consequential matters. These examples are only a fraction of the many unanswered FOIA requests for OLC documents filed by individuals and organizations around the country.⁴ Furthermore, because OLC rarely discloses memoranda as a result of a FOIA request, when organizations like ours are successful in getting OLC materials it is only after extensive FOIA litigation, a process that can often take years and requires significant organizational and government resources.

It is in the long-term interest of all citizens to have access to the legal advice given to the executive branch, irrespective of which political party is currently in power. It is also essential

¹ CREW gets secret Barr memo on Trump obstruction, CREW (August 24, 2022), <https://www.citizensforethics.org/news/press-releases/crew-gets-secret-barr-memo-on-trump-obstruction/>.

² FOIA Request by CREW, to the Office Legal Counsel (July 1, 2020), <https://www.citizensforethics.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/2020-7-1-Presidential-Self-Pardons-1.pdf>.

³ FOIA Request by CREW, to the Office Legal Counsel (January 31, 2017), <https://www.citizensforethics.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/2017-1-31-OLC-FOIA.pdf>.

⁴ See, e.g., FOIA To OLC For Communications And Directives About Events At Capitol During Congressional Certification Of 2020 Election Results, American Oversight (January 11, 2021), <https://www.americanoversight.org/document/foia-to-olc-for-communications-and-directives-about-events-at-capitol-during-congressional-certification-of-2020-election-results> and Exhibit A, Knight First Amendment Institute (March 15, 2019), <https://knightcolumbia.org/documents/1552c902e4>.

that Congress have access to OLC opinions in order to provide effective oversight and serve as a check on potential overreach by the executive branch. When Congress makes laws, the courts issue decisions or the president takes executive action, each almost always does so on the record. So too, binding legal guidance issued by OLC should be made public in a timely manner.

We are pleased that in recent years both House and Senate Appropriators have included strong language regarding the disclosure of OLC opinions, including most recently in the Joint Explanatory Statement of the FY 2024 Appropriations bill.⁵ However, given that OLC has not responded by beginning the process of proactive disclosure it is clear that stronger language is needed to ensure that OLC is compliant with these reporting requirements.

Accordingly, we urge the subcommittee to adopt language similar to the provisions on OLC opinions in House Report 117–97.⁶

Recommended Report Language:

Office of Legal Counsel (OLC) opinions.—The Committee is aware that in 2004, nineteen former senior OLC officials authored a document entitled “Principles to Guide the Office of Legal Counsel,” which included a principle that “OLC should publicly disclose its written legal opinions in a timely manner, absent strong reasons for delay or nondisclosure.” The signers noted that such disclosure “. . . helps to ensure executive branch adherence to the rule of law [and]...promotes confidence in the lawfulness of governmental action. [It] also adds an important voice to the development of constitutional meaning . . . and a particularly valuable perspective on legal issues regarding which the executive branch possesses relevant expertise. . . .” The Committee agrees with this argument for transparency, and its alignment with the precedent for the public reporting of judicial decisions. While the Committee understands that some OLC advice should properly remain confidential, it also agrees with the views of the OLC signers noted above that OLC should “consider the circumstances in which advice should be kept confidential, with a presumption in favor of publication.”

The Committee therefore directs the Attorney General to direct OLC to publish on a publicly accessible website all legal opinions and written OLC communication of non-legal guidance, except in those instances where the Attorney General determines that release would cause a specific identifiable harm to the national defense or foreign policy interests; information contained in the opinion relates to the appointment of a specific individual not confirmed to Federal office; or information contained in the opinion is specifically exempted from disclosure by Section 552 of Title 5 United States Code. For final OLC opinions for which the text is withheld in full or in substantial part, the

⁵ Joint Explanatory Statement Accompanying the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (P.L. 118-24), <https://www.congress.gov/118/crec/2024/03/05/170/39/CREC-2024-03-05.pdf>.

⁶ H.R. Rep. No. 97, 117th Cong. (1st Sess, 2021), <https://www.congress.gov/117/crpt/hrpt97/CRPT-117hrpt97.pdf>.

Attorney General should provide Congress a written explanation detailing why the text was withheld and, to the extent possible, release that explanation to the public.

In addition, not later than 180 days after the issuance of this report, the Attorney General should submit to the Committee and publish online a report that lists each OLC opinion currently in effect that has been: designated by the Attorney General or his/her designee as final; followed by government officials or contractors; relied on to formulate current legal guidance; or cited in another OLC opinion. For each such opinion, with information withheld only as provided by Section 552 of Title 5 of the United States Code and with due consideration to the presumption in favor of disclosure, the report should indicate the title and date of issuance, the signer, and the recipient identified in the opinion. An update of this list should be submitted to the Committee with its future annual budget requests.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to increase transparency of the DOJ's Office of Legal Counsel. If CREW can provide any additional insight into questions regarding OLC reform and transparency, we are always happy to assist.

**Statement of Juliane Baron, Executive Director of the
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences**

**FY 2026 Appropriations for the National Science Foundation Submitted for the record to
the United States House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations**

Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

**Honorable Hal Rogers, Chairman
Honorable Grace Meng, Ranking Member**

May 9, 2025

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS) is grateful for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the National Science Foundation (NSF) for fiscal year 2026 (FY26). FABBS represents thirty-one scientific societies and nearly 60 university departments, whose members and faculty advance our understanding of the mind, brain, and behavior. FABBS urges the Subcommittee to fund the **NSF at least \$9.9 billion in FY26**. This request aligns with the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF), a broad alliance of over 140 professional organizations, universities, and businesses that come together in support of the topline NSF budget.

Robust NSF funding is critical to maintaining U.S. leadership in innovation and science. The agency's investments support discoveries that drive economic growth, protect national security, and improve health and well-being. NSF also plays an essential role in developing the next generation of researchers, educators, and innovators, as well as preparing a robust scientific workforce equipped for the challenges ahead. FABBS is deeply committed to ensuring the continued success and growth of NSF's vital work in advancing scientific research and innovation.

For FY25, Congress maintained NSF's budget at \$9.06 billion—the same as in FY24—representing an 8.5 percent cut from FY23's \$9.9 billion level. These reductions have significantly limited the agency's ability to fund new research grants and initiatives. These setbacks severely threaten the U.S. research enterprise. Without sustained investment, NSF will continue to turn away thousands of high-quality proposals and research that could drive critical advances and train future scientists. It is vital that Congress reverse this trajectory.

This administration has made repeated statements and declared its support for science. As outlined in a [White House letter to Michael Kratsios](#), the administration has emphasized its

commitment to strengthening American science and technology. However, continued flat or, even worse, declining funding from Congress undermines those commitments. While we appreciate the administration's efforts to elevate science in its rhetoric and stated priorities, we urge Congress to match those words with action and dollars to reverse this damaging funding trajectory.

Investments across NSF directorates help advance the national understanding of the brain, mind, and behavior. The Computer and Information Science and Engineering Directorate (CISE) funds human-technology interaction and learning technologies, while the Biological Sciences Directorate (BIO) supports critical behavioral and neuroscience research. The recent growth of the Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (TIP) directorate offered the promise of translating foundational research into real-world solutions. But TIP and similar initiatives can only succeed if they are built on a stable foundation of basic science. NSF's ability to support transformational, cross-disciplinary work hinges on reliable, sustained funding across its entire portfolio.

Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences

FABBS has a particular interest in the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorate, which contributes directly to national priorities. Researchers funded by SBE have expanded our understanding of the mechanisms of memory underlying brain activity. They have also contributed to the design and assessment of the social and ethical consequences of new technologies and developed tools that are now informing national security efforts.

SBE provides approximately 63 percent of the federal funding for fundamental research in SBE sciences at academic institutions across the country, when excluding from the National Institutes of Health. Thus, progress in these areas is heavily dependent on the foundational science made possible by the NSF investment.

SBE also houses the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES), the federal entity responsible for collecting and analyzing key data on the U.S. science and engineering enterprise. NCSES provides critical information to guide federal policy, monitor STEM workforce trends, and assess global competitiveness.

Directorate for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education

The Directorate for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education (EDU) at NSF plays a critical role in advancing evidence-based strategies to improve STEM teaching and learning across all education levels. Programs like Scholarships in STEM expand access to STEM careers for low-income students by providing financial support and fostering inclusive learning environments. Continued investment in the STEM EDU Directorate is

essential to building a diverse and well-prepared STEM workforce, promoting educational opportunities, and ensuring that effective, research-informed practices are implemented nationwide.

The U.S. cannot afford to pause or retreat in our investment in fundamental science. We urge the Subcommittee to restore NSF's momentum by providing at least \$9.9 billion for FY26, which will help reverse damaging cuts and restore confidence to researchers across the country.

Further, FABBS encourages the committee to direct the NSF to invest the funding appropriated to it in FY25. This committee has worked diligently to assess the effectiveness of programs, identify priorities and direction, and provide appropriate oversight. FABBS is deeply concerned about the grant terminations, reports of a freeze on new grants, and anticipated reduction in force. These dramatic changes, and the unprecedented lack of transparency, undermine the very foundation of U.S. leadership in science and innovation, jeopardizing critical research and slowing progress across all fields of discovery.

We thank the Subcommittee for its history of bipartisan support for NSF and urge continued commitment to a thriving, competitive, and inclusive U.S. science enterprise.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

FABBS Member Societies:

Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research, American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback, Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Association for Behavior Analysis International, Association for Psychological Science, Behavior Genetics Association, Cognitive Neuroscience Society, Cognitive Science Society, Flux: The Society for Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, International Congress of Infant Studies, International Society for Developmental Psychobiology, National Academy of Neuropsychology, The Psychonomic Society, Society of Behavioral Medicine, Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology, Society for Computation in Psychology, Society for Judgment and Decision Making, Society for Mathematical Psychology, Society for Research in Adolescence, Society for Psychophysiological Research, Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, Society for Research in Child Development, Society for Research in Psychopathology, Society for the Scientific Study of Reading, Society for Text & Discourse, Society of Experimental Social Psychology, Society of Multivariate Experimental Psychology, Society for Biopsychosocial Science and Medicine, Vision Sciences Society

Dear Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies,

I am a fourth-year graduate student studying Physical Chemistry at Purdue University. I work closely at the intersection of chemistry and physics on the development of quantum-based technologies. I am grateful for the opportunity to submit my written testimony for consideration in the matter of budgetary issues, primarily the matter of funding allocated toward scientific research and development.

I work to fundamentally understand and manipulate light-matter interactions to create platforms for quantum technology. The research conducted in my field has direct applications and implications for the development of quantum sensors, quantum cryptography, quantum computing, and the like. Exploitation of quantum properties allows these systems to overcome fundamental limitations of classical systems—quantum computing, for example, needs exponentially less “bits,” or units of computing power to perform computations than a classical computer performing the same task. At this point in time, we are on the precipice of what is often referred to as the “second quantum revolution,” describing the anticipated technological breakthroughs associated with realizing these quantum-based technologies. Currently the US is one of the leading nations in regard to advancing quantum information science and quantum based technologies. This advantage, however, can and will be squandered if fiscal support for the groundbreaking work being conducted by these scientists every day is reallocated. Not only will this stifle the essential research coming out of universities every day—which is relied upon heavily by companies conducting research and development for foundational knowledge and collaborative research—it will also diminish our capacity to educate and train future scientists. Universities are the sole domestic source of well-trained scientists in the United States. US based companies often preferentially hire US trained researchers; cutting funding for university programs will without question diminish the quality and quantity of our scientific workforce. Graduate student wages are funded almost exclusively from grants—approximately forty percent of which come from government programs. Without these grants, professors cannot hire and train new graduate students. Research will grind to a halt, and the output of newly trained workers will diminish. I am comfortable predicting these effects with certainty, as funding cuts have already caused programs across our nation to slow or halt admissions.

In addition to decimating the scientific workforce, defunding scientific grants will draw the best and brightest of our country to competing nations. The United States’ current competitive position in the international scientific community is directly linked to the quality of research and researchers being produced by our universities. Without the financial means to conduct their research, top scientists will be recruited by other nations. This will ravage our higher education system, as our top educators will be recruited elsewhere. In such a situation, I see few ways for the US to recover its edge in scientific and technological advancement for several decades at the very least.

I see no more efficient way to cripple our nation than to hinder the pursuit of knowledge and technological progress. Every marker defining our quality of life today has come from scientific advancements—our ability to provide healthcare within our society, our ability to manufacture goods on a large scale, to grow enough food to support our population, and to travel across the world in cars, trains, and airplanes. To underestimate the importance of technological innovation and progress in our society would be, in my opinion, to disregard one of the primary

purposes of living in a civil society. It is a gift that we have the current infrastructure to support unrelenting efforts toward advancement, a privilege that I beg the House committee to preserve in these times of fiscal uncertainty. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony.



Animal Welfare Institute

900 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20003
awionline.org phone: (202) 337-2332 fax: (202) 446-2131

**Outside Witness Testimony to the House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for
Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations
Ericca Gandolfo, Senior Policy Associate, Government Affairs
May 9, 2025**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Fiscal Year 2026 funding priorities for the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program* *\$4.5 million

The John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program (Prescott Grant Program), a program under NMFS, provides competitive grants to marine mammal stranding network organizations to do the following: (1) rescue and rehabilitate sick, injured, or distressed live marine mammals, and (2) investigate the events surrounding, and determine the cause of, the death or injury of marine mammals. Over the past 24 years, the Prescott Grant Program has been vital to protecting and recovering marine mammals across the country while also generating critical information regarding marine mammals and their environment. As the sole source of federal funding for the National Marine Mammal Stranding Network, which is comprised of over 120 member organizations in 26 states, the District of Columbia, two territories, and three tribes, these funds remain a much-needed lifeline. While the actual need far exceeds this amount, we urge Congress to provide no less than \$4.5 million, maintaining level funding from FY 2023 and FY 2024, to ensure the program can continue its critical mission.

Marine Mammal Commission (MMC)* *\$4.5 million

The Marine Mammal Commission (MMC) is an independent federal agency established by Congress in 1972 under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). It is responsible for overseeing the proper implementation of the MMPA and provides comprehensive, independent, science-based oversight of all federal and international policy and management actions affecting marine mammals. The MMC's work is crucial to maintaining healthy populations of marine mammals, including whales, manatees, dolphins, seals, sea otters, walruses, and polar bears, and ensuring their survival for generations to come. Additionally, the MMC seeks to ensure that Alaska Natives can meet their subsistence needs through hunting of marine mammals.

Each U.S. taxpayer annually contributes just over 1 cent to fund the MMC and its work. From FY 2015 to FY 2021, the MMC was level funded at \$3.43 million. In FY 2022, funding for the MMC was slightly increased to \$4.5 million, where it remained through FY 2024 and FY 2025. Unfortunately, however, due to rising fixed costs, the MMC has absorbed significant essential costs (salaries, rent, etc.), thereby reducing its discretionary funding. In order for the MMC to fulfill its obligations and mission work, we ask that no less than \$4.5 million, maintaining level funding from FY 2023 and FY 2024, be appropriated for FY26.

Unusual Mortality Event Contingency Fund* *\$4.5 million

Marine mammals are important indicator species of ocean health. Monitoring the health of marine mammals, especially during an Unusual Mortality Event (UME), can reveal emerging threats, potential impacts of human activities, and the effectiveness of management actions. A UME is defined as "a stranding that is unexpected; involves a significant die-off of any marine mammal population; and demands immediate response." There are currently three active UMEs—Atlantic Minke Whale, North Atlantic Right Whale, and Atlantic Humpback Whale. The Atlantic Florida Manatee UME, which led to 1,392 deaths, underscored how a lack of facilities and funding hampers rescue organizations responding to large-scale events.

Since 1991, 72 marine mammal UMEs have been declared. The UME Contingency Fund was established through the Marine Mammal Protection Act to enable the National Marine Fisheries Service to reimburse marine mammal stranding network partners for costs related to caring for and treating live animals that strand as part of UMEs; collecting, preparing, and sending biological samples to the National Marine Mammal Tissue Bank and other diagnostic laboratories to investigate the causes of UMEs; and collecting important marine mammal health data to inform and improve future UME responses and marine conservation. Although Congress created this fund in 1992, it has only appropriated funds in 2005; all other contributions to the Fund have been through voluntary contributions. In the FY23 House Appropriations CJS Bill and Report, \$2M was allocated to this Fund, while the Senate CJS subcommittee, via report language, encouraged NMFS to request funding. In the FY24 appropriations minibuss, the joint explanatory statement included language that encouraged NMFS to request the funding. To ensure the Fund can carry out its core functions and sustain effective stranding response, no less than \$4.5 million should be allocated to the Unusual Mortality Event Contingency fund in FY26.

North Atlantic Right Whales

\$51 million

In 2020, North Atlantic right whales were designated critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Elevated mortalities of the species from entanglements in fishing gear and vessel strikes have been declared an Unusual Mortality Event (UME) by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) since 2017. The annual documented rate of anthropogenic mortality and serious injury due to both entanglement in gear and vessel strikes has exceeded the population's potential biological removal level (PBR) since 1995.

With only about [372](#) North Atlantic right whales left as of 2023, and of those fewer than 70 reproductive females, this species could be effectively extinct within our lifetime. Right whales are extremely vulnerable to being caught in the vertical buoy lines used in lobster and crab trapping gear. Entanglement can lead to drowning, reduced mobility, and, in some cases, a long, painful death from starvation. Collisions with vessels of all sizes can also cause serious injuries, such as blunt force trauma, propeller cuts, and broken bones. On March 30, 2024, a dead North Atlantic right whale, identified as 35-year-old female #1950, was discovered 50 miles off the coast of Virginia. Her [death](#) marks the 40th mortality in the ongoing UME (which has since increased to 41 confirmed deaths). Her dependent three-month old calf was the sixth calf she had produced during her life and is unfortunately also presumed dead, unable to survive without its mother. This mother and her calf mark the sixth and seventh presumed North Atlantic right whale deaths over the first three months of 2024, a total that includes other calves who haven't been spotted with their mothers. The best available science also shows that two-thirds of right whale deaths go undetected, meaning that [these observed deaths and injuries](#) are a dramatic undercount of what the population suffers.

Studies have shown that mortalities from known entanglements have continued to increase from 21 percent (1970-2002) to 51 percent (2003-2018).¹ Entanglements caused as many as 85 percent of diagnosable deaths from 2010 to 2015. In February 2021, a study co-authored by leading North Atlantic right whale scientists found that from 1990-2017, observed carcasses only accounted for 36 percent of North Atlantic right whale mortalities.² These “cryptic mortalities,” i.e., deaths caused by human activities without an observed carcass, represent a larger proportion of the total mortality than previously believed.

The FY24 appropriations minibuss included \$4 million above the FY23 enacted level for North Atlantic right whales within the Marine Mammals, Sea Turtles, and Other Species line item. Within this funding, the Committee supported the use of supplementary funds previously provided to NOAA for purposes including innovative gear research, acoustic monitoring, and satellite tracking. NOAA was further directed to continue supporting disentanglement, stranding response, and necropsy activities. Another \$30 million was provided to States through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) to cover costs associated with testing or voluntary implementation of innovative gear to inform future updates to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) (FR-210827-0171). We remain immensely grateful for the Subcommittee’s concern for this species and the substantial increase in funding, but are still deeply concerned that the 2021 rule continues to fall significantly short of the risk reduction needed to save this species from extinction.

Within our proposal of \$51 million, we believe funding should be appropriated to NOAA to support North Atlantic right whale research, monitoring, and conservation, including no less than \$4 million above the FY24 enacted levels within the Marine Mammals, Sea Turtles, and Other species line item. Funding should also prioritize innovative gear research, disentanglement and stranding response, and necropsies and health assessments of North Atlantic right whales. Sufficient support must also be provided to states through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission for testing and implementing innovative gear. We also recommend an additional \$5 million to advance a near real-time monitoring and mitigation pilot program for large whales, as authorized under section 11303 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act of FY 2024 (PL 117-263). Finally, Congress should encourage ongoing inter-agency collaboration between NOAA, the Office of Naval Research, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and others to support the development and evaluation of whale monitoring technologies.

If we are to save this species, it will require investment and cooperation among Congress, agencies, scientists, and industry to find long-term solutions. We appreciate the Subcommittee’s recognition of the urgency of this situation and the funding it continues to provide for the protection of North Atlantic right whales.

Enforcement and Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP)

\$6.2 million

The Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP) was established in 2016 to require U.S. importers of certain fish and fish products to provide and report key data, with the aim of uncovering illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and/or seafood fraud and preventing it from entering U.S. commerce. The program oversees imports of 13 species groups (which are comprised of more than 1,100 unique species), including sharks and sea cucumbers,

¹ Sharp, S. et al. (2019). Gross and histopathologic diagnoses from North Atlantic right whale *Eubalaena glacialis* mortalities between 2003 and 2018. *Diseases of Aquatic Organisms*, 135(1), 1-31. doi:10.3354/dao03376

² Pace, R. et al. (2021). Cryptic mortality of North Atlantic right whales. *Conservation Science and Practice*. 3. 10.1111/csp2.346.

two marine species that are increasingly threatened by IUU fishing. The 2019 addition of shrimp has had implications for the critically endangered vaquita, of which only about 10 remain. The use of illegal gillnets for catching shrimp in the Gulf of California, and the subsequent bycatch of vaquitas, has been a major factor in the species' decline.

A 2021 report, "[Seafood Obtained via Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing: U.S. Imports and Economic Impact on U.S. Commercial Fisheries](#)," compiled by the U.S.

International Trade Commission, found that \$2.4 billion worth of seafood imports derived from IUU fishing was imported in 2019 (11 percent of total seafood imports). Over 13 percent of the U.S. imports caught at sea were estimated to be caught using IUU fishing practices. Top species included swimming crab, wild-caught warm water shrimp, yellowfin tuna, and squid. The report noted that IUU-sourced seafood is a threat to the livelihood of U.S. fishermen. These practices also pose risks to marine ecosystems, public health, and human rights.

In January 2020, the U.S. government allocated \$8 million to fight IUU fishing and bolster SIMP as part of the US-Mexico-Canada trade agreement (USMCA) approved in January 2021. As part of the agreement, funding will go to NOAA to help it cooperate with the Mexican government in fighting illegal fishing through 2023. In FY22, SIMP received a \$5.2M appropriation, and in FY23 and FY24, funding increased to \$6.2 M. As NOAA works to [expand](#) the Seafood Import Monitoring Program to additional at-risk species, no less than \$6.2 million, maintaining level funding from FY 2023 and FY 2024, should be appropriated to support its continued implementation and growth.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Environment and Natural Resources Division/Environmental Crimes Section

Additional **\$2 million**

AWI asks the Subcommittee to provide an **additional** \$2 million, over and above the amount that would otherwise be appropriated, to the Environmental Crimes Section of the Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division, to be designated for the Section's work on animal cruelty crime.

In the last decade, Congress has taken significant steps to strengthen federal laws to protect animals from cruel treatment. For those efforts to be meaningful, it is imperative that the federal government's enforcement efforts be robustly supported. The attorneys in the Environmental Crimes Section are tasked with ensuring that justice is served when the federal statutes and enforcement regimes that provide for the humane treatment of captive, farmed, and companion animals across the country are violated. These laws include the Animal Welfare Act, the Horse Protection Act, the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, the 28-Hour Law, the animal crush video statute, the Animal Fighting Venture Prohibition Act, and, since 2019, the Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture Act.

This is a tremendous amount of responsibility, and it is a responsibility that both Congress and the American public expect to be executed vigorously. The resources available to bring criminal prosecution under these laws have not kept pace with the improvements made in the laws. Given the increased workload the Section has taken on in just the last couple of years, a \$2 million increase in its funding for its work on animal cruelty crimes is warranted.

**Testimony for the U.S. House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies**

**FY 2026 Spending Priorities within the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration-
National Marine Fisheries Service**

**Submitted by Allison Ludtke, Legislative Affairs Manager, Animal Legal Defense Fund
May 09, 2025**

The Animal Legal Defense Fund appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony on Fiscal Year 2026 spending priorities within the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Report language request:

The Committee directs the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the Secretary of Interior, to ensure none of the funds made available by this Act are used to support, fund, or authorize the development, implementation, or research of aquaculture or farming operations involving octopuses for commercial purposes in the United States, the exclusive economic zone of the United States, or the waters of the United States. Furthermore, no funds may be used to support the import, export, or interstate commerce of commercially aquacultured octopuses, including any living or dead specimens, parts, or derivatives of commercially aquacultured octopus or any product containing these.

Justification

Octopuses are highly complex, intelligent animals with enrichment needs that cannot be met in captivity. They are well-known for escaping aquariums and can learn to solve puzzles, open jars, use tools, and recall information. They are solitary, territorial creatures, and suffer when kept in confined settings, especially with other octopuses. Chronic stress can lead to cannibalism or even self-mutilation, in which they eat their own arms. Commercial octopus farming, which would raise octopus in overcrowded tanks, would lead to aggression, injury, and increased mortality.

Farming octopus not only presents welfare concerns but poses a heightened risk for zoonotic disease transmission and antibiotic resistance. Pathogens can spread rapidly in industrial agriculture, and octopuses are hosts for many types of zoonotic diseases, such as cholera, that can spread to humans. Aside from zoonotic disease spread, octopus farming threatens marine ecosystems and biodiversity. If farmed octopus were to escape from offshore cages, they could degrade natural ecosystems and disrupt fish populations. In addition, the construction and operation of these facilities threaten to pollute water quality with nitrogen and phosphorus waste, as well as antibiotics and pesticides.

Farming octopus on an industrial scale would also be a highly unsustainable practice. Octopuses require three times their own weight in food to sustain themselves. Furthermore, the main ingredients of commercial feeds for carnivorous aquatic species are sourced mainly from forage fish such as anchovy, herring, mackerel, and sardines. The vast amount of feed required for raising octopus would have cascading impacts on the food sources for other marine species and wild-caught fisheries.

Although octopus are not currently farmed for human consumption at a commercial scale, a planned facility in Spain has been awaiting environmental permits since 2021 and is expected to begin construction soon. The facility, run by a company called Nueva Pescanova, would produce 3,000 tons of octopus meat annually, requiring the slaughter of about one million octopus. Washington and California have passed state-level prohibitions on octopus farming, while several other states, including Connecticut, Hawaii Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina and Oregon have introduced legislation to prohibit this practice. Additionally, a bipartisan Senate bill, the OCTOPUS Act, which would ban commercial octopus farming in the United States, was introduced for the first time in the 118th Congress by Senators Whitehouse and Murkowski.

Thank you for your consideration of the Animal Legal Defense Fund's recommendations for the Fiscal Year 2026 spending priorities within the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Testimony of Dr. Erik Chapman
 Director, University of New Hampshire Sea Grant College Program
 and President, Sea Grant Association
 To the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
 Committee on Appropriations
 United States House of Representatives
 Regarding Funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Sea Grant
 Program
 May 2025

The Sea Grant Association (SGA) recommends Congress appropriate \$134.985 million to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Sea Grant Program (Sea Grant) in FY 2026, which includes \$116.985 million for the National Sea Grant College Program and \$18 million for the Sea Grant Aquaculture Research Program. Sea Grant is funded through appropriations to NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research in the Operations, Research, and Facilities account. The SGA thanks the committee for their steadfast, bipartisan support of the Sea Grant College Program and the Sea Grant Aquaculture Research Program since the Sea Grant College Program began in 1966.

Sea Grant consists of a network of 34 community-based programs that has responded to local calls for support in coastal and Great Lakes communities through research, extension, and education for nearly 60 years. SGA is a nonprofit association made up of the academic institutions participating in the program dedicated to representing Sea Grant's vision, mission, and goals and advocates for greater understanding, use, and conservation of marine, coastal, and Great Lakes resources.

An Impactful Use of Taxpayer Dollars

Sea Grant is an excellent steward of federal dollars. In 2023, Sea Grant generated \$828 million in economic benefits from a \$94 million federal investment—a 9-fold return on investment (ROI). A similar ROI on this request would equal over \$1 billion in economic benefits. Federal appropriations enable Sea Grant staff—who live and work in the communities they support—to respond to local calls for support with science-based solutions that yield quantifiable economic and environmental benefits in each Sea Grant state.

Additionally, in 2023, Sea Grant created or sustained 9,569 jobs and 1,601 small businesses, helped restore or protect over 2.1 million acres of habitat, engaged 970,976 people in education, and helped 24,288 seafood industry personnel adopt responsible fishery practices. From 2018-2022, Sea Grant's average annual federal investment of \$16.3 million in aquaculture resulted in a yearly average of \$69.6 million economic impact, 572 businesses created or sustained, 1,147 jobs created or sustained, and 71 publications.

Addressing a Growing Community Need

Sea Grant supports coastal counties, which contribute 46 percent of U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) and 39 percent of jobs in the country. If coastal counties were their own country, they would rank third in the world in GDP, surpassed only by the entirety of the United States and China. Economic prosperity and job production are vulnerable in these counties as they face

increasing threats from storms, sea level rise, marine heat waves, and other coastal hazards. Sea Grant programs are uniquely qualified to respond to their communities' calls for support—as evidenced by the growing demand for their work—and are a necessary part of ensuring a strong marine economy.

Unfortunately, local costs and requests for assistance and expertise are increasing, making it clear that Sea Grant needs more funding to assist the local communities each program supports. The SGA recommendation of \$116.985 million for the Sea Grant College Program is a five percent increase over the \$111.7 million authorized for FY 2025 in the *National Sea Grant College Program Amendments Act of 2020* (P.L. 116-221) and would help address the calls for support and invest dollars directly into the community. The SGA recommendation of \$18 million for Sea Grant Aquaculture Research would allow the program to continue the development of sustainable marine and Great Lakes region aquaculture businesses to create or sustain aquaculture jobs and to assure food security for communities across the nation.

Partnering with Local Businesses, Schools, Government, and More

Sea Grant staff live and work in the communities they serve, working alongside and supporting businesses organizations that they personally know. Of the more than 25,000 partnerships maintained around the country, Sea Grant has more than 7,000 government partners and more than 5,200 industry and business partners who benefit from this relationship. This heavy emphasis on partnerships means Sea Grant leverages nearly \$3 for every \$1 appropriated by Congress and invests those funds directly in support of local needs.

These state-based partners rely on the services their local Sea Grant provides; the owner of a woman-owned business, speaking at a congressional briefing said, “when my business encounters a problem, my first call is to [our state’s Sea Grant Director].”

As of this writing, nearly 15,000 people around the nation have signed onto letters supporting funding for their Sea Grant Program, with many providing further detail, including the following:

- “Without Sea Grant, my oyster farm and many others wouldn’t exist. To lose it is to lose the future of our industry.”
- “My partner [name] and I own one of the largest farms in [state] and have spent almost a decade creating incredibly high-quality seafood that is now available in 15 states every week and creating jobs for many local people in an industry that has been ravaged over the decades. This organization has helped us through good times and bad, and at all stages of our business.”
- “I can’t do my job without them.”
- “STEM learning in partnership with Sea Grant is a hallmark of our district’s instructional program for students, K-12.”

Examples of Work Sea Grant has Done in Their Communities

- During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, Texas Sea Grant helped generate an estimated \$3.5 million in economic benefits to Texas coastal communities and created or supported more than 671 jobs and 219 businesses. The program helped 1,003 seafood industry personnel

adopt safe and sustainable seafood practices, restored or protected 37,686 acres of coastal habitat, and educated over 30,000 K-12 students in coastal and marine topics.

- **Virginia** Sea Grant leveraged the collaboration of federal and state funding to bring in an additional \$17,892,440 to the state over the last six years.
- **Mississippi-Alabama** Sea Grant Consortium is a leader in the ecosystem fisheries management community and has supported oyster aquaculture development, leading to 160 acres of oyster farming and millions in economic impact.
- **New York Sea Grant** historically leverages on average a 3 to 6-fold return on each invested federal dollar annually, with benefits including regulatory assistance guides to support fishery, aquaculture, and seafood businesses; tools to track harmful algal blooms to protect swimmers and businesses; and training, technical assistance, and tools to local governments to mitigate flooding and erosion.
- **Maryland** Sea Grant helped support 38 aquaculture jobs, while its assistance to Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation helped secure a total of \$2.5 million in loans for 33 oyster farmers from 2018 to 2023.
- **Georgia** Sea Grant's work includes advancing sustainable fisheries and aquaculture by working with coastal managers, commercial seafood operators, and academic and legal experts to establish sustainable aquaculture operations, cultivate the seafood industry workforce, and market local products; promoting sustainable tourism by collaborating with coastal companies to share best practices, address challenges, and strengthen regional collaboration that balance economic growth and environmental stewardship; and building resilience of military installations to coastal hazards by partnering with the U.S. Department of Defense and experts nationwide to incorporate nature-based solutions.
- **Pennsylvania** Sea Grant hosted no-cost professional development workshops for K-12 educators and environmental literacy programs for K-12 students; engaged graduate students in fellowship opportunities, increasing their earning potential, and conserved open space with public access for fishing and passive recreation.
- During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, **Florida** Sea Grant helped generate an estimated \$37.9 million in economic benefits and created or supported 601 jobs and 245 businesses. They worked directly with 19 communities to improve their economic and coastal hazard resilience, helped 19,849 people adopt safe and sustainable fishing practices, provided 543 natural resources managers with critical tools and information, helped restore or protect over 16 million acres of habitat, and reached nearly 2,000 K-12 students through educational programming.
- **Illinois-Indiana** Sea Grant has worked with over 50 communities to take back and dispose of over 330,000 pounds of unused pharmaceuticals, keeping them off the streets and out of the waterways; has grown the US economy by providing key training and resources to the aquaculture industry, helping fish farmers reach new markets while better serving existing ones; and has promoted safer water recreation by providing real-time data on water conditions to inform boaters and swimmers on water safety best practices.
- **Connecticut** Sea Grant partners with local, state, regional, and national organizations to leverage funding and capacity, managing a total of over \$8.6 million last year from a federal investment of \$1.35 million. Sea Grant sustains the local economy by supporting the shellfish and seaweed aquaculture industries, providing seafood safety training that assures seafood is safe to eat, and training fishermen in safety at sea—even saving a life!

- Between 2018 and 2023, **California** Sea Grant invested nearly \$9.9 million federal dollars in merit-based research, leveraging over \$44 million in partnerships, for a total investment of more than \$54 million. These resources helped build sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, restore vital kelp forests, understand pollution and threats to coastal water quality, and mitigate coastal flooding.
- **Washington** Sea Grant's work in 2018-2023 brought more than \$190 million in services and economic benefits to the state, reaching more than 1.4 million coastal residents, boaters, fishermen, shellfish growers, small business owners, natural resource managers, coastal planners and K-12 students.
- As a result of **Michigan** Sea Grant's work over the last five years, 103 communities adopted or implemented hazard resiliency practices to prepare for and respond to coastal hazardous events; 28 graduates were employed in a job related to their degree within two years of graduation; 1,311 acres of coastal habitat were protected, enhanced, or restored; 777 fishermen and seafood processing and aquaculture personnel modified their practices using knowledge gained through MISG fisheries sustainability and seafood safety activities; and 46,815 people engaged in MISG-supported informal education programs.
- During the 2023-2024 fiscal year, **Louisiana** Sea Grant helped generate an estimated \$77.9 million in economic benefits and created or supported more than 1,731 jobs and more than 24 businesses. The program helped 6,616 seafood industry personnel adopt safe, sustainable seafood practices including crawfish producers impacted by drought. New materials produced by the program helped residents and communities across the southeast navigate federal disaster aid programs.
- Examples of **North Carolina** Sea Grant's work include engaging over 570 rural and urban community and state partners to address issues such as severe local and repeated flooding; creating workforce training programs in industries such as aquaculture, commercial fishing, and landscaping; supporting \$33.9 million in economic impacts including savings on property owner's insurance; building opportunities that have helped create 40 new businesses while also providing support to 235 additional businesses; supporting the creation of 58 jobs in local rural communities; and providing technical and planning expertise to small communities with limited staff to address water quality or structural problems.

Concluding Thoughts

The SGA's FY 2026 requests for the Sea Grant College Program and Sea Grant Aquaculture Research reflect coastal communities' increasing needs for the services Sea Grant provides. Sea Grant continues to grow taxpayer funds and clearly shows their value to partners and the broader communities they support.

The SGA is grateful for the long-standing consistent support this subcommittee has provided the program. Our on the ground, in-state efforts in coastal resilience, sustainable aquaculture, and other key Sea Grant priorities could not happen without the guidance and support this subcommittee and the rest of the Congress has provided over the years. Thank you again for your time and for your consideration of this request. SGA would be happy to answer any questions or provide any additional information.

**Testimony of Dr. Terry Donaldson
President, National Association of Marine Laboratories**

To the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives

Regarding Funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National
Science Foundation, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration
May 2025

On behalf of the National Association of Marine Laboratories (NAML), I am writing in support of increasing FY 2026 funding levels to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). **As you draft the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill, NAML respectfully requests no less than \$7.5 billion for NOAA and \$16.7 billion for NSF.** The oversight and support of these agencies, including specific programs identified below, are essential to the health and future of our nation's marine and coastal resources and the economies that depend upon them.

[Coastal counties](#) in the United States are home to 40 percent of the population, and if they were their own country, their GDP would rank third in the world, following only the United States and China. Not only is the marine and Great Lakes economy an important part of our national economic foundation, but it also often outperforms the national economy. For example, in [2021](#), America's marine economy saw a 7.4 percent growth in its contribution to the GDP, while the national economy grew by only 5.9 percent.

The role of the ocean and Great Lakes extends far beyond our economy. It is critical to our nation's prosperity and security, impacting everything from global commerce and national defense to food security, resilient ecosystems, and the economic health of coastal and Great Lakes communities. To ensure our security in these areas, the United States must invest in and support agencies and programs that both help us better understand and observe our changing ocean. These agencies will also need to ensure that we will have a trained workforce that enables us to maintain our international competitiveness and leadership.

NAML is a network of 104 place-based marine and Great Lakes laboratories across the nation with a mission to promote excellence in research, education, and public outreach in the marine and freshwater sciences. NAML lab locations can be viewed [here](#). NAML also seeks to provide a forum for the resolution of challenges common to nonprofit marine laboratories in the United States and to inform the wise use and conservation of marine and coastal resources.

NAML respectfully requests the committee continue to fund these mission critical programs at no less than the levels that were appropriated in recent years, as is provided below for extramural ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research, conservation, observing, and education programs. NAML asks the committee to intervene and stop sudden cancellations of ongoing research at NOAA, NSF, and NASA, and sudden, unplanned

reductions in indirect costs for grants and cooperative agreements. At the very least, the proposed indirect cost rates should be delayed to give researchers and institutions time to adjust. NAML also requests the committee keep NOAA intact and continue to fund critical programs within the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research.

NOAA

NOAA plays a key role in our nation's security, stability, and prosperity. NAML labs operate on the frontline of a constantly changing environment. Thus, we understand more than most how much our nation depends on healthy marine and freshwater resources, how weather and climate hazards challenge the resilience of coastal communities, and how research and education enterprises provide the knowledge and training for decision-makers in our coastal communities. **NAML respectfully requests the funding of NOAA at no less than \$7.5 billion.** Additionally, within NOAA's Operations, Research, and Facilities (ORF) Account, NAML requests no less than the FY 2024 enacted amounts listed amounts for the following programs:

- The **National Ocean Service (\$671.5 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** enables the safe, sustainable, and efficient use of marine and coastal resources across sectors including maritime commerce and transportation, fishing, aquaculture, energy development, recreation, and inland export/import.
 - **Integrated Ocean Observation System Regional Observations (\$56 million)** benefits the economy, public safety, and the environment through its network that collects real-time observing data, develops tracking and predictive tools, and delivers tailored products to stakeholders and decision-makers.
 - **Competitive Research (\$20.0 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** uses a competitive, external grant process to fund regional-scale and targeted research and assessment activities that support NOAA's coastal mission areas, including the only national grant programs dedicated to research topics in the *HAB and Hypoxia Research and Control Act*.
 - **National Estuarine Research Reserve System (\$33.3 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** is a federal-state partnership that uses research and education to protect and understand estuarine resources, while functioning as sentinel sites within a changing environment.
 - **National Marine Sanctuaries and Marine Protected Areas (\$67.0 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** conserves and facilitates sustainable use of seascapes, wildlife, and maritime heritage resources.
- Within funding for the National Marine Fisheries Service, NAML requests the amounts below for the following programs:
 - **Prescott Grant Program (\$4.5 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** provides competitive grants to stranding network organizations to rescue, rehabilitate, or investigate sick, injured, or distressed marine mammals and to determine the cause of death or disease of dead marine mammals.
 - **Aquaculture (\$24.0 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** provides science, services, and policies to support the significant expansion and sustainability of U.S. marine aquaculture.
- **Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (\$656.1 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** included in the Senate report, including no less than the:

- **National Sea Grant College Program (\$116.9 million)** turns research into actions that support science-based sustainable practices around resilient communities and economies, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, healthy coastal ecosystems, and environmental literacy and workforce development.
- **Sea Grant Aquaculture Research (\$18 million)** is the largest, most comprehensive government grant program dedicated to supporting marine aquaculture development with grants addressing some of the top challenges to marine aquaculture.
- **Ocean Exploration and Research (\$46.0 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** is the only federal program dedicated to ocean exploration.
- **National Oceanographic Partnership Program (\$2.5 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** is a unique catalyst for participation by nongovernmental organizations and industry in federal ocean research and education projects in the areas of data, resources, education, and communication.
- **Sustained Ocean Observations and Monitoring (\$52.5 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** is a global system for observations and analysis of marine and ocean variables to support operational ocean services worldwide.
- **Office of Education (\$35.5 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** provides leadership on education matters, promotes NOAA products, and services to the public, and provides support for education activities across the agency.
 - **Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Regional Programs (\$8.7 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** is an environmental education program for K–12 students and educators that promotes locally relevant, authentic experiential learning.
 - **Jose E. Serrano Educational Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions (\$20.8 million, FY 2024 enacted level)** uses a competitive process to provide financial assistance to students and Minority Serving Institutions that train students and conduct research in NOAA mission sciences.
- **Saltonstall-Kennedy grant program** in FY25 foci directly support some of the Trump Administration Executive Orders on seafood competitiveness. This program has been very meaningful to Alaska fisheries research, and Alaska's fisheries comprise 60% of the seafood generated in the nation.

NSF

NSF plays a key role in our nation's security, stability, and prosperity and has spurred many U.S. innovations that have made our nation the global leader in advancing research and education.

NAML respectfully requests Congress fund NSF at no less than \$16.7 billion, the congressionally authorized level. With this increase, NAML requests no less than the listed amounts for the following programs:

- **Research and Related Activities (\$7.2 billion, FY 2024 enacted level)** invests in both early-stage research and development of a future-focused science and engineering workforce that can accelerate progress in basic science and engineering research as well as support the private sector.

- **STEM Education (\$1.2 billion, FY 2024 enacted level)** builds a future workforce for the needs of today and the industries of the future, and expands STEM opportunities to everyone, everywhere.

NASA

NASA's Earth-facing missions, which help us understand our planet on both a large and a small-scale, are of particular interest to NAML.

NAML requests no less than **\$7.3 billion for Science (FY 2024 enacted level) and \$2.2 billion for Earth Science (FY 2024 enacted level)**.

Concluding Remarks

Investing in the programs and agencies at no less than the levels highlighted above will help ensure U.S. **security—as it relates to economic, food, homeland, and environmental security—we request that the subcommittee reject any proposed reductions to extramural science programs and instead fund these programs at the levels provided above.** These programs should be adequately funded now, not in response to the next disaster, and we fear these programs will not recover from the impacts of such drastic proposed cuts, and further that the investigators leading this research will leave the U.S. for investment support in other countries.

Thank you in advance for your work on FY 2026 appropriations and for your time and consideration of this request. NAML would be happy to answer any questions or provide any additional information.



SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

**Testimony of the Society for American Archaeology
Before the Subcommittee on Commerce, Science and Technology
House Committee on Appropriations**

March 14, 2025

The Society for American Archaeology (SAA) is pleased to present the following testimony in support of the National Science Foundation (NSF) for fiscal year 2026.

The SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With more than 6,000 members, the SAA represents professional and avocational archaeologists, archaeology students in colleges and universities, and archaeologists working at tribal agencies, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. The SAA has members throughout the United States, as well as in many nations around the world.

The NSF is the nation's primary funding organization for large-scale fundamental research across all disciplines of science. Basic research is the foundation for all of the discoveries and innovations that power modern civilization. Many of these breakthroughs come at unforeseen times but would not occur without the research that the NSF makes possible through its grants. Research activity funded under the NSF's Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences is no exception. Science, which includes archaeology, is a multidimensional field in which discoveries enrich the public benefit. This has a huge impact on both our knowledge of the past and our understanding of life in the present, particularly concerning how past human societies adapted to some of the challenges that we are experiencing today. In our increasingly globalized economy and rapidly evolving world, such information is critical to the national interest.

Funding NSF at \$9.9 billion, and ensuring adequate numbers of personnel, would bring the Foundation back to its FY 2023 level. This amount will enable the NSF to make its critical investments in research while still allowing for congressional and administration priorities.

Dan Ashe
President and CEO
Association of Zoos and Aquariums
Testimony for House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
May 9, 2025

Thank you, Chair Rogers and Ranking Member Meng for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding the priorities of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for Fiscal Year 2026. My name is Dan Ashe, and I am the President and CEO of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). Founded in 1924, the AZA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that our more than 250 accredited zoos and aquariums reflect the global gold standard of excellence in animal care and wellbeing, conservation, education, science, and guest experience. AZA's member facilities are examples of how economic and environmental prosperity work hand-in-hand. Our members welcome more than 200 million visitors annually, including 55 million school-aged children, generating more than \$22 billion in economic activity and supporting more than 198,000 jobs across the country. They also contribute over \$356 million in direct support for field conservation each year, supporting work in 125 countries benefiting 1,021 species and subspecies, of which 235 are listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

At the heart of AZA is our mandatory accreditation requirement, which assures that only zoos and aquariums – like Louisville Zoo and Queens Zoo – that are committed to meeting the global gold standard can become members. The independent and objective AZA accreditation process includes self-evaluation, rigorous on-site inspection, and critical peer review. Our standards are publicly available and are continuously evolving and improving as we learn more about the needs of the animals in our care. Once earned, AZA accreditation confers best-in-class status, an important message for local, state, and federal governments and the visiting public. All AZA members are required to undergo the accreditation process every five years, ensuring that AZA members continue to grow as standards improve.

AZA and its members are leaders, partners, and participants in species conservation. We work in concert with Congress, federal agencies, conservation organizations, state governments, the private sector, and the general public to conserve our wildlife heritage. AZA and its member facilities have longstanding partnerships with NOAA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), including partnership work through the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grants and Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network to do the essential work of marine wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, and recovery.

I am submitting the following testimony in support of the following key programs funded through the annual Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program

Marine mammal strandings impacting thousands of animals each year have increased in recent years and are only continuing to rise. The John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance

Grant Program provides critical support to stranding network operations, many of which are overseen by AZA-accredited aquariums. Prescott grants are currently the only federal funds that aquariums can utilize to help offset the expenses incurred from the rescue and rehabilitation of thousands of sick and injured marine animals each year. The data that aquariums collect in the process of caring for stranded animals is essential to not just understanding ocean health, but also to identify emerging zoonotic diseases and harmful algal blooms that impact the health of commercially valuable species.

AZA-accredited aquariums and other facilities work tirelessly to leverage finite federal resources to rescue and rehabilitate stranded animals in every part of the nation's coastline. Programs engage thousands of volunteers who donate their time to help save stranded and entangled marine mammals and collect key data. However, aquariums need support to sustain the equipment, personnel, and operating costs to run these extensive and expensive stranding programs. Federal funds provide a small, but critical, piece of overall funding. Without those funds, many aquariums and other institutions are unable to operate their stranding programs. We urge you to provide at least \$6 million for Fiscal Year 2026 for the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program.

Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network

Each year, aquariums, zoos, and other organizations rescue and rehabilitate thousands of stranded and injured sea turtles. These organizations are facing increasing demands to respond to and care for federally protected sea turtles as a result of many threats including fishing gear and other plastic debris entanglements, boat strikes, and cold-stun events. Most facilities voluntarily help fulfill federal mandates, operating with little to no direct federal support. This level of voluntary contribution is not sustainable.

The Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network is a collaboration between aquariums, non-governmental organizations, and agencies at the state and federal level coordinating the rescue, rehabilitation, and recovery of sick and injured sea turtles. Several AZA-accredited aquariums serve as State Coordinators and State Liaisons for the network.

We thank the Subcommittee for providing new resources for this initiative in recent years and ask for \$5 million for Fiscal Year 2026 for NOAA to provide direct support to institutions and organizations permitted to provide sea turtle stranding response and/or rehabilitation.

National Sea Grant College Program

The National Sea Grant College Program administers the annual Sea Grant Knauss Fellowships and funds key initiatives supported by AZA-accredited facilities. The thirty-four state Sea Grant programs, located in every coastal and Great Lakes state, collaborate with AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums on a variety of conservation projects benefiting coastal, ocean, and Great Lake areas including aquaculture research, education, and mitigation of environmental hazards, which promote long-term stewardship and responsible use of aquatic resources.

This valuable program also funds essential government fellowships for qualified individuals who help legislators and federal agencies shape policies affecting coastal, Great Lake, and ocean areas. In 2023 alone, Sea Grant created or supported over 20,000 jobs and 1,479 businesses¹. As a proud graduate of the Sea Grant Knauss Fellowship program, I can personally attest to its critical importance in shaping the trajectory of my career. We request robust funding in Fiscal Year 2026 to support the National Sea Grant College Program.

AZA and its members look forward to continuing to work with this Subcommittee and Congress to conserve our marine resources and ensure that current and future generations will continue to be good stewards of the world's precious aquatic ecosystems.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan Ashe". The signature is written in a cursive style, with a large, sweeping initial "D" that loops around the first part of the name.

¹ https://seagrant.noaa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/2023-Sea-Grant-By-the-Numbers_10-3-24_508_web.pdf

Written Testimony

FY26 Funding: VAWA, VOCA Programs & Crime Victims Fund

Prepared for presentation to the
U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Submitted By:

Elena Skardis Saviolakis

Executive Director

Daughters of Penelope

1909 Q Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, DC 20009

www.daughtersofpenelope.org • (202) 234-9741 • dophq@ahcpa.org

May 7, 2025

Chairman Hal Rogers, Ranking Member Grace Meng, and distinguished members of the Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Subcommittee, the **Daughters of Penelope (DOP)**, an international service organization for women of Greek heritage and Philhellenes, which is dedicated, in part, to supporting survivors and their families of domestic violence, is requesting meaningful support for **Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) (Office of Justice Programs - OVC)** and **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) (Office of Violence Against Women - OVW)** programs at the **Department of Justice**.

We sincerely thank Congress for taking important measures recently to strengthen federal programs that address domestic violence and that provide the lifesaving services needed for survivors and their families. These measures included the passage of the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021, which is beginning to help stabilize the Crime Victims Fund, and the passage of a strong bipartisan-backed VAWA reauthorization through 2027. As a result, it is critical for these programs to be sustained and funded properly.

To continue funding the essential and lifesaving services to crime victims, Congress must provide a Crime Victims Fund cap for FY 2026 that is set at **\$1.9 billion** and work toward a long-term solution to restore steady VOCA funding and stabilize the CVF without sacrificing other victims' services programs with cuts. We also support **maximized investment** for VAWA programs to truly meet survivors' needs.

Finally, we respectfully urge the Subcommittee to call on the U.S. Department of Justice to unfreeze Fiscal Year 2025 grant funding for the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). These critical programs support survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other serious crimes, as well as the mission-driven organizations that serve them.

VOCA Programs & Crime Victims Fund

The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) created the Crime Victims Fund, which serves as a mechanism to fund compensation and services for the nation's victims of federal crime. The Fund is comprised of money from criminals, and by law, the Fund is dedicated solely to victim services. For example, the Fund is used to help pay for state victim compensation and assistance programs and grants to victim service providers. A considerable amount supports victims' out-

of-pocket expenses such as medical and counseling fees, lost wages, and funeral and burial costs. The Fund provides formula grants to over 11,000 local victim assistance programs.¹ These agencies provided services to more than six million victims of crime, including victims of murder, assault and sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse, stalking and elder abuse, and others.

The Crime Victims Fund is financed by fines, forfeitures, or other penalties paid by federal crime offenders. *Therefore, the Crime Victims Fund is not funded by taxpayer dollars.* However, it is unfortunate that in the past Congress carved out funds from the CVF to use as offsets for other government programs. Because CVF is comprised of non-taxpayer dollars, it should not be considered available for use for non-VOCA programs in the federal budget. Therefore, we recommend to the Subcommittee that the Fund be used only for programs authorized under the VOCA statute.

Finally, we recommend setting the Crime Victims' Fund cap to at least \$1.9 billion to address the urgent needs of victims of crime. From FY2023 to FY2024, VOCA funds suffered a 30% cut—an approximate \$600 million reduction. The VOCA Fix Act has helped restore deposits into the CVF, but not yet to the degree that is needed. State programs remain drastically impacted and require a more consistent funding stream to alleviate the detrimental impact to local services providers. This is why we support the bipartisan **Crime Victims Fund Stabilization Act** (H.R.909) that adds excess funds from the False Claims Act to the CVF for five years.

VAWA Programs

Domestic violence is a pervasive, life-threatening crime affecting millions of individuals across our nation regardless of age, gender, socio-economic status, race or religion. The statistics are alarming. According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)²:

- More than 1 in 4 women have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime.
- Approximately 8 million women are raped, physically assaulted, and/or stalked by a current or former intimate partner each year.
- 1 in 5 women and 1 in 38 men have experienced rape in her or his lifetime.
- Nationwide, an average of 3 women are killed by a current or former intimate partner every day.
- Approximately 26% of children under the age of 18 are exposed to domestic violence in their lifetime.

Our nation's response to intimate partner and domestic violence is driven by VAWA programs. Each of these programs is critical to ensuring that victims are safe, that offenders are held accountable, and that our communities are more secure. Thanks to VAWA, steady progress has been made, however, there are many victims who still suffer in silence. A 2023 24-hour survey of 1,626 domestic violence programs across the U.S. found that a staggering 76,975 victims were served in one day. However, **13,335** requests for services (such as emergency shelter, transportation, or legal representation) went unmet because programs lacked the resources to provide them, an increase from the previous year.³ An estimated 54% of the unmet services were for Housing and Emergency Shelter. The extreme gap between need and resources is clear.

¹ <https://www.justice.gov/ncj/149952/download>, Page 144.

² NNEDV Domestic Violence Fact Sheet.

³ 18th Annual Domestic Violence Courts Report, accessed [18th Annual DV Courts Report National Summary-FINAL-FH.pdf \(nnedv.org\)](#)

Daughters of Penelope's Work to Support Domestic Violence Shelters

Why are VAWA and VOCA programs important to the Daughters of Penelope? In addition to our chapters supporting domestic violence shelters in their respective local communities, the Daughters of Penelope is a national sponsor and stakeholder of two domestic violence shelters—**Penelope House** in Mobile, Alabama, and **Penelope's Place** in Brockton, Massachusetts.

Penelope House was the first shelter established in Alabama when it opened in 1979. Since then, Penelope House is recognized as a model shelter for others to emulate. VAWA and VOCA grant funding has been critical in helping Penelope House to meet its mission of providing safety, protection, and support to victims of domestic violence and their children through shelter, advocacy, and individual and community education. Penelope House has been awarded VAWA and VOCA grants from the following programs: Shelter Services, Court Advocate Program, and Transitional Living Program. Portions of these grants help to fund the case managers, case and court advocates, and children's counselors and program coordinators, among other employees who help to provide life-saving support to domestic violence victims and their children.

Statistics | Effectiveness and Importance of VAWA and VOCA Grant Funding

Historically, VOCA/VAWA grants have funded more than 35% of Penelope House's budget.

- However, with VOCA grant reductions, VOCA/VAWA grants are funding 25% of Penelope House's budget.

While Penelope House's Court Advocacy Program is funded by VOCA and VAWA, it is not fully funded due to the reductions. Its 2024 stats for clients served were:

- Adult Clients (unduplicated): 1,949
- Children (unduplicated): 700
- Court Appointments with Clients: 5,862
- Clients assisted to obtain protection from abuse or no contact orders: 1,246

VOCA supports the salaries and benefits for **seven Court/Victim Advocates** and the Court Advocate Supervisor, all of whom provide services to victims of domestic violence throughout Mobile, Washington, Clarke, and Choctaw Counties of Alabama as they navigate within the court system. (VOCA has become increasingly important to Penelope House because its services were expanded to include more counties.)

VAWA supports a **full-time Court Advocate Administrative Assistant** and a portion of the salary for a **Court/Victim Advocate** for the Court Advocacy Program. The Court Advocate Administrative Assistant provides administrative support to Court/Victim Advocates and assistance to the Court Advocacy Supervisor. The CA Assistant collects and compiles program data needed for grant statistics and the evaluation of the Court Advocacy Program. The CA Administrative Assistant is dually trained to serve as a Court/Victim Advocate, when necessary, in case of illness or any other absence of court advocates. Thus, a survivor will not have to be alone as he/she attempts to navigate within the court system.

Penelope House's Emergency Shelter Program is funded by VOCA. It's 2024 service stats:

- Adults sheltered (unduplicated): 176
- Children sheltered (unduplicated): 159
- Total Client Service Hours: 16,064.75
- Total nights of shelter provided: 5,275
- Crisis calls: 1,587

- Meals Served: 15,834

Penelope's Place is a 5-bedroom emergency domestic violence shelter for families and individuals in Brockton Massachusetts. It serves women and children who are in imminent danger of serious injury or death. In addition to being a safe place to live, Penelope's Place helps people meet their basic needs, increase their incomes, improve their mental and physical health and overall quality of life.

- In FY 2024 (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024), Penelope's Place served **48 victims**, including 27 children under the age of 9. The average length of stay was 3.9 months.

In the past, the women living in the shelter were typically in their 30s. Recently, all but one have been in their 20s. These young women have needed additional support, but with Penelope Place's strong relationships within and outside of Health Imperatives, the shelter has been able to get them additional help they need. For example, Penelope's Place recently worked with a mother with four children, aged 10, 8, 6, and 5. Three of the children are on medication for ADHD, and the youngest has Autism Spectrum Disorder. They had all witnessed their mother being choked by their father and they had a very difficult time adjusting to life in the shelter. One of the children was hospitalized for mental health concerns. We connected the children to Health Imperatives counselors and arranged for a trauma-informed yoga teacher to teach the children how to relax and regulate their emotions. The mother was then able to enroll in a training program and return to work.

VOCA funding supports a rape crisis center and domestic violence support programs including "SAFEPLAN" court advocacy that aids residents with restraining and harassment orders. According to Penelope Place's president and CEO, *"In fact, 95% of people who call a statewide shelter for DV shelter are turned away every day. That's why VAWA and VOCA funding is so important—the more supports/resources we can provide survivors, the safer they are, and the more people we can serve as we are able to help them move into affordable housing more quickly."*

RECOMMENDATION

The Daughters of Penelope is requesting support for **Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)** and **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)** programs, which are vital to DOP programs that serve its mission. Specifically, we request a **Crime Victims Fund** cap for FY 2026 set to at least **\$1.9 billion** and without any transfers to programs not authorized under the VOCA statute. The CVF is not funded by taxpayer dollars. Therefore, the cap can be sustained or raised without adding to the national debt or deficit and a roadmap for stability must be in place. We also support **maximized investment** in VAWA programs to meet survivors' needs. Finally, we respectfully urge the Subcommittee to call on the U.S. Department of Justice to unfreeze Fiscal Year 2025 grant funding for the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) and the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). These critical programs support survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other serious crimes, as well as the mission-driven organizations such as Penelope House and Penelope's Place, that serve them. The viability and dependability of VOCA and VAWA grants have become ever more important to meet the survivors' needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our written testimony to the Subcommittee.



**Testimony of Tara L. Perry, Chief Executive Officer
National Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)/Guardian ad Litem (GAL)
Association for Children**

**United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies**

Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Department of Justice Funding

May 9, 2025

Chairman Rogers, Chairman Cole, Ranking Members Meng and DeLauro, and Members of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to submit remarks on the Department of Justice (DOJ) FY 2026 budget including funding for the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Program through the Office of Justice Programs, State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Account.

CASA/GAL advocacy is a well-established model strongly associated with improved long-term outcomes for child victims, for which the need continues to be critical. With Congressional support at the requested level of \$15 million, the same as the House FY 2025 proposed level, the CASA/GAL network in 49 states and the District of Columbia will enhance and advance specialized training, tools, and resources to continue delivering vital one-on-one best-interest advocacy that addresses the complex and ever-evolving needs of traumatized children who have been victimized by their caregivers.

Emerging issues such as the commercial sexual exploitation of children and our nation's ongoing opioid epidemic – for which children account for an increasing number of victims – both necessitate a greater specialization within one-on-one advocacy, with a keen and deliberate focus on progressing toward the call within the Victims of Child Abuse Act to serve every child victim. As we enrich CASA/GAL advocacy to encompass evolving direct service needs, our national network will further strengthen its capacity to serve over 200,000 child victims of abuse and neglect.

Child victimization and maltreatment remains all too prevalent in our country and the negative impact on children, their families and society are significant. Traumatized victims of child

abuse and neglect face significant and multiple risk factors, most notably, juvenile delinquency, adult criminality, and poor educational performance that affects future employment and stability. These issues result in a hefty impact on federal, state, and local spending –at least one-quarter of the DOJ budget is dedicated to our nation’s prison system, and at the same time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates the economic and social costs of child abuse and neglect to total \$124 billion nationwide per annum. Local CASA/GAL programs offer an effective service to child victims of abuse and neglect that improves outcomes, increases the efficient functioning of our court systems, and saves millions in federal and state taxpayer dollars annually in the process.

CASA/GAL programs are, at the heart of their operation, a highly effective leveraging of community-based resources to provide dedicated and sustained one-on-one advocacy for child victims and advise the courts of the child’s best interests and needs throughout abuse and neglect proceedings. Research has shown that the presence of a caring, consistent adult in the life of a child victim is associated with improved long-term outcomes. These efforts, which focus on helping the child find a safe, permanent home where they can both heal and thrive, require thorough background screening, specialized training, and resources to promote a nationwide system of programs that adhere to and assure the highest quality of services and care for the child victim.

CASA Program funds through DOJ achieve and uphold national standard setting, assessment, accountability, and evaluation across 939 local, state, and tribal programs to promote improved child outcomes and effective stewardship of public investments in victim advocacy. Evidence-based practices, intensive technical assistance, direct program guidance and partnerships, and national program standards and quality assurance processes all lie at the foundation of effective CASA/GAL program service delivery in communities across the nation.

Given the nature of the CASA/GAL advocates’ intensive work with child victims of abuse and neglect, standards of rigorous screening, training, supervision, and service are implemented nationwide, with Congressional support, to ensure consistent quality for victims who directly benefit from having their needs and rights championed in the courtroom and in the community. Comprehensive pre-service, in-service, and issue-focused training curricula – including training in disproportionality, cultural competency, and working with older youth – ensures a cutting edge approach to victim services centered on the child thriving well into the future as a member of the community. Federal support is foundational to the solid and high-quality functioning of a national child advocacy network for child victims of abuse and neglect.

As the needs of children who have experienced abuse and neglect grow and change, so must the specialization of one-on-one advocacy and services by CASA/GAL programs. Since the Victims of Child Abuse Act was passed, the landscape of victims’ services for children has evolved significantly. Researchers and practitioners know more now than ever about trauma, and its associated impacts on child development, as well as the significant and multiple risk factors and issues faced by abused and neglected children such as mental health/ post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), commercial sex trafficking, overmedication, and the growing effects of substance use disorder and the opioid epidemic in particular. Further, we know that youth of color in particular face very significant challenges – in addition to victimization – on their path to a thriving

adulthood. CASA/GAL advocates bring one-on-one attention and a dedicated focus to each of the issues that the child victim faces, but additional resources are needed to enhance and build their knowledge base as part of a continuous advocacy development process.

These complex issues warrant adaptive and responsive training, technical assistance, and resources, while continuing on a trajectory of maintaining quality care and services within current CASA/GAL caseloads and also simultaneously building the capacity to take on additional cases when appointed by the court. National CASA/GAL Association is committed to continuous improvement of training, technical assistance, and resource delivery to strengthen and support local CASA/GAL programs and state organizations to help advocates remain at the forefront of emerging child welfare issues.

Federal support at the requested level is instrumental to bridging advocacy training and best practice tools into multiple and new emerging issue areas including child sex trafficking, substance use disorder and opioid-overuse, and the overmedication of child victims, for example. Advocates need to be well versed in warning signs for these issues, as well as the available services, resources, and coordination of community and court efforts in order to best address the child victim's needs.

FY 2026 funding of \$15 million will be targeted to fortifying resources and training for CASA/GAL programs and their staff and volunteers based upon existing best practices and models. In addition, this federal funding will be used to target resources to serve over 200,000 child victims of abuse and neglect and continue efforts toward the development of strong state CASA/GAL organizations and local programs that will enhance support of quality service delivery in local communities. Additional projects include sustaining development of training on best practices in addressing the needs of children impacted by the opioid epidemic and other forms of substance use disorder, child sex trafficking, children of incarcerated parents, young people aging out of the foster care system and addressing racial disproportionality in child welfare and increasing diversity, equity and inclusion in our member staff, volunteers and governing bodies.

According to the most recent government data available, the number of substantiated child abuse and neglect cases was 558,899 in FY 2022. This remains a significant population with equally significant and complex issues and risk factors. Without the benefit of a specially trained CASA/GAL advocate that is able to devote dedicated time and attention to the needs of children, those children face a complex court process and child welfare system that is often overwhelmed, under resourced and challenging to navigate. Our ability as a national network to serve every child who has experienced abuse and neglect is directly tied to strengthening and expanding a foundational and interwoven program of advocate training, technical assistance, standards, tools, and resources that are funded with DOJ support.

While children who are the victims of maltreatment have suffered deep layers of trauma, these experiences do not have to be their only life story. Juvenile detention and adult incarceration do not have to be the path to their future. Substance use disorder, PTSD, homelessness, and joblessness do not have to be the basis of their experiences. We can change their trajectory, together, with Congressional support.

Caring, dedicated, and extensively trained CASA/GAL advocates bring about positive changes in the lives of child victims. Full funding is needed to continue expanding the advocate pipeline, enhance the training, resources, and services provided to and through CASA/GAL programs, and strengthen outcomes for future members of our nation's workforce.

We urge the Subcommittee to allocate \$15 million for the Court Appointed Special Advocates Program in FY 2026 to address the overwhelming need for dedicated advocacy on behalf of children who have experienced abuse and neglect. Thank you for your consideration.



**Official Written Testimony in Support of
Fiscal Year 2026 Funding for the National Science Foundation**

Submitted by
Steven C. Kemp, CAE, Executive Director, Human Factors and Ergonomics Society

Prepared for the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science, and Related
Agencies;

Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
April 28, 2025

On behalf of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES), we are pleased to provide this written testimony to House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies for the official record. **HFES urges the Subcommittee to provide at least \$9.9 billion for the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the fiscal year (FY) 2026 appropriations process.** This includes support for the Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (TIP) Directorate, which serves to scale and translate new research discoveries, and the Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences, which is essential to understanding human behavior and social organizations, as well as the STEM Education Directorate, which is ensuring we have the workforce to power our future innovation.

HFES is a multidisciplinary professional association with over 3,000 individual members worldwide, comprised of scientists and practitioners, all with a common interest in enhancing the performance, effectiveness, and safety of systems with which humans interact through the design of those systems' user interfaces to optimally fit humans' physical and cognitive capabilities. The Society and its members strongly believe that investment in scientific research serves as an important driver for innovation, national security, and maintaining American global competitiveness. Funding for fundamental research at NSF to address national and societal needs will be critical as Congress works to ensure the U.S. remains the global leader in advancing scientific and technological innovation. Specifically, fundamental research is key to basic understandings of novel technologies and informs the safe and secure development of such technologies. We thank the Subcommittee for its longtime recognition of the value of scientific and engineering research and its contribution to innovation in the U.S.

Human Factors and Ergonomics at the National Science Foundation

HFES and its members strongly believe that federal investment in NSF will have a direct and positive impact on the U.S. economy, national security, and the health and well-being of Americans. It is for these reasons that HFES supports robust funding for the Foundation to encourage further scientific advancements that will bolster our capabilities in technology, education, defense, and healthcare, among others. In the past, NSF funding for HF/E basic research has strengthened interdisciplinary partnerships that promote multilateral approaches to technology research and development, including consideration of the human and user experience. HFES supports collaboration between the TIP and SBE directorates within NSF to

further research and opportunities in behavioral research within the creation of emerging technology. The benefits of this research are not confined to one field but rather span across a range of disciplines to increase understanding of the way humans interact with technology, as well as with each other.

In particular, NSF funds HF/E research to:

- Better understand and improve the effectiveness of how individuals, groups, organizations, and society make decisions.¹
- Improve understanding of the relationship between science and engineering, technology, and society, to advance the adoption and use of technology.²
- Gain a better understanding of how humans and computers interact to ensure the development of new devices or environments that empower the user.³
- Inform decision making in engineering design, control, and optimization to improve individual engineering components and entire systems.⁴

HF/E research will be especially critical as the Federal Government works to develop, adopt, and broadly integrate emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI). HFES recognizes that most systems that rely on AI will not operate independently but will be initially programmed and trained by humans to augment, collaborate, or perform specific tasks. Because of this it is key to consider human experience throughout the research and development process, especially how bias and human error may impact systems.

The HF/E profession has conducted detailed research on impacts of AI on human performance, and HFES believes AI must be designed to successfully support human capabilities and overcome known human cognitive limitations, so that humans can understand and utilize fully optimized AI capabilities and receive the full breadth of benefits from the actions of AI. More research is needed to understand how systems can be designed to overcome AI biases, provide transparency and explainability for human use, and provide clear interfaces for human-AI interactions. Interdisciplinary research programs at NSF to address these challenges, such as its Fairness in Artificial Intelligence program⁵, the AI Research Institutes⁶, as well as the National AI Research Resource⁷ will be critical to ensuring the U.S. achieves the promised benefits AI can bring to society.

The Value of Human Factors and Ergonomics Science

For over 50 years, the U.S. federal government has funded scientists and engineers to explore and better understand the relationship between humans, technology, and the environment.

¹ Decision, Risk & Management Sciences (DRMS) Program

(http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5423)

² Science and Technology Studies (STS) Program (https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505697)

³ Human Centered Computing (HCC) Program (https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=504958)

⁴ Operation and Design Cluster (http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=13473)

⁵ NSF Program on Fairness in Artificial Intelligence in Collaboration with Amazon (FAI)

(https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505651)

⁶ Artificial Intelligence Research Institutes (https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=505686)

⁷ National AI Research Resource <https://new.nsf.gov/focus-areas/artificial-intelligence/nairr>

Originally stemming from urgent needs to improve the performance of humans using complex systems such as aircraft during World War II, the field of human factors and ergonomics (HF/E) works to develop safe, effective, and practical human use of technology. HF/E does this by developing scientific approaches for understanding this complex interface, also known as “human-systems integration.” Today, HF/E is applied to fields as diverse as transportation, architecture, environmental design, consumer products, electronics and computers, energy systems, medical devices, manufacturing, office automation, organizational design and management, aging, farming, health, sports and recreation, oil field operations, mining, forensics, and education.

With increasing reliance by federal agencies and the private sector on technology-aided decision-making, HF/E is vital to effectively achieving our national objectives. While a large proportion of HF/E research exists at the intersection of science and practice—that is, HF/E is often viewed more at the “applied” end of the science continuum—the field also contributes to advancing “fundamental” scientific understanding of the interface between human decision-making, engineering, design, technology, and the world around us through research funded by NSF. The reach of HF/E is profound, touching nearly all aspects of human life from the health care sector to the ways we travel, to the hand-held devices we use every day.

HFES supports programs across the federal government that promote the safe and secure development of technologies, as well as prioritize how humans can understand and harness the full capabilities of such technologies. In addition to NSF, programs that promote secure AI systems are critical to its success and advancement. HFES would like to see further support for the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) US AI Safety Institute (USAISI), which brings together hundreds of stakeholders to identify, measure, and mitigate the risks associated with advanced systems. The testing, evaluation, and standards setting activities the USAISI is tasked with engaging in are essential in accelerating the development of trustworthy AI systems and maintaining global leadership in AI standards. Initiatives like the USAISI are key to mitigating risk associated with and misuse of AI, to promote public safety and national security.

Conclusion

Given NSF’s critical role in supporting fundamental research and education across science and engineering disciplines, HFES supports an overall FY 2026 NSF budget of at least \$9.9 billion. This investment funds important research studies, enabling an evidence-base, methodology, and measurements for improving organizational function, performance, and design across sectors and disciplines. In addition to this, HFES encourages continued Congressional support for programs that prioritize safe and secure AI systems, like the NIST USAISI.

On behalf of HFES, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions about HFES or HF/E research. HFES truly appreciates the Subcommittee’s long history of support for scientific research and innovation.

Outside Witness Testimony on behalf of Coastal States Organization, Integrated Ocean
Observing System Association, National Estuarine Research Reserve Association, and
National Marine Sanctuary Foundation for the
**House Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related
Agencies Committee on Appropriations**
May 9 2025

**In Support of NOAA FY 2026 Appropriations to Promote Resilience and the Economy
of the Nation's Ocean and Great Lakes Coastal Communities**

Mr. Chair and Members of the Subcommittee, this joint statement is submitted on behalf of the nonprofit organizations listed above who share a deep concern for the economic vibrancy, cultural heritage, and resilience of our nation's ocean, gulf and Great Lakes communities. The members of our organizations partner to strengthen and protect our nation's coastal communities and the economies they rely on by leveraging each other's contributions and strengths to ensure we maximize the use of our resources towards synergistic outcomes.

America's coasts are home to growing populations and robust economies. Over 129 million residents—40% of the population of the United States—live in coastal counties. The marine and coastal economy contributes hundreds of billions of dollars to the U.S. GDP, sustaining domestic markets and connecting the national economy to global markets. The marine sector and coastal communities support millions of jobs, drive innovation, and sustains quality of life across the nation.

International competition, economic downturns, port closures, weather disasters, and diminishing federal support threaten the sector and its contribution to a strong economy.

The ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes are experiencing a unique set of challenges from dramatic changes as a result of increasing coastal storm frequency, coastal flooding, erosion, harmful algal blooms, ocean acidification, biodiversity loss, and more.

Since 1980, weather and climate disasters have resulted in more than \$2.195 trillion of damages around the United States. Over the last five years (2020-2024) alone, there were 115 events that each resulted in damages over a billion dollars. In addition to damaging critical coastal infrastructure, these extreme weather events result in significant loss of life and the disruption or loss of livelihoods. Changing ocean conditions are impacting the diversity, distribution, and abundance of marine species, including commercially and recreationally important species. This threatens the physical well-being, economic prosperity, and food security of communities along our coasts and businesses that rely on marine resources and transportation.

This interface of coastal change, increasing coastal populations, and growing economic opportunity drives an urgent need to enhance coastal community adaptation, mitigation, and resilience capacity. The members of our organizations, in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), play leading roles in addressing these continually evolving ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes challenges to ensure that our coasts remain vibrant hubs of economic and environmental fortitude.

NOAA's partner programs embedded in states and communities—Coastal Zone Management Programs, Sea Grant Programs, National Estuarine Research Reserves, National Marine Sanctuaries, and the Integrated Ocean Observing System—work together to provide tailored information, technical assistance, planning resources, protected land and water areas, science, and science translation that provide comprehensive and integrated services to address national priorities effectively at the local, state, and regional level. Each of these partners provides a

critical tool in the toolbox needed to support communities and businesses ranging from data on tides and flood risk, protecting environments that support tourism, recreation and fishing, to managing working waterfronts. If any of these tools are missing, or federal investments do not adequately support each of these tools, efforts to address coastal resilience and strengthen coastal and marine economies will be hampered. To ensure coastal communities are prepared to address increasing coastal hazards, a robust investment in a networked approach is necessary.

Our organizations strongly support the following investments in FY 2026 appropriations to ensure robust investments in our coasts and oceans:

\$145.7 million for the National Sea Grant College Program and \$18 million for Sea Grant Aquaculture Research.	\$108.5 million for Coastal Management Grants and \$64.782 million for Coastal Zone Mgmt. and Services
\$106.5 million for National Marine Sanctuaries operations, research, & facilities and \$8.5 million for procurement, acquisition & construction	\$47 million for National Estuarine Research Reserve System operations and \$10 million for procurement, acquisition & construction
\$56 million for the Regional Integrated Ocean Observing Program	\$34 million for National Ocean and Coastal Security Fund
\$11.412 million for Regional Ocean Partnerships	\$45 million for the Coral Reef Conservation Program

National Sea Grant College Program—A joint federal, state, and local investment, Sea Grant works in the Great Lakes, Gulf of America, and on the Atlantic, Caribbean, and Pacific coasts and islands yielding quantifiable economic, social, and environmental benefits. With a mission to enhance the practical use and conservation of coastal, marine, and Great Lakes resources to create a sustainable economy, a healthy environment, and resilient communities, Sea Grant has benefitted from bipartisan congressional support since its creation in 1966. Sea Grant funds peer-reviewed research and provides science-based expertise and education that responds to local needs. Sea Grant fosters cost-effective partnerships, leveraging nearly \$3 for every \$1 appropriated. In 2022, Sea Grant created or sustained 9,569 jobs and 1,601 small businesses, helped restore or protect over 2.1 million acres of habitat, engaged 970,976 people in education, and helped 24,288 seafood industry personnel adopt responsible fishery practices.

The Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS)—The IOOS Regional Associations (RAs) work with local and regional users, as well as the federal Ocean Policy Committee agencies, to design and operate regional observing systems that provide actionable information for navigation, public safety, national security, weather forecasting, and preparation for extreme events. IOOS links observation to modeling and tools via data management in order to tailor data services to local industry and user needs while simultaneously enhancing national models and forecasts. The IOOS regional network enables NOAA to more efficiently achieve its mission through non-federal partnership and data sources. The FY2026 request sustains the core operations and maintenance of the regional system, keeps pace with inflation, and meets rising

demands for critical data that support public safety, weather and ocean forecasting, flood and water level monitoring, and the economic health of U.S. fisheries, maritime, and coastal economies.

Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Programs—The CZM Programs across 34 states and territories in partnership with NOAA's National CZM Program, advance the effective management, beneficial use, protection, and development of the coastal zone. The demands on CZM Programs have steadily increased, requiring greater balancing of coastal zone uses and needs for conservation, while increasing weather and climate related hazards threaten the lives and livelihoods of coastal communities. Sustained funding is needed to support vulnerability assessments, long-term resilience planning, community engagement and risk communication, permitting capacity, and other core CZM functions that rely on annual appropriations for Coastal Management Grants. The requested investment in Coastal Management Grants will ensure comprehensive, state-led management of the coasts to address all facets of economic development, ecosystem protection and coastal resilience.

National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS)—The NERRS is a time-tested network of 30 coastal sites with a proven track record of delivering the essential information and solutions communities need to address their most urgent environmental challenges. Over 53 years and through many crises, Reserves have become trusted members of their communities. They serve as living laboratories, support jobs, contribute to the economy, help sustain fisheries, protect natural infrastructure, and create access to nearly 1.4 million acres of public lands and waters that enhance public health and quality of life. Full funding will expand NERRS' economic impact by supporting local industries—including seafood and tourism—strengthening coastal resilience, and fueling job creation and professional development through applied science, fellowships, educational programs, and partnerships.

National Marine Sanctuary System—The National Marine Sanctuary System is our network of underwater parks encompassing over 629,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters. National marine sanctuaries are economic anchors in coastal communities, conserve wildlife and preserve America's cultural and maritime history, and promote access to world-class outdoor recreation. By balancing conserving natural and cultural treasures with public access and economic development, sanctuaries underpin thriving tourism industries while also benefiting community well-being by maintaining healthy marine ecosystems. National marine sanctuaries connect people and communities through recreation, education, U.S. history, science, and stewardship and inspire community-based solutions that help people understand and conserve the spectacular underwater wildlife, archaeological resources, and cultural seascapes of the United States. Providing increased and robust funding to the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is an investment in America's national treasures and the communities, local economies, and public-private partnerships that rely on them.

The Regional Ocean Partnerships (ROPs)—The four ROPs play a unique role in facilitating collaboration across State coastal agencies, including State and Territory CZM Programs, Tribes, federal agencies, and other stakeholder groups, to manage the nation's coast and enhance coastal resilience by tackling complex issues at a regional scale. Annual funding for the ROPs, consistent with the ROP Act, were previously made available. However, it is important to recognize the need for this funding to be supported through annual appropriations not just supplemental funding.

National Ocean and Coastal Security (NOCSA) Fund—The NOCSA Fund provides grants to nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, for-profit organizations, and State, Territory, local, municipal, and Tribal governments for the purpose of investing in conservation projects

that restore or expand natural coastal features that minimize the impacts of storms and other naturally occurring events on nearby communities. Increased resources under BIL and sustained annual appropriations will enable coastal communities to tackle the vast need for coastal habitat restoration and community resilience projects across the nation's coasts.

Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP)—Coral reefs are critical ecosystems, which provide numerous environmental, economic and resilience. The CRCP supports coral reef conservation in the seven U.S. jurisdictions that are home to the United States coral reefs: Florida, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as reefs internationally. This funding supports priority areas, including coral reef restoration activities and infrastructure, local capacity building, and site-based efforts to enhance reef resilience to climate change through the reduction of local-level stressors including land-based sources of pollution and sustainable fisheries.

Ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research, observation, education, conservation, and resource management programs funded by this Subcommittee invest in the future health, resiliency, and well-being of our coastal communities, driving improved quality of life as well as beneficial environmental and economic outcomes many times over the federal investment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this joint statement.

May 9, 2025

The Honorable Hal Rogers, Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Grace Meng, Ranking Mbr.
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: House CJS Appropriations bill and report language, Minority Business Development Agency, FY 2026

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Meng:

ASIAN, Inc. has successfully operated multiple MBDA Business Centers at the behest of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency. Today, we and other Center operators are gravely concerned about the potential loss of crucial job-creating and job-saving value that the national network of MBDA Business Centers, Export Centers, Advanced Manufacturing Centers and the Federal Procurement Center are providing. Therefore, we are writing to request that, as you negotiate and finalize legislation to fund the government in Fiscal Year 2026, that the House Appropriations Committee's bill and report include the following language:

"The Committee provides \$68,250,000 (equal the FY 2024 enacted level) for the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA). Not less than 50 percent of funds provided to MBDA shall be awarded to cooperative agreements funding and implementing the statutorily-mandated MBDA Business Center program, and through external awards, and grants implementing the MBDA Rural Business Center program and MBDA American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawai'ian (AIANNH) program. Those funds awarded to cooperative agreements for the traditional and specialty MBDA Business Center program shall constitute not less than 26 percent of all funds provided to MBDA. This appropriation upholds 15 USC 9525, within Public Law 117-58, which mandates the integrity of the existing MBDA Business Center program:

"MINIMIZING DISRUPTIONS TO EXISTING MBDA BUSINESS CENTER PROGRAM. The Under Secretary shall ensure that each Federal assistance award made under the Business Centers program of the Agency, as is in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act, is carried out in a manner that, to the greatest extent practicable, prevents disruption of any activity carried out under that award."

The nationwide network of 38 MBDA Business Centers and 15 Specialty Centers is the statutorily-mandated "flagship" program of the Minority Business Development Agency. The final House CJS Appropriations bill and report must include

language that provides assurance and certainty that the MBDA and its MBDA Business Center network is to be fully funded and maintained in the coming fiscal year. The Centers serve as the face of the Agency's Congressionally-mandated imperative as the direct technical assistance providers to job-generating socially- and economically-disadvantaged-individual (SEDI)-owned businesses in communities across the Nation. *SEDI businesses include veteran-owned and rural enterprises owned by individuals of any race.*

Without the statutorily-mandated MBDA Business Center network, the Nation would lose a crucial job creator. As shown in the attachment ([available online here](#)), in FY 2024, the MBDA Business Center network nationally facilitated access to **capital and contracts totaling nearly \$5 billion**, helping SEDI-owned businesses create and save **22,966 jobs** across the country. It is important to note that as a highly efficient economic development tool, the MBDA Business Center network more than pays for itself. **The statutorily-mandated MBDA Business Center network has returned over \$230 for every taxpayer dollar invested in the Agency and the centers.**

While other federal agencies focus on broader demographic and emerging businesses, MBDA focuses exclusively on the unique needs of middle-stage SEDI-owned businesses. MBDA is the only federal agency dedicated to the growth and global competitiveness of our Nation's **over 11 million SEDI-owned enterprises**, which, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent Survey of Business Owners, **contributed well over \$1 trillion in total economic output and employed nearly 6 million Americans**. Given the economic challenges that SEDIs face and the income and wealth gap between predominantly SEDI- and non-SEDI communities, it is important that we fund the MBDA Business Center network to support these firms with overcoming some of the obstacles that they disproportionately encounter.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring that SEDIs are able to maximize their potential, and for your consideration of this request. We appreciate the opportunity to speak to the importance of preserving the statutorily-mandated MBDA Business Center network's job-creating and job-saving value to the Nation.

Sincerely,



Lamar Heystek
President, ASIAN, Inc.

cc: All Members, House Committee on Appropriations

Attachment

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY | FISCAL YEAR 2024



11,265 JOBS CREATED **11,701** JOBS RETAINED **\$2,657,599,270** + **\$1,507,477,159** + **\$694,711,963** = **\$4,859,788,392**

CONTRACTS CAPITAL COMBINED CONTRACTS & CAPITAL TOTAL FINANCIAL IMPACT

Breakout by Contracts and Capital by Source

	Private	Federal Government	State Government	Local Government	Other or Not Disclosed	Total
Contracts	\$1,362,213,274	\$1,014,907,984	\$91,293,650	\$189,184,361	-	\$2,657,599,270
Capital	\$861,724,031	\$159,685,080	\$65,070,553	\$174,625,000	\$246,372,495	\$1,507,477,159
Combined Contracts & Capital	-	-	-	-	\$694,711,963	\$694,711,963
Subtotal	\$2,223,937,305	\$1,174,593,064	\$156,364,203	\$363,809,361	\$941,084,458	\$4,859,788,392

Breakout by MBDA Program Type

	MBDA Business Centers	Federal Procurement Center	Advanced Manufacturing Centers	Export Centers	Enterprising Women of Color	MBE Equity Multiplier	American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian (AIANNH) Projects	Capital Readiness Program	Total
Contracts/Procurement	\$2,186,699,786	\$173,885,182	\$147,670,266	\$149,344,036	-	-	-	-	\$2,657,599,270
Financing	\$1,073,254,341	\$77,400,323	-	\$110,750,000	-	\$3,000,000	-	\$246,072,495	\$1,510,477,159
Combined Contracts & Capital	\$200,610,283	-	-	-	\$32,641,879	-	\$458,459,801	-	\$691,711,963
Subtotal	\$3,460,564,410	\$251,285,505	\$147,670,266	\$260,094,036	\$32,641,879	\$3,000,000	\$458,459,801	\$246,072,495	\$4,859,788,392

Contracts by Industry Sector*



* As reported by MBDA Business Centers (i). Advanced Manufacturing Centers, Export Centers and Procurement Center.
** Chart sums to 98% due to rounding and industries not named that amount to less than 2%.
Potential divergence estimated of up to 0.5 percent for Contracts and Capital.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY | FISCAL YEAR 2024



Year One Of The Capital Readiness Program

Last year, MBDA launched the Capital Readiness Program (CRP), the largest-ever federal program of its kind designed to help minority and other underserved entrepreneurs grow and scale their businesses. During the first year of the program, MBDA invested in new technologies to improve our methods of communicating goals, capturing data, and establishing metrics. MBDA's Capital Readiness Program incubators and accelerators have already helped thousands of eager entrepreneurs jumpstart their businesses and raise \$263 million in capital.

Expanding Public And Private Partnerships

MBDA's strength comes from its network of collaborators and stakeholders throughout the country who work with the Agency to deliver resources for MBEs and bolster the nation's economic growth and national security. One way the Agency expands its reach is through Memorandums

of Understanding (MOUs), which are collaborations with both public and private sector entities to help leverage organizational strengths and reach in order to provide the public with enhanced knowledge and awareness of available programs, resources, networks, technical assistance, and federal procurement opportunities. In 2024, MBDA established 26 MOUs with Federal Agencies and other public and private sector organizations.

Information Clearinghouse

MBDA implemented initial phase development of its information clearinghouse featuring the MBDA data warehouse and research library that are designed to collect and disseminate demographic, economic, financial, managerial, and technical data relating to MBEs. In addition to publishing MBDA original and commissioned studies and reports, the MBDA Research Library will host other relevant studies and reports from government entities and other organizations.

MBDA Minority Business Enterprise Advisory Council

2024 marked the formation of the MBDA Minority Business Enterprise Advisory Council. The council convened their first two meetings, delivering their first set of recommendations to related to four key pillars: access to capital, access to contracts, global markets, and data repository. The Council is composed of 19 members: nine private sector members and one representative from each of ten Federal agencies that support business formation, labor development, monetary policy, national security, energy, agriculture, transportation, and housing.



**Written Testimony of Jack Waldorf, Executive Director
Western Governors' Association**

**Submitted to the United States House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
March 18, 2025**

Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and Members of the Subcommittee, the Western Governors' Association (WGA) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on items within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies, including the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and National Science Foundation (NSF). WGA is an independent organization representing the Governors of the 22 westernmost states and territories. The Association is an instrument of the Governors for bipartisan policy development, information sharing, and collective action on issues of critical importance to the western United States.

Western Governors underscore the importance of a close and productive working relationship between states, territories, and the federal government and understand that more effective cooperation depends on federal recognition of states as co-sovereigns and partners. The promotion of greater partnership between states and the federal government is central to the mission of WGA and is reflected in the Governors' Policy Resolution 2024-01, Strengthening the State-Federal Relationship. Given the numerous federal programs, policies, and regulations directly affecting states and territories, Western Governors encourage the Subcommittee to direct federal agencies to improve their internal processes and coordinate with states and territories on federal policies and procedures, as well as integrate state and territorial data into federal programs, including for policymaking purposes.

WGA also commends your attention to other Western Governors' resolutions that articulate policy positions relevant to the Subcommittee's work. These include policy resolutions 2023-06, Rural Development; 2023-07, Broadband Connectivity; 2023-09, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons; 2024-04, Combating the Opioid Crisis; and 2024-07, Water Resource Management in the West.

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) plays a critical role in supporting vibrant and prosperous rural communities across the West. Western Governors urge increased flexibility in the allowable uses of EDA funds so that rural communities can prioritize the investments that work best for them.

Western Governors recommend an increase in the proportion of economic development and infrastructure funding that goes toward capacity building, and Congress should allow EDA to negotiate the percentage of financial versus technical assistance within provided appropriations. Strengthening local capacity by providing ample and consistent federal funding

for institutions, training, and technical assistance is essential to maximize the effect of state and federal resources and ensure that assistance reaches the communities that need it most. Western Governors support efforts to facilitate improved coordination across agencies and streamlined, one-stop application processes for rural customers. The Governors believe that assessment metrics based solely on the absolute number of jobs created do not reflect the important economic benefits of investments in rural community assets that improve quality of life, nor do they account for the relative effect of job creation in small communities or areas with high unemployment or poverty rates.

Western Governors note that shifts in our economy, labor force, and technology require fundamental changes to economic development strategies. They request that the Subcommittee support small businesses and entrepreneurs; education and training programs that can be tailored to the needs of rural communities; economic diversification; and tax incentives, grants, and other financial incentives to spur innovation and attract businesses and manufacturing enterprises to rural areas. Programs like the newly authorized grant program for critical supply chain site development and the existing Regional Technology and Innovation Hubs Program help accomplish these objectives.

Many western communities, particularly rural and tribal areas, lack broadband access due to high infrastructure costs and the economic challenges of low population densities. Even where broadband is available, speeds often fail to meet bandwidth demands, or communities or individuals lack the necessary skills, technology, or capacity to fully engage in the digital economy. These challenges have disadvantaged rural businesses and limited access to telework, telemedicine, and distance learning opportunities.

Western Governors encourage the Subcommittee to consider continued federal investment in broadband deployment to close connectivity gaps and supplement Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funding, including innovative and flexible ways to redirect existing resources. They emphasize that federal funding should prioritize scalable broadband infrastructure capable of meeting future demands, including support for equipment maintenance and upgrades to ensure long-term reliability. Additionally, the Governors encourage the Subcommittee to consider how funding can better reflect the high costs and unique challenges of broadband deployment in the West and explore opportunities to improve broadband connectivity on tribal lands, ensuring adequate support to expand internet access to as many hard-to-reach households as possible. Western Governors also call on the Subcommittee to appropriate funding for unmet and ongoing digital equity needs after the expenditure of State Digital Equity Planning and Capacity Grants and Digital Equity Competitive Grants.

The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) crisis continues to deeply affect western communities. Western Governors recommend that the Subcommittee continue to provide support for communities and tribes addressing the MMIP crisis through appropriate DOJ programs.

Western Governors acknowledge the outsized harm caused by the opioid epidemic, which has become increasingly lethal and devastating to public health and safety. Reducing the

epidemic's effects involves stemming the supply of illegally produced opioids and limiting inappropriate and nonmedical uses of prescription opioids. Western Governors urge the Subcommittee to continue financially supporting state interdiction activities. The Governors appreciate past allocations to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to reimburse states for cleaning up and safely disposing of illegal substances. Western Governors also call for designations to enhance access to harm reduction strategies at low costs for teens and adults.

Opioid education and awareness campaigns, such as those managed by DEA, are necessary tools to foster public dialogue and mobilize action across communities. The Subcommittee should support DEA in further developing its campaigns and dedicate funding to states and territories for targeted and culturally specific opioid awareness and education efforts, especially efforts focused on youth awareness and education, which are complementary to those at the federal level.

Finally, western states rely on basic information on the status, trends, and projections of water resource availability to make sound water management decisions. This information allows water users throughout the West and decision makers at all levels of government to assess drought conditions and respond effectively with drought mitigation measures to reduce the risk of wildfires, ecosystem impairments, agricultural production loss, and degradation of municipal and industrial water supplies.

For these reasons, Western Governors support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS), which informs western water management and drought response. Western Governors also support federal programs dedicated to the improvement of data on snowpack, streamflow, soil moisture, and forecasting, including the NASA National Land Imaging Program, and federal efforts to coordinate water data gathering and information programs across multiple agencies. Western Governors recognize the need for improved predictive capabilities for extreme weather variability and urge the Subcommittee to place a priority on improving the sub-seasonal and seasonal precipitation forecasting capabilities that could facilitate water management decision making.

Western Governors recognize the enormous challenge you have in balancing competing funding priorities, and we appreciate the difficulty of the decisions the Subcommittee must make. These recommendations are offered in a spirit of cooperation and respect, and WGA is prepared to assist you as the Subcommittee discharges its critical and challenging responsibilities.



Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

6730 Martin Way E., Olympia, Washington 98516-5540
 Phone (360) 438-1180 www.nwifc.org FAX (360) 753-8659

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF ED JOHNSTONE, CHAIRMAN
 NORTHWEST INDIAN FISHERIES COMMISSION
 SUBMITTED TO THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON
 COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES
 ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET FOR THE
 NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION**

May 9, 2025

Chair Rogers, Ranking Member Cartwright and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Ed Johnstone, and I am the Chair of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC). The NWIFC is composed of the 20 tribes that are party to *United States v. Washington*, which upheld the tribes' treaty-reserved right to harvest and manage various natural resources on and off-reservation, including salmon and shellfish. On behalf of the NWIFC, I'm providing testimony for the record on the natural resource and fishery management program funding requests for the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)/National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) appropriations. These programs support the management of salmon fisheries, which contribute to a robust natural resource-based economy and the continued exercise of tribal treaty rights to fish. Given the onslaught of pressures we face, it is now more important than ever for the federal trustee to support management, supplementation, and restoration of fisheries – vital to the tribes physical, cultural and economic wellbeing, as well as an important link in our nation's food supply chain.

SUMMARY OF FY26 APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS

- ❑ **\$70.0 million for NOAA Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund**
- ❑ **\$7.0 million for NOAA Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans**
- ❑ **\$43.5 million for NOAA Pacific Salmon Treaty**
- ❑ **\$34.0 million for NOAA Mitchell Act Hatchery Programs**

The member tribes of the NWIFC ceded much of the land that is now western Washington in exchange for reserving the continued right to harvest and manage various natural resources including salmon and shellfish. Salmon are the foundation of tribal cultures, traditions and economies in western Washington. To ensure that tribal treaty rights and lifeways are protected, it is essential that the federal government provide support to all aspects of salmon management including, harvest planning and implementation (e.g. Pacific Salmon Treaty), hatchery production, (e.g. Mitchell Act Hatchery Programs and Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans) and habitat protection and restoration (e.g. Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund).

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUESTS

- **Provide, at a minimum, \$70.0 million for NOAA Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) and preferably restore funding to FY02 levels (\$110.0 million)**

We respectfully request, at a minimum, \$70.0 million for PCSRF, which is an increase of \$5.0 million over the FY23 enacted level of \$65.0 million. It is worth noting that this request is a significant departure from the PCSRF peak level of \$110.0 million in FY02 or subsequent years in which appropriations were maintained upwards of \$80.0 million through FY11. We ultimately would like to see PCSRF funding fully restored to FY02 levels. This level of funding would help carry out the original congressional intent of these funds to support the federal government's obligations to salmon recovery and the treaty fishing rights of the tribes. However, we understand that budget restrictions may require Congress to take a more incremental approach toward this end goal.

The PCSRF is a multi-state, multi-tribe program established by Congress in FY00 with a primary goal to help recover dwindling salmon populations throughout the Pacific coast region. Through PCSRF, tribes work collaboratively to help protect and restore salmon habitat to increase natural salmon productivity. To accomplish this, tribes implement scientifically based salmon recovery plans developed for each watershed in concert with federal, state, and local partners. Tribes also participate in sustainable harvest management activities such as monitoring fish abundance, which is then used to forecast adult returns and subsequently develop annual harvest rates that achieve conservation objectives and provide for tribal and non-tribal harvest opportunities. Since its inception, PCSRF has been the primary salmon recovery response. As of October 2022, this has resulted in the restoration and protection of over 1.1 million acres of spawning and rearing habitat and re-established salmon access to more than 11,800 miles of previously inaccessible streams in our region.

- **Provide \$7.0 million for NOAA Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans (within NOAA – Pacific Salmon)**

We respectfully request \$7.0 million to support review, approval and implementation of Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans (HGMPs), which is a \$1.0 million increase over the FY23 enacted level of \$6.0 million. We also respectfully request continued report language to ensure a portion of this funding is passed through to the tribes and can be used to implement approved HGMPs. We recommend that the overarching Pacific Salmon subactivity be funded at \$94.0 million to accommodate this request, ensure maintenance of existing programs, and agency requests. This recommendation for the Pacific Salmon subactivity is \$19.0 million above FY23 enacted level of \$72.0 million.

Review and approval of HGMPs is necessary to provide hatcheries with Endangered Species Act (ESA) coverage and implementation of the plans is necessary to accomplish their conservation goals. NMFS uses the information provided by HGMPs to evaluate the impacts of state and tribally operated hatcheries on salmon and steelhead listed under the ESA and recommends improvements to operations to meet conservation objectives. With the lack of improvement in salmon stocks, hatchery operations have become even more important to achieving recovery

goals and maintenance of salmon fisheries. However, the lack of improvement in natural origin salmon has also resulted in scrutinizing hatcheries for their potential genetic impacts on natural spawning populations. This has resulted in increasingly specific performance standards and management expectations included in tribes' HGMPs.

Implementing the activities described in the HGMPs includes biological monitoring and evaluation of hatchery programs. Monitoring and evaluation assess whether the goals of the program are being met and ensures the compatibility of the program with regional and co-management salmon recovery plans. These monitoring and evaluation programs generally involve various methodologies to monitor the juvenile fish released by the hatchery, sample the returning adult fish, and evaluate the interactions of hatchery and wild fish.

Tribes need help addressing the escalating costs of hatchery management associated with the monitoring and adaptive management practices called for by HGMPs. For example, requirements to closely monitor natural and hatchery produced salmon interactions on the spawning ground are costly and time-intensive. Therefore, it is essential that HGMP funding is increased to address these rising costs and that flexibility is provided to ensure that funding can be used by the tribes to implement the plans' recommendations, which both federal, state and tribal governments have extensively invested in.

- **Provide \$43.5 million to implement the national commitments in the Pacific Salmon Treaty agreements (within NOAA – Salmon Management Activities)**

We support the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) U.S. Section's FY26 request of \$43.5 million for the Pacific Salmon Treaty line within Salmon Management Activities, which is an increase of \$2.5 million over the FY24 enacted level of \$41.0 million.

Adult salmon returning to most western Washington streams migrate through U.S. and Canadian waters and are harvested by fishers from both countries. For years, there were no restrictions on the interception of returning salmon by fishers of neighboring countries. Eventually, the U.S. and Canada agreed to cooperate on the management of salmon by developing and ratifying the PST in 1985. The PSC was created to implement the PST and is responsible for developing management recommendations and assessing compliance with the treaty. Negotiations to revise the provisions of the Annex Chapters were successfully completed in 2018 and 2019. These chapters contain the specifics for implementing the treaty for each species in each geographic area. These revised chapters represent the combined efforts of the participants to ensure healthy salmon populations for the next ten years, and as such include commitments from the U.S. to improve current management strategies.

- **Provide \$34.0 million for NOAA Mitchell Act Hatchery Programs (within NOAA – Salmon Management Activities)**

We respectfully request \$34.0 million for the Mitchell Act Hatchery Programs, an increase of \$10.5 million over the FY24 enacted level of \$23.5 million. The request for this additional increase in Mitchell Act funds is needed to ensure that mitigation hatcheries operate at full

production level to meet federal obligations. This program is funded through the Salmon Management Activities subactivity.

Mitchell Act hatchery production is intended to mitigate for fish and habitat loss caused by the federal hydropower dam system on the Columbia River. Funding for these programs supports the operation and maintenance of hatcheries that release around 42 million juvenile salmon and steelhead in Oregon and Washington. This represents about 30 percent of the total hatchery salmon and steelhead released in the Columbia River Basin. Adequate funding for Mitchell Act hatcheries is of particular importance to us because it supports salmon production for tribal treaty harvest along the Washington coast. Additionally, adequate funding to ensure full production from the Mitchell Act hatcheries dampens the impact of Canadian and Alaskan ocean fisheries on Washington and tribal fisheries under the terms of the PST.

CONCLUSION

The treaties between the federal government and Indian tribes, as well as the treaty-reserved rights to harvest, manage and consume fish and shellfish, are the “supreme law of the land” under the U.S. Constitution (Article VI). It is, therefore, critically important for Congress and the federal government to provide continued support in upholding the treaty obligations and carrying out its trust responsibilities. Although the U.S. Section advocates for governmental efficiency, there is apprehension regarding the insufficient number of NMFS staff. The states and tribes require the backing of our federal partners to ensure the effectiveness of this process. Substantial reductions in federal assistance jeopardize the future viability of the salmon resource and the communities reliant on it.

An important component of these obligations is to fully fund the sustainable salmon fisheries management programs that provide for improved harvest planning, hatchery production and habitat management. We respectfully urge you to continue to support our efforts to protect and restore our treaty-reserved rights and natural resources that in turn will provide for thriving ecosystems and economies for both Indian and non-Indian communities alike. Thank you.



**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE AND RELATED AGENCIES
“FY2026” APPROPRIATIONS TESTIMONY
FOR DEPARTMENTS OF JUSTICE AND COMMERCE
Friday, May 9, 2025
Written Testimony of
THE HONORABLE W. RON ALLEN, TRIBAL CHAIRMAN/CEO
JAMESTOWN S'KLALLAM TRIBE**

On behalf of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, I am pleased to submit this written testimony on our funding priorities and requests for the Fiscal Year 2026 for the Department of Justice and the Department of Commerce and State Department Budgets. Our Budget Request endorses the requests and recommendations of our international, regional, and national partners, the Pacific Salmon Commission, the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, and the National Congress of American Indians.

Tribal Governments are part of the American family of Sovereign Governments with a unique legal standing that is predicated on the Nation-to-Nation political relationship that arose from trust and treaty obligations and is rooted in the U.S. Constitution. Federal programs for American Indians/Alaska Natives (AI's/AN's) are a fundamental part of these trust and treaty obligations and represent the legal commitment of the United States to Tribal Nations. This legal commitment is a mandatory, not a discretionary obligation that was given in exchange for Tribal lands and resources. To fulfill these commitments, the Federal government must prioritize funding for Tribal programs and services and must maintain a skilled and knowledgeable workforce that is capable of effectively carrying out critical trust and treaty functions.

The Administration's budget proposes to obliterate funding for core Tribal government programs by \$911 million or 24%. Tribal law enforcement is slated for a \$107 million or 20% reduction. These proposed cuts are being couched as cost savings, but they will cost lives and endanger Tribal communities who are already struggling with a public safety and justice crisis due to severe and persistent funding shortages. In addition, numerous grants across the Federal government that Tribes rely on to supplement unfulfilled Federal obligation have been eliminated. The Department of Justice (DOJ) eliminated 365 public safety and justice grants totaling over \$800 million dollars stating the grants did not align with the Administration's priorities and that more grant eliminations are forthcoming.

Similar significant cuts have been proposed for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). We are salmon people with a deep cultural and spiritual connection to salmon which also serves as a primary food source for our people. NOAA programs and funding supports the Federal government's obligations to salmon recovery and the treaty guaranteed fishing rights of the Pacific Northwest Tribal Nations. Efforts to achieve government efficiency and fiscal responsibility must not use Tribal Nations as collateral damage. Diminishing or eliminating funding for Tribal programs and services will not result in any meaningful savings to

the Federal government but it will decimate the health, welfare, and safety of our citizens and communities who the Federal government has a legal obligation to serve and protect.

A quiet crisis of unfulfilled Federal obligations has persisted for decades across Indian Country, but the crisis will only grow louder if Congress does not act to protect funding for Tribal programs. We urge Congress to hold Tribes harmless from the Administration’s proposed cuts and pass a Federal budget for AI/AN that is reflective of the legal obligations that are owed to Tribes by the United States. We have proven time and again that when you invest in Jamestown and empower our Tribe to exercise our inherent right of Self-Governance we become strong Nations who are less reliant on the Federal dollar and economically self-sufficient.

UPHOLD MANDATORY LEGAL COMMITMENTS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

1. Uphold Trust and Treaty Obligations Across the Federal Government
2. Respect Tribal Sovereignty & the Government-to-Government Relationship – Tribal Consultation

TRIBAL REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS – DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
(Support the FY 2026 request of the Pacific Salmon Commission)

1. Provide \$110 million for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (NOAA/NMFS)
2. Provide \$43.5 million for the Pacific Salmon Treaty
3. Provide \$33.5 million for the Mitchell Act Hatchery Program (NOAA/NMFS)

NATIONAL REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS - DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

1. Fully Fund the Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA)
2. Fully Fund Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) inclusive of \$25 Million for SDVJ
3. Office of Justice Programs (OJP) – Create a Ten Percent (10%) Tribal Set-Aside for Tribes
4. Victims of Crime Act Funding – Provide a five percent (5%) set aside
5. Fund COPS Program - \$52 million

UPHOLD MANDATORY LEGAL COMMITMENTS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

1. Uphold Trust and Treaty Obligations Across the Federal Government

A plethora of recent Executive Orders and Federal Guidance have inadvertently caught Tribes in the crosshairs of unilaterally made Federal policy decisions that effectively negate Trust and Treaty obligations to Tribes, our citizens, and communities. The recent hiring freeze, reductions in force (RIF) and the continued Federal funding pause are wreaking havoc at the local level and we are deeply concerned about the grave and long-lasting implications of these ill-conceived and overly broad Executive Branch directives. The Administration has acknowledged that its actions are not intended to affect ongoing legal requirements; therefore, Indian Country programs must be fully restored, essential Federal staff must be maintained to carry out critical services, and Tribes must be explicitly exempted from any programmatic changes and proposed funding cuts, reductions, and/or rescissions intended to reduce Federal spending. This Tribal exemption must be applied Agency-wide and not limited to the Department of the Interior (DOI) Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Department of Health and Human Services” (HHS) Indian Health Service (IHS).

2. *Respect Tribal Sovereignty & the Government-to-Government Relationship – Tribal Consultation*

Tribal consultation respects Tribal sovereignty and ensures that Tribal Nations have a seat at the table when any Federal actions and/or decisions have a direct or substantial impact on Tribal lands, interests, or rights. Our Tribe urges Congress to exercise your Article I authority, your leadership, and your influence to shield Indian Country from any further arbitrary and unilateral action by the Executive branch that interferes with the sovereign status of Tribes, the government-to-government relationship, and funding and staffing levels needed to fully and properly execute the Federal Trust and Treaty obligations.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE TRIBAL REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *\$110 million for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (NOAA/NMFS)*

The Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery fund was established to reverse the decline of salmon and steelhead in the Pacific Northwest. Jamestown uses the funds to restore wild salmon populations, to protect and restore important habitat in the Puget Sound coastal plains and to support fish hatchery efforts to allow for Tribal Treaty fishing rights. These funds also support providing much needed jobs for our Tribe and the local community to assist with our policy development and help to build the technical capacity of our Natural Resource staff charged with planning, implementation, and monitoring recovery activities.

2. *\$43.5 million for the Pacific Salmon Treaty - The U.S. Section estimates that this funding is needed to implement national commitments created by the Treaty (NOAA/NMFS)*

The Pacific Salmon Treaty is renegotiated every decade and provides the framework for international collaboration and cooperation to conserve and manage Pacific Salmon. The Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) works together to establish fishery regimes, develop management recommendations, assess each country's performance and compliance with the Treaty, and is the forum for all entities to work towards reaching an agreement on mutual fisheries issues.

3. *\$33.5 million for the Mitchell Act Hatchery Program (NOAA/NMFS)*

This program supports and helps sustain Tribal Treaty harvest rights and other fisheries. Jamestown hatchery operations have elevated our success and generated a substantial return on our investment in our aquaculture business. The Tribe operates three types of hatchers, two in Washington state and one in Hawaii that produce shellfish and sablefish seeds. The seedlings help to replenish fish and shellfish stocks that have been depleted due to loss of ecosystems and natural habitats. Tribes depend on hatcheries to support Treaty fishing rights, protect our culture and traditional ways of life, and to bolster our commercial fishery operations at home and trade abroad.

NATIONAL REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

1. *Fully Fund the Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA)*

The Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) aims to enhance Tribal justice systems and strengthen public safety in Indian Country by providing funding for law enforcement, Tribal courts, detention facilities and the provision of rehabilitative and preventative services. TLOA

empowers Tribes to better address the unique public safety challenges and reduce the prevalence of violent crime in Indian country. However, full Funding is needed to effectively and efficiently implement the comprehensive and improved measures that were enacted to address the public safety crisis in Tribal communities.

2. Fully Fund Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Including \$25 million for VAWA Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction

Violence Against Women Act funding supports programs that help victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. More than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native women and men have experienced violence in their lifetime and over 90% of these crimes are committed by non-Natives. In 2013, Congress reaffirmed the inherent sovereign authority of Tribes to exercise Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction over Indians and Non-Indians who commit certain crimes in Indian country. Tribal justice systems need additional resources to fully implement this authority, and we therefore urge Congress to continue to appropriate \$25 million to support this effort.

3. Office of Justice Programs (OJP) – Create a 10% Tribal Set-Aside for all (OJP) Programs and Allow for Greater Flexibility

The Federal government has a responsibility to ensure public safety in Indian Country. A 10% Tribal set-aside for the Office of Justice (OJP) discretionary programs will streamline Federal funding and empower Tribal governments by ensuring they have access to critical resources to establish Tribal courts, improve victim services, and address other unique justice needs in Indian Country. Stable base funding coupled with maximum flexibility for Tribal public safety and justice will foster a more equitable and effective criminal justice system and ensure safe, healthy, and thriving Tribal communities.

4. Continue to Fund a Five Percent (5%) Tribal Set-Aside for Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Funding

The Victims of Crime Act funding is financed by fines and penalties imposed on convicted Federal offenders and is the largest source of Federal funding for crime victims. As of January 2025, the fund balance was over \$4.3 billion. Although the fund was established in 1984 and despite the staggering rates of violent crimes in Indian country, Tribes were not authorized as direct recipients of funding until FY2018. For the past seven years, Congress has authorized and appropriated a portion of the fund directly to Tribal Nations. We urge Congress to continue to provide a 5% Tribal Set Aside on a recurring annual basis.

5. Fund the Community Oriented Policing (COPS) Program - \$52 million

The Administration is proposing to eliminate more than 365 public safety and justice grants. The COPS Office provides grant funding to Tribes for law enforcement officers. COPS funding is also used for police training, equipment, vehicles, and technology. Although there is a great need for additional law enforcement officers throughout Indian Country, limited resources have hindered Tribe’s ability to hire, retain, and train law enforcement officers. It is imperative for the safety of Tribal citizens, Indian communities, and surrounding neighboring communities that a significant increase in funding is allocated for Tribal law enforcement officers and programs.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony.

Written Statement
John H. Morrison, PhD, President, Society for Neuroscience
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
Appropriations Committee
In Support of FY26 Appropriations for the National Science Foundation

Chair Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the Society for Neuroscience (SfN), I am honored to present this testimony in support of robust appropriations for biomedical research at the National Science Foundation (NSF). SfN urges you to provide at least \$9.9 billion, an increase of approximately \$840 million, in base-level funding for NSF in FY26. For researchers nationwide, the ability to make life-changing advancements in neuroscience depends on significant and sustained federal funding.

One area of my lab's research at the University of California, Davis focuses on the neurobiology of aging and neurodegenerative disorders, particularly as they relate to cellular and synaptic organization of the cerebral cortex. My lab is developing a comprehensive model of synaptic health in the cerebral cortex and how molecular and structural deviations from this profile induced by age and Alzheimer's Disease impact cortical circuitry and cognitive performance. Continued progress depends on sustained federal funding at a level that at a minimum, keeps pace with inflation.

The Importance of the Research Continuum

SfN believes strongly in the research continuum—a pipeline, in which basic science leads to clinical innovations, which leads to translational uses impacting the public's health, reducing long-term medical costs and generating new jobs across the country. Basic science is the foundation upon which all health advances are built. To cure diseases, we must first understand them through fundamental discovery-based research.

SfN is grateful to Congress for its support of the important mission of the NSF, which includes a focus on promoting the progress of science and advancing the national health, prosperity, and welfare, through increased appropriations in recent years. NSF funding for basic research is not only critical for enabling groundbreaking discoveries; it is essential for building our scientific workforce. For the United States to remain the world leader in biomedical research and to maintain and grow opportunities across areas of science, Congress must continue to fund the training pipeline of the scientific workforce. Young trainees today are the ones who will make the key discoveries of the future. The deeper our grasp of basic science, the more successful those focused on clinical and translational research will be. Neuroscientists use a wide range of experimental, animal, and human models not used elsewhere in the research pipeline. These opportunities create discoveries – sometimes unexpected discoveries – expanding knowledge of biological processes. This level of discovery reveals new targets for research to treat all kinds of brain disorders affecting millions of people in the United States and beyond.

NSF basic research funding is also a key economic driver of science at universities and research organizations across the country and generates jobs in all states across the nation. Federal investments in scientific research fuel the nation's pharmaceutical, biotechnology and medical device industries. The private sector leverages NSF-funded scientific discoveries to improve health outcomes and sustain America's Research and Development (R&D) enterprise. Basic

science generates the knowledge needed to uncover the mysteries behind human diseases, ultimately leading the private sector to develop new treatments and therapeutics. Importantly, industry rarely funds this early-stage research given the long-term path of basic science and pressure for shorter-term return on investments. Congressional investment in basic science is essential and irreplaceable in the pipeline for development of drugs, devices, and other treatments for brain related diseases and disorders as seen in the below examples of NSF-funded research.

Understanding the Brain Project

Understanding the Brain Project (UtB) is an example of NSF's success by enabling scientific understanding of the full complexity of the brain through targeted, cross-disciplinary investments in research, technology, and workforce development. NSF's strategic investments in neural mechanisms and processes, brain function modeling, and neurotechnology will support research and infrastructure designed to transform our view of who we are and understanding the structure and function of the brain.

Researchers Develop New Framework for Studying Human Decision Making

Understanding the mechanisms driving human decision-making has been a long-standing goal of neuroscientists. NSF-funded researchers at the University of Texas El Paso have developed a new framework to study the human decision-making process. The new framework allows for testing in a natural, unrestricted environment which greatly augments the capacity to model challenges inherent to daily living. The NSF funding these researchers allowed them to develop this framework, and without sustained federal funding, scientists may still be relying on frameworks with limited transferability. Sustained federal funding for research is crucial to ensure that researchers can continue to make groundbreaking discoveries.

Call for Funding in Regular Order and Stabilization to the Research Enterprise

SfN joins the biomedical research community in supporting an increase in NSF funding to at least \$9.9 billion in FY26. This proposed increase is necessary to provide certainty to the field of science, allow for the exploration of new scientific inquiry, train the next generation of scientists, and foster increased economic growth and further improvements in the public's health. Further cuts to discretionary investments would have a devastating impact on NSF-funded research and would hurt the country's ability to maintain its international competitiveness in this space. Year-long continuing resolutions have significant consequences on research, including restricting NSF's ability to fund new grants and to fully fund continuation grants. For some of our members, this means waiting for a final decision to be made on funding before knowing if their highly scored grant will be realized or operating a lab at a diminished capacity until appropriations are final. These consequences can be particularly devastating for trainees seeking to begin their careers. Reliable funding allows researchers to plan long-term studies, develop technologies, and engage in groundbreaking science without disruption.

In addition, recent federal agency communication and funding freezes, workforce layoffs, agency restructuring, and the breakdown of regular order and processes have left neuroscientists deeply concerned about whether their vital work will continue and what the future of research in the United States looks like. Uncertainties surrounding the research enterprise have led to canceled grants, institutions pausing the admission of new PhD students, and early career scientists

considering leaving the field altogether. On top of this, capping NSF facilities and administration (F&A) grant costs to just 15% will inherently result in diminished research activity and fewer discoveries being made in the United States. F&A costs are an essential component of biomedical research, including construction and upkeep of laboratory facilities and equipment, IT, safety measures and security personnel, and other critical infrastructure and functions. Capping the NSF F&A reimbursement rate to 15% will cause research institutions of all sizes to downsize their biomedical research programs; they would not have funds to cover the costs of laboratories and expenses currently paid by F&A reimbursement. Ensuring federal funding for biomedical research remains uninterrupted is essential to the future of research in the United States. All the positive benefits research provides in this country are negatively impacted by these real time considerations and destabilization efforts. SfN strongly supports the appropriation of NSF funding in a timely and efficient manner to avoid delays in approving new research grants or reductions in funding for already approved research projects.

SfN thanks the subcommittee for its continued bipartisan support of foundational research and looks forward to working with you to ensure the United States remains the global leader in neuroscience research and discovery. Collaboration among Congress, the NSF, and the scientific research community has created great benefits for not only the United States but also people around the globe suffering from brain-related diseases and disorders. On behalf of the Society for Neuroscience, we urge you to continue this critical cooperation and support of biomedical research.



CONSORTIUM of SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATIONS

1430 K STREET NW, SUITE 550 • WASHINGTON, DC 20005 • PHONE: (202) 842-3525 • EMAIL: WNAUS@COSSA.ORG • WWW.COSSA.ORG

**Testimony in Support of Fiscal Year 2026 Funding for the
National Science Foundation, Census Bureau, National Institute of Justice, and
Bureau of Justice Statistics**

Prepared for the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies

Committee on Appropriations, United States House of Representatives

Submitted by Wendy A. Naus, Executive Director

Consortium of Social Science Associations

May 9, 2025

On behalf of the Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA), I offer this written testimony for inclusion in the official committee record. For fiscal year (FY) 2026, COSSA urges the Committee to appropriate:

- At least \$9.9 billion for the National Science Foundation
- \$2 billion for the Census Bureau
- \$60 million for the National Institute of Justice
- \$75 million for the Bureau of Justice Statistics

First, allow me to thank the Committee for its long-standing, bipartisan support for scientific research. Strong, sustained funding for all U.S. science agencies is essential if we are to make progress toward improving the health and economic competitiveness of the nation.

COSSA serves as a united voice for a broad, diverse network of organizations, institutions, communities, and stakeholders who care about a successful and vibrant social and behavioral science research enterprise. We represent the collective interests of all STEM disciplines engaged in the rigorous study of why and how humans behave as they do as individuals, groups and within institutions, organizations, and society.

Social and behavioral science research is supported across the federal government, including at the National Science Foundation and the Department of Justice. Further, federal statistics produced by the Census Bureau and other federal statistical agencies provide data needed to conduct social science research to inform policy decisions. Taken together, federal social and behavioral science and statistical data help provide answers to complex, human-centered questions affecting all Americans.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH • AMERICAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION • AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION • AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION • AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY • AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION • AMERICAN STATISTICAL ASSOCIATION • LAW AND SOCIETY ASSOCIATION • MIDWEST POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION • NATIONAL COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION • POPULATION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA • SOCIETY FOR PERSONALITY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY • SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

National Science Foundation

COSSA joins the broader scientific community in support of at least **\$9.9 billion for the National Science Foundation (NSF) in FY 2026**. The U.S. scientific enterprise, including NSF, requires stability, predictability, and sustainable funding growth, as well as federal policies that are patient and can tolerate a reasonable amount of risk in order to achieve the greatest payoff.

NSF is the only U.S. federal agency tasked with supporting basic research across all fields of science, making the recent staff reductions and termination of research grants absolutely devastating to the American science enterprise and our ability to compete on the global stage. This is especially true for disciplines and fields across the social and behavioral sciences, which have historically suffered from inadequate funding.

While by far the smallest of the research directorates, SBE's impact is huge. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine stated in its 2017 consensus report, *The Value of Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences to National Priorities*¹, that "nearly every major challenge the United States faces—from alleviating unemployment to protecting itself from terrorism—requires understanding the causes and consequences of people's behavior. Even societal challenges that at first glance appear to be issues only of medicine or engineering or computer science have social and behavioral components."

So much of this expertise and data have already been lost due to Administration actions. An FY 2026 appropriation of \$5.2 billion for NSF as proposed by the Trump Administration would set the American scientific enterprise back decades and take generations to make up for all that has already been lost.

To that end, we urge the Subcommittee to reject the President's proposals and instead support robust funding for NSF in FY 2026.

Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce

COSSA requests that the Committee appropriate \$2 billion for the Census Bureau in FY 2026. Social scientists across the country rely on the Census Bureau for accurate, timely, objective, and relevant data to better understand the U.S. population and to produce findings that help us shape policies that better serve the American people.

During fiscal year 2026, the Bureau will conduct critical tests in six geographically and demographically diverse sites as part of the planned ramp up to the 2030 Decennial Census. These tests are important components of the decennial planning cycle as they are used to evaluate new enumeration and data collection strategies and the latest technologies. With

¹ <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/24790/the-value-of-social-behavioral-and-economic-sciences-to-national-priorities>

sufficient investment, the Census Bureau can transform its data collection and processing systems, expand its data storage and analysis capabilities, continue its work to improve linking of data from administrative records and big data sources, and ensure that the Bureau continues to set the standard in data security and privacy protection.

In addition, COSSA calls on Congress to fully fund the American Community Survey (ACS) and maintain its status as a mandatory federal survey. The ACS is the only source of comparable, consistent, timely, and high-quality demographic and socio-economic data for all communities in the U.S. As a component of the Decennial Census, the ACS is a “mandatory” national survey. The Census Bureau needs additional funds to expand the ACS sample size (which has not been expanded since 2011) to produce more timely, granular data for a significant number of geographies and sub-populations than currently achievable.

National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice

COSSA requests that the Committee appropriate at least \$60 million for the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) within the U.S. Department of Justice’s (DOJ) Office of Justice Programs (OJP). NIJ provides funding for research, development, and evaluation projects at institutions across the country to shed light on the most pressing issues facing our nation’s criminal justice system today, including the drivers of domestic radicalization, addressing the drug epidemic, reducing violent crime, improving school safety, and fostering positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

Despite the nation’s growing need for objective, science-backed solutions, NIJ’s budget has been on a gradual decline for more than a decade. Funding shortfalls limit NIJ’s ability to disseminate critical findings to law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders who need the most up-to-date information to improve policies and practices that promote public safety and equitable access to justice. The justice system of the future requires sustained investment in cutting-edge research.

Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice

As the Department’s principal statistical agency, the Bureau of Justice Statistics produces high-quality data on all aspects of the United States criminal justice system, including corrections, courts, crime type, law enforcement personnel and expenditures, federal processing of criminal cases, Indian country justice statistics, and victims of crime. **COSSA urges the Committee to appropriate at least \$75 million for the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS).**

Despite growing demand from policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders for high-quality criminal justice data across an expanding array of variables, BJS has also faced significant budgetary challenges over the past decade. Since FY 2010, the BJS budget has decreased by 42%, not accounting for inflation. Steady declines in funding have resulted in antiquated systems and, especially, staffing shortfalls, which can only be resolved through sustained investment.

Increased funding would allow BJS to modernize data collection and dissemination systems, hire the necessary experts, and begin to develop the next generation of statistical products to keep pace with the ever-changing criminal justice landscape and fill critical knowledge gaps.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this statement. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require additional information.

US Commissioners
Phil Anderson
W. Ron Allen
Douglas Vincent-Lang

**UNITED STATES SECTION
of the
PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION**

Office of the
US Section Coordinator
7600 Sand Point Way N.E.
Building 1, F/NWR2
Seattle, WA 98115
Phone: 206-526-6155
206-526-6156
206-526-4140
Fax: 206-526-6534

W. Ron Allen, Chair
US Section Budget Committee of the PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE AND RELATED AGENCIES
on the FY 2026 Budget for the National Marine Fisheries Service
May 9, 2025

Mr. Chairman, and Honorable Members of the Committee, I am W. Ron Allen, the Tribal Commissioner and Chair for the U.S. Section Budget Committee of the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC). I am also the Tribal Chairman/CEO of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe located on the Olympic Peninsula of Washington State. The U.S. Section prepares annual budgets for the implementation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty. The implementation of the Treaty is funded through the Departments of Commerce, Interior and State.

Department of Commerce funding in support of implementing the Pacific Salmon Treaty is part of the Salmon Management Activities account in the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) budget. The United States and Canada completed negotiations of revised Annex Chapters to the Treaty in 2019. Funding in the Department of Commerce budget is for the programs to fulfill national commitments created by the revised Treaty Annex Chapters. **The U.S. Section recommends FY 2026 funding of \$41,100,000 to implement national commitments created by the Treaty.** This represents no change from the FY 2025 request.

Maintaining this funding is essential to advance the prosperity of coastal communities in Alaska, Washington, and Oregon and to ensure American-caught salmon are available for domestic and international markets and on our dinner plates. The U.S. fisheries associated with the PST provide:

- more than 26,700 full time equivalent jobs;
- an annual economic value of more than \$3.4 billion; and
- contribute to keeping salmon as the core to the identities and way of life of Indigenous communities throughout the Pacific Northwest and Southeast Alaska.

The U.S. Section recommends that the Pacific Salmon Treaty line item in the Salmon Management Activities section of the NMFS budget be funded at \$41,100,000 for FY 2026. The bulk of this funding is passed through in grants to the states of Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, along with BIA funding to tribal governments. Although the PST is fundamentally a federal obligation, the states and tribes have the expertise and primary responsibility for the data collection, stock assessments, fishery management, and hatchery programs that support the PST. However, the cost of programs conducted by the States to fulfill national commitments created by the Treaty continue to be substantially greater than the funding provided in the NMFS budget. Consequently, the States have supplemented the federal Treaty appropriations from other sources, including State general funds. Many of these funding sources are limited or no longer available.

These activities:

- Implement PST provisions that identify obligatory fishery and stock assessment programs. These programs provide the foundation for maintaining sustainable fisheries and to effectively advocate for U.S. fisheries when opposed by Canada;
- Ensure we meet the terms and conditions of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) biological opinions that provide ESA "Take" coverage for our fisheries. Without funding to implement these obligations, U.S. fisheries become a litigation target for environmental groups;
- Contribute to conserving Southern Resident Killer Whales by augmenting the available prey through habitat restoration projects and increased hatchery production of Chinook salmon; and
- Sustain at-risk Puget Sound Chinook salmon stocks with hatchery conservation programs that maintain this unique genetic legacy and increase the number of spawners.
- Fill key science gaps to increase the strong science foundation necessary to meet conservation objectives and meet the data intensive provisions of revised agreements under the PST;

The sound science funding - supports research and stock assessments necessary to acquire and analyze the technical information needed to fully implement the abundance-based Chinook salmon management program provided for by the Treaty. The States of Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, and the twenty-five Treaty Tribes conduct projects selected in a rigorous competitive process.

The International Fisheries Commissions line, under Regional Councils and Fisheries Commissions in the NMFS budget is funded at \$475,000 and provides the U.S. contribution to bilateral cooperative Sockeye salmon enhancement on the transboundary river systems, which originate in Canada and flow to the sea through Southeast Alaska. This project was established in 1988 to meet U.S. obligations

specified in the Treaty and annual funding should continue at \$475,000 annually.

The core Treaty implementation projects included in the Pacific Salmon Treaty line, and the U.S. Chinook Agreement line under Salmon Management Activities, as well as the International Fisheries Commission line under Regional Councils and Fisheries Commissions consist of a wide range of stock assessment, fishery monitoring, and technical support activities for all five species of Pacific salmon in the fisheries and rivers between Cape Suckling in Alaska to Cape Falcon in Oregon. The States of Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and the NMFS conduct a wide range of programs for salmon stock abundance assessment, escapement enumeration, stock distribution, and fishery catch and effort information. The information is used to establish fishing seasons, harvest levels, and accountability to the provisions of Treaty fishing regimes.

Prior to FY 2020, the base annual Treaty implementation funding remained essentially flat since the inception of the Treaty in 1985. In order to continue to fulfill the Federal international commitments created by the Treaty, as costs and complexity increased over time, the States had to augment Federal funding with other Federal and State resources. Recent increases to implement the revised Annex Chapters were welcome changes.

The PST commits the United States and Canada to prevent overfishing; provide for optimum production; and provide for each party to receive benefits equivalent to the production of salmon originating in its waters. Negotiations to revise the provisions of the Annex Chapters to the Treaty, except for the Fraser River Chapter, were successfully completed in 2018. The revised provisions will last for ten years. These chapters contain the specifics for implementing the Treaty for each species in each geographic area. The provisions for a revised Fraser River Chapter were completed in 2019. The revised chapters represent the combined efforts of the participants to ensure healthy salmon populations for the next ten years. They require commitments to increase efforts to improve upon current management strategies for numerous salmon populations. The United States and Canada are entering negotiations to revise the Annex Chapters to the Pacific Salmon Treaty with the intent of continuing to provide for healthy salmon populations, while conserving underperforming populations, and providing fishing opportunities.

Finally, it is important to consider that the value of the commercial harvest of salmon subject to the Treaty and managed at productive levels under the Treaty, supports the infrastructure of many coastal and inland communities. The value of the commercial and recreational fisheries, and the economic diversity they provide for local communities throughout the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, is immense. The value of these fish to the twenty-five Treaty Tribes in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska goes far beyond their monetary value, to the cultural and religious lives of American Indian and Alaska Native peoples. A significant monetary investment is focused on salmon due to the listings of Pacific Northwest salmon populations under the Endangered Species Act. Given these resources, the U.S. Section will continue to utilize the Pacific Salmon

Commission process to develop recommendations that help with the development and implementation of solutions to minimizing impacts on listed stocks.

The economic, community, and cultural benefits of the PST cannot be maintained absent continued investments to meet domestic commitments, legal requirements, and the international obligations of the PST. Reductions in PST funding directly impact our ability to meet PST obligations.

The U.S. Section is concerned about the reduction in force for NMFS staff. While the U.S. Section supports government efficiency, the States and the Tribes need the support of our federal partners to make this process work. Significant reductions in federal support compromises the future health of the salmon resource and the people that depend on it.

Effective implementation of the PST advances our shared commitment to a better future for salmon, robust and sustainable salmon fisheries, and prosperous communities. We will continue to work towards the true intent of the Treaty, and with your support, we will manage this shared resource for mutual enhancements and benefits.

This concludes the statement of the U.S. Section of the Pacific Salmon Commission submitted for consideration by your Committee. We want to thank the Committee for the support given to us in the past. Please let us know if we can supply additional information or respond to any questions the Committee Members may have.

Thank you.



**Outside Witness Testimony for the House Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations**

From: Kristen Yarincik, Executive Director, IOOS Association

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and Members of the Subcommittee,

This testimony supports fiscal year 2026 appropriations to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Ocean Service to provide robust funding for Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) Regional Observations. It is submitted by the IOOS Association, a nonprofit organization representing the 11 federally certified IOOS Regional Associations located around our coasts and Great Lakes, including U.S. territories in the Caribbean and Pacific. Our priority is to ensure that the IOOS regional network is optimally sustained, and we respectfully request that the Committee provides \$56 million for the IOOS Regional Observations line in the fiscal year 2026 appropriations legislation.

The U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone supports a growing \$476.2 billion portion of the nation's gross domestic product and 2.4 million jobs. Ocean-dependent industries—such as shipping, offshore energy, fisheries, tourism, and recreation—rely on timely and accurate coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes data to improve efficiency and manage risk from hazardous conditions, harmful algal blooms, and extreme weather events. The IOOS regional network operates through a unique, competitive grant program that supports the collection and delivery of essential observations needed to forecast ocean conditions. As part of our national infrastructure, IOOS supports navigation, maritime safety, offshore operations, emergency response, and weather forecasting, playing a vital role in keeping America's ocean-based economy strong and competitive.

The IOOS Regional Associations are proven federal-private partnerships that maximize efficiency in serving the public with federally certified, real-time data critical to the success of coastal economies, seafood competitiveness, and maritime operation. IOOS is a cohesive and quality-assured system that supports a wide range of applications across multiple sectors and 17 federal agencies, making it a highly cost-effective investment for American taxpayers. A recent study¹ concluded that the economic value of the IOOS regional observing system is at least five times greater than the current annual federal investment in the system. Another way to approach the value of IOOS is by impact on lives saved; the investment in IOOS is justified by as few as five lives² saved by improved preparedness, warnings, and models.

¹ Colgan, Charles S. and Castelletto, Anthony 2021. *The Economic Value of Ocean Observing Systems in the United States: A Prototype User Valuation*. Monterey, CA: Center for the Blue Economy, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey.

² Department of Transportation Guidance on Valuation of a Statistical Life in Economic Analysis: https://www.transportation.gov/office-policy/transportation-policy/revised-departmental-guidance-on-valuation-of-a-statistical-life-in-economic-analysis?utm_source=chatgpt.com

1706 Hutchinson Ln
Silver Spring, MD 20906
+1 617 308 3848 | www.ioosassociation.org

AOOS | CARICOOS | CeNCOOS | GCOOS |
GLOS | MARACOOS | NANOOS | NERACOOS |
PacIOOS | SCCOOS | SECOORA



As non-federal entities, the IOOS Regional Associations partner with private industry and businesses, academia, and state and local governments to operate more than 1,000 observing assets, including buoys, underwater gliders, all kinds of sensors, models, and the nation's only network of high frequency radars. They use these technologies to collect ocean and coastal data and provide publicly accessible information, tools, and products that are tailored to the needs of regional users, such as offshore industries, commercial fisheries, aquaculture, vessel operators, and recreational ocean users. The data collected also enhance weather models, forecasts, and the U.S. Coast Guard Search and Rescue Optimal Planning System. While the Regional Associations operate as a coordinated system, their operational and respective investment plans are guided by local stakeholder engagement to prioritize activities that address specific geographic needs. IOOS is a prime example of a program that should be leveraged and expanded to meet growing ocean and coastal economy needs, foster private sector innovation in data tools, technologies, and forecasts, and advance U.S. leadership in the maritime domain.

In its 2004 landmark report, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, chaired by Admiral James D. Watkins, USN (ret), called for the establishment of IOOS. The report stated, "the United States simply cannot provide the economic, environmental, and security benefits..., achieve new levels of understanding and predictive capability, or generate the information needed by a wide range of users, without implementing the IOOS." The IOOS program was established in law shortly after and was reauthorized unanimously by Congress in 2020 in a bill that was signed into law by President Trump. Our appropriations request of \$56M is at the program's authorized funding level as outlined in that law.

The \$56 million request for IOOS Regional Observations includes \$50 million to sustain core operations and maintenance of the regional system, and \$6 million for competitive grants to support innovations—such as sensor development, autonomous sampling, and coastal modeling—as well as high-priority initiatives, like enhancing the National Harmful Algal Bloom Observing Network, which Congress has supported since fiscal year 2020. While this request is an increase over current enacted funding to IOOS Regional Observations, it is not about expanding the program. This level of funding is about preserving core capabilities, keeping pace with inflation, and meeting rising demands for critical data that support public safety, weather and ocean forecasting, flood and water level monitoring, and the economic health of U.S. fisheries, maritime, and coastal economies.

Investing in ocean observing saves lives, protects communities, and reduces disaster costs. For example, funding at this level would allow the IOOS regions to continue the pan-regional Hurricane Glider Program that was initiated by and has only been sustained through disaster supplementals. Subsurface ocean data collected by underwater autonomous vehicles has been shown to improve hurricane intensity forecasts by up to 50%, helping better prepare and protect people and infrastructure from hurricane and typhoon threats in the Atlantic and Pacific. These actionable data also support military base planning and resource allocation, ensuring timely and cost-effective operations. For example, Typhoon Mawar in 2023 caused an estimated \$2B in damage to military installations on Guam, underscoring the need for reliable ocean intelligence. By maintaining and expanding these capabilities, IOOS plays a vital role in safeguarding U.S. sovereignty, economic security, and military readiness.





IOOS delivers real-time weather and ocean current data that support safe navigation and decision-making for both commercial and recreational vessel operators. Continued funding is needed to strengthen these forecasting systems and ensure mariner safety. IOOS data are also used by Marine Exchanges across the country that monitor weather conditions and vessel traffic in and out of our major ports, and by the U.S. Coast Guard to support search and rescue operations. In particular, data from the IOOS high frequency radar network feed into the Coast Guard's Search and Rescue Optimal Planning System (SAROPS), which has been shown to reduce search areas by up to a factor of five³, enabling faster and more effective rescues.

IOOS data support U.S. seafood competitiveness. Regional observations help fishermen determine where conditions may result in a successful fishing day as well as where and when it is unsafe to go to sea. Shellfish growers depend on IOOS data to monitor ocean temperature and acidity, helping them protect their operations from marine heatwaves and acidification. IOOS is also advancing the use of emerging technologies to collect data and is committed to providing this information in usable formats to improve regional fisheries assessments and support informed decision-making by resource managers.

IOOS is a critical component of the weather enterprise. In 2024, the IOOS Regional Associations provided NOAA with ~14.5 million meteorological and wave observations from a national network of 260 platforms, including data from 47 different partner institutions. This comprises a significant portion (25%) of all stations reporting through the National Data Buoy Center and more than one-third of National Ocean Service stations. These data undergo the same rigorous quality assurance and quality control processes as federally collected data and are used by NOAA's National Weather Service to improve their weather research and forecasting capabilities. These data are so important to the weather service that this relationship was codified in the 2017 Weather Act Reauthorization, which mandates that the National Weather Service "integrate additional coastal and ocean observations, and other data and research, from the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) into regional weather forecasts". IOOS Regional Associations are more than external grantees, they are essential data providers that directly improve NOAA's forecasts, products, and services.

We are grateful that the Committee supported IOOS at its authorized level of \$56M in its fiscal year 2025 appropriations bill. We respectfully request that the Committee again provide \$56 million to IOOS Regional Observations under NOAA's National Ocean Service.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this statement.

³ Futch, V. and Allen, A. 2019. Search and Rescue Applications: On the Need to Improve Ocean Observing Data Systems in Offshore or Remote Locations. *Frontiers in Marine Science*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2019.00301>



**TESTIMONY OF SUZANNE HOPE, DIRECTING ATTORNEY
KENTUCKY INNOCENCE PROJECT
KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCACY
FOR THE COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED
AGENCIES SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

May 9, 2025

On behalf of the Kentucky Innocence Project, and as a member of the Innocence Network, a national coalition of more than 70 local innocence organizations working to exonerate the innocent and prevent wrongful convictions nationwide, thank you for the Subcommittee's critical funding increases and bipartisan support for innocence and forensic science programs over the past several years. Thank you also for considering my testimony for the record as you review FY26 appropriations requests. In FY26, I urge you to please sustain and increase funding for the following programs at the Bureau of Justice Assistance at the Department of Justice and at the National Institute of Standards and Technology at the Department of Commerce:

- **\$15 million** for the Wrongful Conviction Review Program at the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) (the Wrongful Conviction Review Program is part of the Capital Litigation Improvement Program);
- **\$15 million** for the Kirk Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Program at DOJ/BJA
- **\$25 million** for the Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to support and conduct foundational forensic science research, **including \$2 million for technical merit evaluations.**

The innocence programs at DOJ and forensic science research at NIST increase the fairness and accuracy of the criminal justice system; provide the strongest possible forensic science tools to justice system stakeholders; and generate greater public safety for our nation. ***Innocence program grantees help to identify real perpetrators through exonerations, identify and address system issues to ensure that the correct person is identified prior to conviction, and help provide true justice to victims of crime through these efforts.***

Data from the National Registry of Exonerations show that the number of exonerations ***has more than doubled*** since federal innocence programs - the Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing and Wrongful Convictions Review programs - began to receive funding in 2008 and 2009, respectively. This dramatic increase is in part a result of the federal decision to support these programs to help ensure the accuracy and integrity of the criminal justice system.

2023 set the record for the highest number of years individuals lost to being wrongfully convicted - an average of ***14.6 years per exoneree. Almost 33,000 life years have been lost to wrongful incarceration.*** The National Registry of Exonerations currently lists ***almost 3,700 exonerations since 1989.***

Freeing innocent individuals and preventing wrongful convictions also greatly benefits public safety. Every time DNA identifies a wrongful conviction, it enables the possible

identification of the person who committed the crime. *As of 2020, such true perpetrators have been identified in more than half of the 375 DNA exoneration cases.* Unfortunately, we know that many of these individuals went on to commit additional crimes while an innocent person was convicted and incarcerated in their place. Supporting innocence and forensic science programs helps to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the criminal justice system.

The Kentucky Innocence Project (KIP) has had incredible success that has resulted in the exoneration of 26 clients to date who have served a total of 294 years in prisons for crimes that they never committed. Most of KIP's innocence cases have taken years - sometimes close to a decade or even more - to secure the eventual release of our clients. For example, Jeff Clark and Garr Hardin from Meade County were arrested in 1992 for a murder that the prosecution theorized was a "satanic killing." KIP opened Clark's case in 2009, secured DNA testing in 2014, vacated the conviction in 2016, and finally got new charges by the prosecutor dismissed in 2017. Jeff and Garr were wrongfully imprisoned for 22 years before they were released - at great cost to Kentucky taxpayers - and collectively they served 44 years for crimes they did not commit. These exonerations were a direct result of KIP receiving a Bloodsworth Post- Conviction DNA Testing grant.

Like Jeff's case, wrongful conviction cases can be difficult to investigate, often involve complex forensic science, and complex litigation. It is an arduous and resource intensive process to prove an individual's innocence after that person has been wrongfully convicted. Even before litigation commences there is voluminous record collection and review, rigorous investigation, and in-depth case analysis to determine whether there is evidence to prove a person's innocence. However, it is worth this critical effort because it is through the lens of these cases that errors from a large and human criminal legal system can be identified and remediated, and systemic concerns resolved in order to prevent future wrongful convictions and their associated human and fiscal costs.

Today KIP has 182 cases that are currently awaiting review or other action, and 9 currently in litigation as part of Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing and Wrongful Convictions Review programs. Two of these DNA cases have already resulted in a CODIS hit for a potential alternative perpetrator. Grant funding has provided KIP with the resources to obtain forensic experts, DNA testing, record collection and review, investigations, and legal representation of wrongfully convicted individuals. Without funding from these grants, KIP will not have the resources to devote to the efforts that are needed to correct a wrongful conviction.

The value of federal innocence programs and forensic science research is not only for exonerated people, but for all stakeholders in the criminal justice system as well as for public safety. Funding for these programs enhances the accuracy of criminal investigations, strengthens criminal prosecutions, and results in a fairer and more accountable system of justice that provides true justice to victims of crime.

Wrongful Conviction Review Program

We know that wrongful convictions occur in cases where DNA evidence may be insufficient or unavailable to prove innocence. The National Registry of Exonerations currently lists almost 3,700 exonerations since 1989, the vast majority of which did not have the presence or benefit of

testable DNA. The Wrongful Conviction Review Program provides critical support to ensure that experts are available to navigate the complex landscape of post-conviction litigation, as well as oversee the thousands of volunteer hours local innocence organizations leverage to help investigate these complex non-DNA cases and support the significant legal work they require.

The Wrongful Conviction Review Program provides funding to local innocence organizations, such as the Kentucky Innocence Project, so that they may provide this type of expert, high quality, and efficient representation for innocent individuals. The program's goals also are to help alleviate burdens placed on the criminal justice system through costly and prolonged post-conviction litigation and to identify, when possible, the person who actually committed the crime.

In previous years, only a few local innocence organizations received Wrongful Conviction Review funding during each grant cycle. Even with the FY23 funding increase, there is still a need to expand this program further to resolve the long waiting lists of wrongfully convicted individuals – lists that are often hundreds of individuals long for just an individual innocence organization. These cases require evaluation, investigation, and often representation, which helps to improve the fairness and reliability of the criminal legal system. ***We urge you to provide \$15 million for the Wrongful Conviction Review Program in FY26.*** (Please note that the Wrongful Conviction Review grant program is a part of the Capital Litigation Improvement Program.)

The Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Program

The Bloodsworth Program supports states and localities that want to pursue post-conviction DNA testing in appropriate cases, and grantees range from state and local prosecutor offices to law enforcement agencies and crime labs. These grantees can collaborate with local innocence organizations when appropriate. For example, a grant to Arizona allowed the state's Attorney General's Office to partner with the Arizona Justice Project to create the Post-Conviction DNA Testing Project. This effort canvassed incarcerated individuals in Arizona, reviewed cases, located evidence, and filed joint requests with the court to have evidence released for DNA testing. In addition to identifying the innocent, Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard noted that the “*grant enable[d] [his] office to support local prosecutors and ensure that those who have committed violent crimes are identified and behind bars.*”¹ The Bloodsworth program is a powerful investment for states and localities seeking to free innocent individuals and identify the individuals who actually committed the crimes. The success of this program has been both generating individual exonerations while supporting broader system review when problems arise.

For example, Virginian Thomas Haynesworth, who was wrongfully incarcerated for 27 years, was freed thanks to Bloodsworth-funded post-conviction DNA testing that also revealed the person who committed the crime. The culpable person in that case went on to terrorize the community by attacking twelve women, with most of the attacks and rapes occurring while Mr. Haynesworth was wrongfully incarcerated. Given the importance of this program to both

¹ Arizona receives federal DNA grant, <http://community.law.asu.edu/news/19167/Arizona-receives-federal-DNA-grant.htm> (last visited Mar. 13, 2012).

innocent individuals and public safety, I urge you to provide the **\$15 million to sustain the work of the Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Program in FY26.**

Forensic Science Improvement

To continue the critical work to improve forensic science, and help prevent wrongful convictions, I urge you to provide **\$25 million** for NIST to support foundational forensic science research, **including \$2 million** to conduct technical merit evaluations.

As the federal entity that is both perfectly positioned and institutionally constituted to conduct foundational forensic science research, NIST's work will improve the validity and reliability of forensic evidence, a need cited by the National Academy of Sciences 2009 report, Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward.² NIST's reputation for innovation will result in technological solutions to advance forensic science applications and achieve a tremendous cost savings by reducing court costs posed by litigating scientific evidence.

Additionally, some forensic science techniques have not yet received an evaluation of their technical merit and NIST needs further support to conduct these vital reviews. The forensic science activities and research at NIST will help to improve forensic disciplines and propel forensic science and the criminal legal system toward greater accuracy and reliability, and as a result, help prevent wrongful convictions and improve system equity.

Conclusion

Thank you for your leadership in ensuring the accuracy, equity, and integrity of our nation's criminal justice system. I urge you to support all of the aforementioned programs. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact me at Suzanne.hopf@ky.gov or Jenny Collier at jcollier@colliercollective.org.

² National Research Council. Strengthening Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2009. doi:10.17226/12589, p. 22-23.

**House Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee on Appropriations
Public Witness Hearing**

May 2, 2025

Testimony Submitted by Mark Barden, Co-Founder and CEO of Sandy Hook Promise

I would like to begin by thanking Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and the members of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Subcommittee for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am grateful for the Subcommittee's longstanding and continued bipartisan support for children's safety in and outside of school. Sandy Hook Promise (SHP)'s mission is to educate and empower youth and adults to prevent violence in their schools, homes, and communities.

In Fiscal Year 2026, we are supportive of the following requests in the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies bill that will help protect the children of our nation. We support increased funding for the *Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence* program and request \$86 million for the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and \$55 million for Community Oriented Policing Solutions (COPS) to reflect increased demand for school safety solutions. Further, we support \$100 million for the Department of Justice's (DOJ's) Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative (CVIPI). Each of these programs has a role to play in helping to keep kids safe at home, at school, and in their communities.

I am submitting this request on behalf of Sandy Hook Promise, an organization of which I am a co-founder. On December 14, 2012, the youngest of my three children, my sweet little Daniel, was murdered in his first-grade classroom at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Following the shooting, I began working with other family members whose loved ones were killed that day to find a way to prevent others from experiencing the senseless, horrific death of their child due to gun violence. The result was Sandy Hook Promise, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to honoring all victims of violence by turning our tragedy into a moment of transformation. By empowering youth to "know the signs" and uniting all people who value the protection of children, we can take meaningful action to prevent violence and stop the tragic loss of life.

To date, over 31 million youth and adults have participated in our life saving *Know the Signs* programs. As of April 2025, Sandy Hook Promise's National Crisis Center, has saved more than 700 lives and prevented 18 school shootings.¹ We work every day to ensure that our Crisis Center responds to messages from concerned students and connects those students in crisis or at risk with help. Students must have resources and training to ensure that when they observe warning signs, they can be upstanders and receive help from a trusted adult.

Millions of acts of youth violence, including suicide, threats, bullying, and homicide occur every year, affecting all urban, suburban, and rural schools. In 2023, 13 percent of high school students reported not attending school because of safety concerns at least once in the previous month.² Further, an August 2023 poll found that 38 percent of parents fear for a child's physical safety at

¹ <https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/who-we-are/our-impact/>

² https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/yrbs_data_summary_and_trends.htm

school and 14 percent of parents say a child has expressed safety concerns to them.³ For students to learn and grow, they need safe, and proactive steps towards improving their physical and mental health. The rates of suicide and instances of poor mental health among young people continue to be of concern too. In 2023, 20% of high school students seriously considered attempting suicide, 16% of students made a suicide plan, and 9% of high school students attempted suicide.⁴ These rates continue to underscore the need for programs designed to prevent suicide and violence like those funded by the *STOP School Violence* grant program to ensure resources are available for school personnel and students.

The *STOP School Violence Act* was signed into law in 2018 by President Trump following the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Sandy Hook Promise worked with bipartisan members of Congress to craft this legislation based on the research and lessons learned following the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary that took my son, Daniel. Ensuring strong funding for the *STOP School Violence* grants continues to be Sandy Hook Promise's top priority to honor our commitment to students, teachers, parents, and communities across the nation to help prevent school shootings and keep kids safe. The continuation of bipartisan support and deep investments in the *STOP School Violence Act* is a testament to Congress' dedication to children's safety at school.

Research shows that youth often display warning signs before harming themselves or others. In fact, 75 percent of school shooters and 70 percent of youth who complete suicide told someone of their plans or gave another warning sign.⁵ Students, teachers, and school staff need tools and trainings to empower them know how to reach out for help when concerned about violence toward themselves or others. Increased funding for *STOP School Violence* grants will help additional states, school districts and tribal organizations bring evidence-based safety programs and strategies to schools on topics including suicide, bullying, and violence prevention. In addition to the funding made available through *Public Law 117–159*, for Fiscal Year 2025, we support \$86 million for BJA and \$55 million for COPS for *STOP School Violence Act* grants. We also support the following report language as it relates to the *STOP School Violence Act* to be included in the FY 2026 CJS report:

STOP School Violence Act.—The recommendation provides a total of \$201,000,000 for the STOP School Violence Act grant program for fiscal year 2026. Of this amount, \$60,000,000 is derived from Public Law 117–159 and \$141,000,000 is provided for in this act. Of the amount provided in this act, \$86,000,000 is provided to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) for evidence-based school safety programs outlined in the STOP School Violence Act and \$55,000,000 is provided to the Community Oriented Policing Service (COPS) program. The Committee directs BJA to prioritize evidence-based programming to train students and school personnel on the warning signs of interpersonal violence and suicide, to prevent the root causes of student violence, and to deliver mental health crisis intervention, as permitted under the STOP School Violence Act. The Committee directs the offices to notify eligible entities of funding availability and increase training and technical assistance for school district applicants with an emphasis on rural, tribal and

³ Gallup Inc. (2023) "School Parent Safety Concerns Remain High in the U.S."

⁴ "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS)." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, April 27, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/>

⁵ United States Secret Service. Lina, Alathari. (2020) *MASS ATTACKS in PUBLIC SPACES -2019*.

under-resourced schools. The Committee directs BJA to prioritize applicants from rural and under-resourced school districts, applicants who incorporate the use of mental health professionals and resources in their school safety plans, and, for applicants incorporating crisis centers, to prioritize those that include evidence-based trainings for students and staff within their anonymous reporting systems.

The Committee recognizes that fiscal year 2026 is the last year of supplemental funding for STOP School Violence Act programs from Public Law 117–159. Agencies responsible for STOP implementation are directed to provide a report and briefing to the Committee, within 180 days of enactment of this act, on year-over-year trends in applicants since fiscal year 2018. The report should include the number and type of applications, the geographic distribution of recipient schools and corresponding student bodies, school safety solutions implemented, and strategies employed to reach under-resourced and rural communities, including microgrants.

Children deserve to feel safe at home, at school, and in their communities. Some students feel safer in the school building than they do outside of school. Violence continues to be a leading cause of death and nonfatal injuries among adolescents and young adults with the US homicide rate reaching 10.7 per 100,000 among people ages 10-24 in 2021.⁶ We must invest in our communities to keep children safe from violence. Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative grants at the DOJ fund vital evidence-informed programming that emphasizes community involvement in identifying conflict and designing solutions. These grants require implementation through at least two entities including state and local government, law enforcement, and community-based organizations to get to the root of a community's needs. We encourage the Subcommittee to address the April 2025 grant terminations under this program, as communities most impacted by violence are currently facing uncertainty and incomplete programs meant to provide life-saving services. The current proposed funding would help address the public safety needs of both urban and rural communities and help to reduce homicides and shootings, address trauma inflicted by crime, and increase public safety overall. In Fiscal year 2026, we support \$100 million for the DOJ's Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative (CVIPI).

Violence does not exist in a vacuum and investments to keep kids safe at school and in their communities will not only improve children's lives but save them. We know that funding for school safety resources and programs and funding for community violence intervention work have key roles in supporting child safety and saving lives. We must commit resources to keeping our schools safe from shootings, increase suicide prevention and mental health programming, and invest in community violence intervention work to help stop the leading cause of death of children. Thank you to the Subcommittee for its continued bipartisan commitment to keeping kids safe and for the opportunity to submit testimony today on this critical issue.

⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db471.pdf>

House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

FY 2026 Public Witness Testimony

**Statement of Mr. Nicholas Yula, Jr.
Morgan County Drug Court Graduate
Morgan County, Alabama**

On behalf of All Rise

May 8, 2025

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Meng, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, I am honored to submit my testimony on behalf of All Rise, the leading national organization for treatment courts, like drug courts and veterans treatment courts. Given the ongoing substance use disorder and fentanyl death crisis, **I support All Rise's request to provide level funding of \$89 million for the Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program and \$32 million for the Veterans Treatment Court Grant Program at the Department of Justice for fiscal year 2026.**

I am a small business owner, a devoted father, an engaged member of my community, and living a fulfilling life in recovery thanks to the Morgan County, Alabama, drug court.

In March, I had the incredible opportunity to share my drug court story with my congressman, Dale Strong, in his Washington, D.C., office. It was a profound honor to be invited to meet with him, and I was filled with a sense of humility and gratitude upon shaking his hand.

I came away from the meeting impressed by his leadership in addressing the addiction epidemic and the associated rise in crime, not just in my county, but nationwide. He recognizes the tragic reality of lives lost to addiction every day and understands the far-reaching impact this epidemic has on our communities and the criminal justice system.

During our meeting, Congressman Strong presented me with a congressional coin. This gesture deeply impacted me. The coin is a reminder of all I have accomplished in my recovery and motivates me to continue to serve as a leader in my community, where I share my story with a new generation of drug court graduates. Meeting Congressman Strong was truly an extraordinary honor—one that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

I walked out of the meeting reflecting on the journey that brought me to that moment. At 18 years old, my father, and sole custodian parent, died. It was a devastating loss at a critical moment in my life. I self-medicated with alcohol and drugs. I spent the next 20-plus years in a downward spiral of substance use and crime, cycling in and out of the justice system. I was lost and hopeless. Eventually, it all caught up to me, and I was arrested and charged with felony theft, facing 5-10 years in prison. Instead, I was offered the opportunity to participate in drug court.

For the first time in decades, I was held accountable for my actions. The drug court team made it clear that they were there to help me, but that I would need to take personal responsibility over my own recovery. I was given an evidence-based treatment plan based on an assessment of my substance use disorder and mental health needs. This meant that I was matched with treatment that was appropriate for me and helped me engage in the recovery process quickly. I believe drug court saved my life.

Treatment courts, like the Morgan County, Alabama drug court, are on the front lines of America's drug and crime epidemic. These programs have proven to be the most successful and cost-effective solution for reducing crime and preventing overdose deaths. They do this by holding individuals with substance use and mental health disorders accountable through close supervision, evidence-based treatment, and personal responsibility. I am living proof that treatment courts work.

I strongly urge this subcommittee to provide level funding of \$89 million for the Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program and \$32 million for the Veterans Treatment Court Grant Program for fiscal year 2026 at the Department of Justice so treatment courts can continue providing lifesaving treatment with accountability to help people like me find long-term recovery and keep our neighborhoods safe.



Written Public Testimony by Dr. Kristen Goodrich
President, National Estuarine Research Reserve Association
On behalf of the National Estuarine Research Reserve Association
For the Record and before the Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Subcommittee,
Committee on Appropriations, United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. May 9, 2025

Chair and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Kristen Goodrich. I am the director of training and engagement at the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve. I submit this testimony in my capacity as president of the National Estuarine Research Reserve Association (NERRA), a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the understanding and protection of our nation's estuaries and coasts by supporting the work of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS). The NERRS is a time-tested, mission-ready, state-federal partnership that focuses the expertise and resources of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on the needs of coastal communities and states.

Reserves thank you. On behalf of the special people and places we support, we commend you on your leadership. Farsighted legislation in the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) designated the NERRS in 1972. Fifty-three years of congressional investment have helped us become a powerful network of 30 protected sites, encompassing nearly 1.4 million acres of coastal lands and waters that are treasured by thousands of visitors who explore, recreate, and learn in these areas every day. Reserves are living laboratories where scientists, communities, educators, and state partners come together to understand, protect, and enhance the societal and economic benefits of coastal and estuarine resources. You have continued and grown this legacy.

Reserves connect us. Reserves protect places, but people are the heart of our System. State and local support was essential to the designation of all Reserves, and today, more than 36,000 people from local Reserve friend, foundation, and land trust groups support the NERRS in 24 states and Puerto Rico. Communities throughout the U.S. Coastal Zone recognizes Reserves as "go-to" places for high-quality environmental data; locally relevant science guided by community need; training and technical assistance for decision-makers and businesses; science education for teachers and students of all ages; and innovative approaches to managing natural infrastructure that protects people and property.

State and community demand for new Reserves is a testimony to their success. Soon, the Atchafalaya Reserve in Louisiana and Wisconsin's Bay of Green Bay site will be designated. Additionally, the U.S. Virgin Islands is in the designation process, and the governors of Michigan, Indiana, and Florida have requested NOAA to designate new Reserves in their states.

Reserves strengthen economies. Federal investment in Reserves yields multiple dividends. Approximately 98% of federal funding for Reserves goes directly to states, which contribute \$6 million in match funding annually. Each Reserve leverages additional external funding to support their mission and benefit surrounding communities. This leverage can bring in as much as \$7.9 million annually. All Reserves attract volunteers, whose efforts help offset operational costs. Together, volunteers contribute

approximately 82,000 service hours, valued at \$1.9 million, every year. These layered contributions—federal investment, state match, external grants, and volunteer time—illustrate the NERRS’ fiscally responsible, high-impact approach to coastal management.

Furthermore, every \$1 invested in protecting communities from hazards yields a \$6 return. Each year, Reserves provide local data, technical assistance, and training to more than 13,400 people, 2,000 decision-makers, and 570 businesses as they prepare for and respond to extreme weather, flooding, and hazards like oil spills, pollution, and red tides. Communities, businesses, and scientists rely on Reserves to help them address challenges like these by providing more than 48 million high-quality data points from Reserves’ 300 water quality and weather stations each year.

Reserves support the nation’s coastal and marine economy by creating jobs, attracting visitors, generating revenue, and supporting industries like commercial and recreational fishing, aquaculture, and tourism. Reserves directly employ more than 400 people and sustain more than 10,000 jobs. Each Reserve contributes to local and state revenues and supports industries through public programs, partnerships, facility operations, data, and training.

Reserves educate. Reserves are training the next generation of coastal scientists, managers, and business owners through K through 12 education programming, professional development for educators, a graduate research fellowship focused on community needs, and partnerships with more than 100 universities and research institutions. This pipeline is essential to foster the next generation of coastal leaders.

Reserves protect natural infrastructure and build resilience. The lands and waters Reserves help protect and provide many valuable benefits to industries, communities, and states. More than 500,000 people visit Reserves to hike, fish, kayak, watch wildlife, and hunt every year, enjoying access to ~4.5 thousand miles of waterfront, ~900 miles of paddling and hiking trails, and more than 800 public piers, docks, and ramps. Almost all Reserves provide opportunities for recreational fishing and hunting. Reserves play a key role in the \$12 billion coastal recreation economy by keeping coastal spaces clean, healthy, and open to the public. Wetlands, like those supported by the Reserves, prevent an estimated \$267 billion in storm damage, making their restoration and conservation extremely cost-effective strategies for protecting the coasts. Reserve research and data also improves management of essential habitats that support the U.S. commercial fish catch, which contributes billions of dollars to the U.S. economy each year.

NERRA FY 2026 Budget Request

- **NERRS Operations, Research, and Facilities (ORF): \$47 million***
- **NERRS Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction (PAC): \$10 million**
- **NOAA Coastal Zone Management and Services: continued support of a robust budget**

*Funding requested matches authorization amounts contained in H.R. 2786, the Resilient Coasts and Estuaries Act.

NERRS Operations, Research, and Facilities (ORF)

Since Congress created the NERRS through the CZMA 53 years ago, Reserves have performed and achieved more than its architects imagined. Today, they serve the nation and coastal communities with the essential science and services they need to manage our rapidly changing coasts. Demand is high for Reserves and their programs—and the System is growing as communities across the country engage their Governors in seeking NERRS designation. At the same time, existing sites are responding to increasing local needs for coastal access, land protection, trusted science, education, and training services.

As such, NERRA's request for the FY 2026 NERRS ORF and PAC budgets will support this local and national growth and build Reserve capacity to work with our NOAA partners in nine critical areas:

1. Amplify Reserve ability to strengthen the economy by creating jobs; attracting visitors; contributing to local and state revenues; supporting industries like tourism and fishing; and boosting business revenues through public programs, partnerships, and facility operations;
2. Provide much needed data and training to communities and businesses through nationally significant monitoring programs that integrate community needs, provide standardized, high quality data on how coastal conditions are changing, and set a standard for other monitoring networks to follow;
3. Enhance collaborative science programs that deliver knowledge and tools where and when they're needed most to address local, state, and national priorities;
4. Deliver scientific training, technical assistance, and tools to help thousands of coastal decision-makers enhance community resilience — offsetting costs to local, state, and federal governments;
5. Offer science, technology, engineering and mathematics-focused education programs that deliver field training, curricula, local data, and other resources to more than 70,000 students and nearly 5,000 teachers each year;
6. Continue the NERRS/NOAA Margaret A. Davidson Graduate Research Fellowship Program, which provides science to address near-term, community needs related to nationally significant issues and training for the next generation coastal science and management workforce;
7. Provide public access for hunting, fishing, boating, hiking, wildlife watching, and passive recreation on more than one million acres of land and water;
8. Send more dollars to each state, allowing each Reserve to keep up with rising inflation while growing the programs needed to meet increasing community demand for data and local assistance. This budget would mean approximately \$1.2+ million dollars per Reserve.

9. Meet growing state demand for Reserves by adding two sites in Louisiana and Wisconsin and advancing designation of a site in the U.S. Virgin Islands. At least three more Reserves have been requested by Governors in Michigan, Florida, and Indiana.

NERRS Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction (PAC)

NERRA's \$10 million request for an FY 2026 NERRS PAC budget is a \$1.5 million increase over the FY 2024 program baseline.

NERRS PAC funding advances conservation through the strategic acquisition of priority lands and the construction and upgrades of essential facilities. PAC funds enhance the climate resilience of Reserve infrastructure with sustainable, energy efficient materials and designs that reduce the risks associated with storms, rising waters, and flooding. These improvements serve as models for communities seeking safer and more resilient coasts. PAC funds also are critical to ensure that Reserve research, education, and outreach programs continue to meet community needs. Reserves compete for PAC funding, and the need for construction funds that generate jobs is more than \$36 million. Moreover, Reserves have identified \$152 million in future needs for restoration, construction, and essential facilities upgrades that would create more than 2,000 local jobs.

NOAA Coastal Zone Management and Services

NOAA's Office for Coastal Management (OCM) provides national leadership to guide, coordinate, and leverage the work of State and Territory Coastal Zone Management programs, the NERRS, the Digital Coast Partnership, and the Coral Reef Program for maximum impact. It also provides science, data, and tools that benefit communities, as well as leadership and support for training and mentoring the next generation of coastal management scientists and professionals. NERRA supports a robust budget for NOAA Coastal Zone Management and Services.

In conclusion, and with appreciation, NERRA is deeply grateful for the support this Subcommittee has demonstrated for the NERRS. Our FY 2025 request of \$47 million for NERRS ORF and \$10 million for NERRS PAC will enhance NERRS ability to work with states and communities to address extreme weather events and other natural resource challenges, while supporting the economic viability of coastal businesses and industries and the communities you serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to present these remarks and on behalf of NERRA, I would be happy to answer questions or provide additional information.

**Outside Witness Testimony in Support of FY 2026 Funding for the
National Science Foundation**

May 7, 2025

Submitted by:

Gil Nelson, Ph.D.
President, Natural Science Collections Alliance
950 Herndon Parkway Suite 450, Herndon, VA 20170
Phone: 202-628-1500, E-mail: membership@nscalliance.org

Submitted to:

House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies

The Natural Science Collections Alliance appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support of fiscal year (FY) 2026 appropriations for the National Science Foundation (NSF). We strongly encourage Congress to reject the President's budget request and instead allocate **at least \$9.9 billion** for NSF in FY 2026—restoring its funding to the FY 2023 enacted level.

The Natural Science Collections Alliance is a non-profit association that supports natural science collections, their human resources, the institutions that house them, and their research activities for the benefit of science and society. Our membership consists of institutions that are part of an international network of museums, botanical gardens, herbaria, universities, and other institutions that contain natural science collections and use them in research, exhibitions, academic and informal science education, and outreach activities.

Scientific collections—and the professionals and researchers who build, maintain, and study them—are a vital part of the nation's research infrastructure. These collections and the expertise surrounding them play a crucial role in growing our bioeconomy. Whether housed in museums, government laboratories or archives, or university departments, these scientific resources represent a highly coordinated network of specimens, samples, and data—including genetic, tissue, organismal, and environmental information—that form an irreplaceable foundation for understanding life on Earth, past and present.

Natural science collections drive cutting-edge research and education that inform solutions to pressing societal challenges. They support efforts to improve public health, increase agricultural productivity, manage natural resources, conserve biodiversity, and boost American innovation and economic growth. Research based on these collections is also advancing new cyberinfrastructure, data visualization technologies, and best practices in data management. Moreover, the insights gained through this work provide essential input for policymaking across numerous federal agencies. A few examples of how scientific collections have saved lives, enhanced food production, and advanced scientific discovery include:

- Scientists used museum specimens in U.S. collections to gather data on the distribution of the mosquito *Culex quadrofaciatus*, which is known to carry West Nile Virus and other

pathogens. They then modeled the distribution under different scenarios of changing climates to predict regions where the species may expand in the future. Predicting the spread of disease vectors such as these mosquitoes helps the health care community prepare for disease outbreaks and where they will happen.

- Researchers from Boston University documented Tau proteins in the brains of fluid preserved museum specimens of Downy Woodpecker. These proteins are also found in traumatic brain injuries in humans. Because of the life history traits of woodpeckers, the researchers argue these birds may have evolved a level of resistance to traumatic head injuries that could have implications for treatments for humans.
- Citrus bacterial canker disease wreaks havoc on fruit crops in Florida. Using plant specimens collected a century ago, scientists have analyzed the bacterium and traced its source. Knowledge of how the bacteria spreads allows scientists to develop effective control methods and to protect the U.S. citrus industry.
- When the 2001 anthrax attacks happened in the United States, specimens collected decades earlier allowed researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to quickly identify the strain involved.

Scientific collections enable us to tell the story of life on Earth. There are more than 1,600 biological collections in the United States. These resources are the result of more than 200 years of scientific investigation, discovery, and inventory of living and fossil species. Scientists have collected and curated more than one billion specimens within those collections, many of which have now been digitized with continued funding from NSF and the resulting data stored in easily accessible online databases that contribute heavily to research.

The institutions that care for scientific collections are important research infrastructure that enable other scientists to study the basic data of life; conduct biological, geological, anthropological, and environmental research; and integrate research findings from across these diverse disciplines. Their professional staff members train future generations with the tools and expertise required to move science forward. In-house institutional staff expertise is vital to the development and deployment of this critical research infrastructure.

According to the U.S. Interagency Working Group on Scientific Collections (IWGSC), “scientific collections are essential to supporting agency missions and are thus vital to supporting the global research enterprise.” A [2020 report](#) by the IWGSC presented a framework for estimating and documenting the long-term benefits, both monetary and non-monetary, generated by federal institutional collections. More recently, a [2023 report](#) from the IWGSC enumerated the many ways federal scientific collections have served the nation in diverse areas, including with the COVID-19 response and improving national health, climate change research and mitigation, ensuring the nation’s food security, as well as environmental health and safety.

Additional recent reports have highlighted the value of mobilizing biodiversity specimens and data in spurring new scientific discoveries. In 2019, the Biodiversity Collections Network issued a community-informed call for the development of an Extended Specimen Network. The report, “[Extending U.S. Biodiversity Collections to Promote Research and Education](#),” outlined a national agenda that leverages digital data in biodiversity collections for new uses. This endeavor requires robust investments in our nation’s scientific collections.

A 2020 report by the National Academies, [“Biological Collections: Ensuring Critical Research and Education for the 21st Century,”](#) argued that collections are a critical part of our nation’s science and innovation infrastructure and a fundamental resource for understanding the natural world. The report’s recommendations for establishing an action center for biological collections and requiring specimen management plans for research proposals generating new specimens underscore the importance of biodiversity specimen collections and have been supported by the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022. A white paper published in 2024, [“Envisioning a Natural History Collections Action Center,”](#) summarizes the features and functions of an action center and underscores the essential role that collections play in medical science, human health, food security, pathogen-borne disease, biosecurity, a strong bioeconomy, mitigating the effects of climate change, and conserving ecological services for human use and subsistence. Such a center will provide leadership, support, and coordination for federal, non-federal, and private collections and enable transformative research to address grand societal challenges.

All these reports articulate a common vision for the future of biological collections and emphasize the need to broaden and deepen these collections and associated data to realize their potential to inform 21st century science. Because NSF is the only agency that supports research in all fields of science, it is ideally suited to lead a national effort to establish the action center and build the Extended Specimen Network, which will require the engagement of computer and information scientists, geoscientists, life and environmental scientists, and anthropologists.

Collections are a critical resource for advancing the knowledge needed to address current global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and pandemics. The COVID-19 crisis has illustrated how inextricably linked humans are to nature. Biological collections, their extended data, and the experts who build and study them are globally important for understanding where viruses exist and when they cross from their current hosts to humans.

The United Nation’s Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services has warned that about one million species of plants and animals worldwide face extinction within the next few decades. This would not only be an unprecedented loss of global biodiversity but also a loss of valuable genetic diversity that has implications for human health and well-being. Robust investments must be made to support efforts to grow and digitize natural history collections and conduct critical collections-based science that can help prevent this loss.

The NSF plays a unique role in protecting and expanding access to our nation’s scientific collections. It supports research that uses existing collections as well as studies that gather new natural history specimens. NSF’s Directorates for Biological Sciences, Geosciences, and Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences support research and student training opportunities in natural history collections. NSF is also an important supporter of national research infrastructure that houses natural history collections, such as living stock collections and field stations.

The NSF funds evolving work to digitize high priority specimen collections. The result of this effort is that irreplaceable biological specimens and their associated data are now accessible through the Internet to researchers, educators, and the public. More than 147 million specimens are now online, with millions more awaiting digitization. Many of these specimen records also include high quality images of the specimens that facilitate high quality, detailed analyses. This

project involves biologists, computer scientists, and engineers in multi-disciplinary teams who develop innovative imaging, robotics, and data storage and retrieval methods. Resulting new tools and approaches expedite the digitization process and contribute to the development of new products and services of value to other industries. Museum specimens and associated data also represent an extraordinary resource for teaching core concepts in science.

A powerful example is the multi-institutional openVertebrate (oVert) project, which generates high-resolution 3D anatomical data for museum specimens of amphibians, reptiles, fishes, mammals, and birds across the nation. Through its NSF-supported partner MorphoSource, an open-access online repository, these data have been downloaded more than 100,000 times and viewed over 1 million times by faculty, veterinarians, exhibit designers, K12 teachers, and artists resulting in more than 200 scientific publications. Additionally, more than 2,000 undergraduate students have engaged with oVert data and visualizations in fields ranging from zoology and veterinary science to art and design.

In addition to supporting research, NSF's science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education programs enhance the ability of museums, botanic gardens, zoos, and other research institutions to provide science learning opportunities for students. NSF's Advancing Informal STEM Learning program furthers our understanding of informal science education outside of traditional classrooms. The program makes important contributions to efforts to make STEM more inclusive of historically underrepresented groups.

Conclusion

Investments in NSF have long served the national interest. Scientific collections supported by NSF contribute to improved public well-being and national economic security. These collections—irreplaceable records of our nation's natural heritage—contain specimens collected decades or even centuries ago. Today, they are essential for developing and validating models that track the global spread of species, including viruses, parasites, and pathogens, and help us understand their potential to impact human health now and in the future. NSF is the primary funding agency that provides support to institutions that preserve at-risk scientific collections, ensuring their continued accessibility for research and innovation.

Despite this essential role, NSF received an 8% budget cut in FY 2024 and only flat funding in FY 2025—figures that fall far short of the bipartisan vision outlined in the CHIPS and Science Act. That landmark legislation recognized the importance of biological collections, called for a national collections action center, and authorized NSF funding to grow to \$17.8 billion in FY 2026. Yet, current funding remains well below this target. Furthermore, the President's FY 2026 budget proposal includes a 57% cut to NSF, a move that would severely undermine our nation's ability to lead in science, technology, and innovation. Enacting such a drastic reduction would squander decades of progress and erode our global competitiveness.

Please reject the President's proposal and instead provide at least \$9.9 billion for NSF in FY 2026—bringing the agency back to its FY 2023 funding level and reaffirming America's commitment to scientific excellence. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request.

Jeff Watters, Vice President of External Affairs, Ocean Conservancy
Testimony for the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
FY 2026 Appropriations for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony regarding Fiscal Year 2026 (FY 2026) appropriations for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Ocean Conservancy has worked for over 50 years to address threats to the ocean through evidence-based, practical policies that protect our ocean and improve our lives. NOAA has a fundamentally important mission that supports our nation's economic wellbeing and livelihoods on and off the coast, provides life-saving forecasting and tracking of severe storms, and helps us keep our coasts clean and manage our marine resources. There is not a single state or district in our nation that does not benefit directly from NOAA's services.

We ask that you recognize the critical importance of this agency and ensure that NOAA is funded at least at FY2024 enacted levels across all programs. Complete eliminations of line offices, research services or programs would have cascading impacts across the agency, the government, and for the American people. In addition to keeping NOAA's funding – at a minimum— level with FY2024 levels, we also urge you to keep all programs funded and intact and ensure that no policy language moves forward that would negatively impact NOAA's ability to deliver critical services to our nation.

In recent months, NOAA has been marked by budgetary and staffing uncertainty, with layoffs of probationary employees in important positions, plans for a continued Reduction in Force (RIF) that will further hamper the agency's ability to provide critical services to the nation, and uncertainty for the science and research that underpins everything that NOAA does. Recently, the release of the President's topline budget as well as reporting on more detailed plans within the administration has made it clear that the administration is proposing to slash agency funding, completely defund critical programs, eliminate the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research as a line office, and move portions of NOAA to other agencies. Regardless of any steps by the administration to preemptively administer cuts to NOAA, we strongly urge you to use Congress's constitutional spending powers to reject the elimination of NOAA programs, functions, research facilities, and services that are crucially important for communities, businesses and the American people.

Our coastal communities, fishermen, shipping companies and entire nation depend on NOAA. Large funding and staffing cuts to the agency will put us all at risk. As the appropriations process moves forward, we urge you to stand up for your constituents that depend on NOAA's services and ensure that NOAA is properly supported with funding and staffing that enable the agency to deliver on its mission.

As you craft the FY 2026 spending bills, we also urge you to consider the balance between NOAA's oceanic and atmospheric missions, the nexus between the two, and the research and observations that are the foundation of every service that NOAA provides. For example, we cannot have accurate forecasts without the cutting-edge modelling and research out of NOAA's labs and cooperative institutes. Nor can we accurately predict conditions — from severe weather to Harmful Algal Blooms — without the monitoring of ocean conditions provided through the

Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS). NOAA's labs, cooperative institutes, and ocean observing systems have all been targeted for complete elimination. This puts our nation at risk.

The U.S. marine economy contributed \$476 billion to the U.S. economy in 2022 alone, with roughly half of that impact coming from tourism, recreation and fisheries. A healthy and resilient ocean is vital to maintain and grow our coastal economies and communities. Some of NOAA's most successful programs work to provide resources to regions, states, Tribes, and local communities to ensure a bottom-up approach to solving the issues these communities face today. NOAA's Sea Grant Program — also targeted for elimination — is one of these programs that works to support and meet the needs of coastal businesses and industries like fisheries across the nation. NOAA provides resources for hardworking people on the coast and on the water who are fighting for a stronger blue economy through region-by-region fishery management, region-specific programs, extramural funding that supports state agencies and universities, place-based conservation in our estuaries and oceans, and more.

In 2022, commercial and recreational fisheries contributed \$149 billion to the GDP and supported 2.3 million jobs. NOAA provides services and data that supports this multi-billion-dollar industry. Surveys and stock assessments are the backbone of science-based management of our federal fisheries. Despite this, a 2022 GAO report found that many stocks were not regularly assessed, and the scientific and survey capacity were key constraints. Without adequate topline funding for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and funding to support data collection, surveys and assessments, NMFS must make difficult choices about which surveys to complete and how to complete them. Changing ocean conditions makes this information more critical than ever and we need increased investment — not funding and staffing cuts — to fill gaps and ensure the continued delivery of high-quality information needed for management.

Over past appropriations cycles, Congress has clearly recognized the vital role that NOAA plays in keeping our nation safe and our economy strong. We thank you for your past support and ask that you once again ensure that NOAA has the funding and congressional direction that it needs to deliver services that our nation depends on.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of robust funding for NOAA.

Outside Witness Testimony on behalf of Coastal States Organization for the
**House Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related
 Agencies Committee on Appropriations**
 May 9, 2025

**In Support of NOAA FY 2026 Appropriations to Enhance Resilience and Adaptation for
 the nation's Oceans, Coasts, and Great Lakes**

Mr. Chair and Members of the Subcommittee, this joint statement is submitted on behalf of Coastal States Organization (CSO). We serve as the collective voice for the nation's coastal states, commonwealths, and territories on federal legislative, administrative, and policy issues relating to coastal, Great Lakes, and ocean management. For more than [50 years](#), CSO has strived to provide State Coastal Zone Management Programs (CZMPs) with tools to inform coastal management and to improve their capacity to understand, plan for, and respond to changing coasts now and into the future.

We urge the committee to support an increase in the Coastal Management Grants line to \$108 million to ensure State and Territory CZMPs around the country have the resources and capacity necessary to continue to deliver on the decades long track record of successfully meeting program mandates and addressing increasing needs for local resilience in coastal communities. Additionally, as a state-federal partnership, we also ask that you continue to fund Coastal Zone Management and Services, to ensure that the National Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program is providing the State and Territory CZM programs with robust data, tools, technical support, and other resources to inform effective coastal zone management, as well as the Regional Ocean Partnerships (ROPs)

Coastal Management Grants

Coastal Management Grants provide funding to all participating coastal states to support the administration and implementation of our federally approved coastal management plans. As required by law, states match these funds dollar-for-dollar. This unique federal-state partnership, allows states to utilize funds to implement programs that reflect and support their own unique coastal economies, experience, and priorities. These annually appropriated funds support state CZM programs to hire staff, provide resources and funds to local partners, cover administrative and management costs (such as those associated with enforcing policies and issuing permits), acquire land, construct projects, maintain and refurbish waterfront infrastructure and more.

For the past fifty years, the State and Territory CZM programs have effectively tackled the country's most pressing and emergent coastal issues and align and leverage resources and investments to address coastal challenges. The CZM programs support the congressionally recognized priority of the effective management, beneficial use, protection, and development of the nation's coastal zone. A tenet of this priority is that healthy coastal resources support both business and conservation, and that long-term planning is essential for coastal areas to remain the economic drivers they are today.

Year after year, the demands on CZM programs increase with continuously more complicated balancing of coastal zone uses and needs for conservation, while emerging issues including sea level rise, increased coastal storm intensity, coastal flooding, and erosion threaten the lives and livelihoods of coastal communities. Throughout the nation, coastal States and Territories have identified that annual appropriations would need to be over \$134M in FY 2026, to fully address these demands.

While CZM programs nationwide are facing increased demands, they have also faced budget stagnation. Between FY2002 and FY2017 the appropriations for CZM Grants went up from \$68.93M to only \$70M. While there have been more recent increases bringing CZM Grants up to \$81.5M in FY24, that amount has not kept pace with inflation or the increased costs of staffing and operating programs. When adjusted for inflation, the FY 2002 appropriation's level would be the equivalent of \$122.8M today, as a result CZM programs are effectively operating under decreased funding. Additionally, as of the time of submission final funding levels for FY 2025 are not yet available, but cuts are anticipated.

Coastal communities in the United States are hubs of economic activity, recreation and tourism, cultural heritage and biodiversity. Over 129 million residents—40% of the population of the United States—live in coastal counties. These counties produce more than \$10 trillion in goods and services annually and employ 54.6 million people. Working waterfronts -- whether large international shipping ports, harbors for commercial fishing fleets or shipbuilding facilities -- are vital to the U.S. economy and often deeply woven into the cultural fabric of communities. In other areas of the coast, it is the natural beauty of beaches, corals and wetlands that draw in tourists, including families, recreational fishers, divers and more, from around the world. These visitors support a vibrant tourist and recreational economy that contributes approximately \$143 billion in GDP to the national economy annually. CZM programs work to balance the various uses of the coast to ensure that they can promote economic development while also protecting natural lands and maintaining public access.

The state CZM programs play a critical role working with coastal communities, to enhance their preparedness for, mitigate the impacts of, and build their resilience to changing coastal conditions. Hazards like hurricanes, flooding, and erosion threaten the physical well-being, economic prosperity, and food security of communities along our coasts and businesses that rely on marine resources and transportation. By investing in hazard mitigation and resilience, funds delivered through these appropriations allow state and communities to significantly reduce the amount of property and infrastructure damage they incur from these hazards and even save lives.

Coastal Zone Management and Services

The NOAA Office for Coastal Management (OCM) is the federal partner to the State and Territory CZM Programs, providing implementation support and coordination and technical assistance. OCM supports develops tools and implements programs that are valuable for effective and integrated management of the nation's coastal zone including the Digital Coast. OCM also administers the Coastal Management and the Digital Coast Fellowships which serve as a professional development pipeline for the next generation of coastal managers while also supporting on-the-ground initiatives and projects of the State and Territory CZM Programs. In addition, OCM provides national level coordination and technical assistance to the CZM partner

program under the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS), and the NERRS Margaret Davidson Graduate Fellowship.

We ask that Coastal Zone Management and Services be funded at \$64,782 million.

Regional Ocean Partnerships

The four ROPS—the Gulf of America Alliance (GOAA), the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO), the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC), and the West Coast Ocean Alliance (WCOA) – play a unique role in facilitating collaboration across State coastal agencies, including CZM Programs, and with federal coastal agencies. The ROPs have an effective record of bringing together the expertise of the state CZM Programs, other state coastal agencies, and key coastal decision-makers to address regional priorities.

Congress passed the Regional Ocean Partnership Act as part of the James M. Inhofe , National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 (P.L. 117-263) authorizing \$11,412,160 in FY2026 with \$1M of that amount authorized for supporting Indian Tribe engagement and the remainder to the ROPs. It is imperative to ensure the continuity of the ROPs that they are fully funded at the authorized level.

In conclusion, CZM programs funded by this Subcommittee are investments in the future health, resiliency, and well-being of our coastal communities, which will result in improved quality of life, as well as beneficial environmental and economic outcomes many times over the federal investment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this statement.

Derek Brockbank

Executive Director of Coastal States Organization

RE: Written testimony in support of FY 2026 Federal Funding for Sea Turtle Stranding Response, Rehabilitation and Release

**Jesse Gilbert
President and CEO, Oceans and Wildlife Institute
and
Executive Director, Texas State Aquarium**

May 9, 2025

**Re: House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies**

My name is Jesse Gilbert, and I am the President and CEO of the Oceans and Wildlife Institute (OWI) and Executive Director of the Texas State Aquarium (TSA) both based in Corpus Christi, Texas. I am writing to request the Subcommittee's support for \$5 million in the FY 2026 Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations bill for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to provide direct support to organizations permitted to provide sea turtle stranding response, rehabilitation and release, consistent with NOAA's stewardship responsibilities for these endangered species.

As a leader in wildlife resiliency, OWI operates the country's largest coastal wildlife rescue program and the fourth largest public aquarium in North America, TSA. Over the past eight years, OWI has invested over \$18 million in the wildlife rescue program which has rescued and released over 3,900 sea turtles back into Texas waters. The rescue program's single largest sea turtle stranding event followed a large winter storm in 2021. Over 1,600 animals were admitted into the program during this event.

Maintaining the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN) is part of every sea turtle recovery plan under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Organizations that make up the STSSN – more than 50 facilities in 17 states and two territories – are facing increasing demands to respond to and rehabilitate federally protected sea turtles, yet there is little to no direct federal funding available to support this work. In contrast, organizations that participate in Marine Mammal Stranding Networks are eligible for direct funding via NOAA's Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program to support stranding response and rehabilitation of marine mammals. Similar support for sea turtle stranding response and rehabilitation is vital to the recovery of sea turtles and success of STSSN organizations.

Marine mammals and sea turtles bring immense value to states from Florida to California to Texas to Alaska as critical parts of healthy ocean ecosystems and as beloved icons for residents and visitors alike. Robust and appropriately funded sea turtle stranding networks limit negative impacts to tourism and human health by ensuring timely response to sick, injured, or deceased sea turtles that strand on beaches. Sea turtle stranding network organizations help defray federal government costs by leveraging private support to help recover sea turtles. Stranding network organizations spend more than \$35 million each year responding to, caring for, and releasing stranded sea turtles.

The STSSN work also has a significant economic impact through the turtle's ecological services. Coastal green sea turtles maintain seagrass beds which in turn are nurseries for popular recreational fisheries including red drum, spotted sea trout, snapper species and grouper species. An unmaintained sea grass system could have substantial negative impacts on fisheries and the recreational fisheries economy.

We respectfully request your support for \$5 million appropriated in FY 2026 for NOAA to provide direct support to institutions and organizations permitted to provide sea turtle stranding response, rehabilitation and release.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Outside Witness Testimony
 Ellen Kuo, Associate Director, Legislative Affairs
 On behalf of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB)
 Before the Subcommittee on Commerce, Science, Justice, and Related Agencies
 Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives
 On the Appropriations for the National Science Foundation in FY 2026
 May 9, 2025

Chair Hal Rogers, Ranking Member Grace Meng, and members of the Committee, FASEB respectfully recommends at least \$16.7 billion for National Science Foundation (NSF) in FY 2026.

With a mandate to support fundamental research across all fields of science, engineering, and mathematics, the NSF is the cornerstone of our nation's scientific and innovation enterprise while also advancing our security and economic interests. Through the recently created Directorate for Technology, Innovation and Partnerships (TIP), it will be better able to collaborate with other stakeholders to translate fundamental research into commercially viable products and services enhancing our competitiveness on the global stage. However, NSF must have enough funds to enable steady, sustained increases across the entire agency. To achieve this goal, Congress should find a way to fulfill the authorization levels in the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 (P.L. 117-167) which would double NSF's budget over a 5-year period.¹

In FY 2024, NSF received \$9.06 billion which was a decrease of \$470.01 million or 5 percent below the FY 2023 base appropriations. According to the NSF spend plan, \$182.82 million was cut from the biological sciences division within its total research and related activities account, which is now down to \$7.2 billion from the previous level of \$9.2 billion.²

Among federal science agencies, NSF has the unique capacity to:

Support multi-disciplinary research: By leveraging its portfolio across the sciences, NSF funds cutting-edge research at the interface of the physical, biological, and social sciences to tackle challenges in creative ways, including biodiversity loss, global heating, and One Health where multiple disciplines work at the local, national and global levels to attain optimal health for all living things and the environment.³

Organize and lead research partnerships at speed and scale: The NSF coordinates and leads interagency research endeavors, including partnerships with NIH and DOE SC. These collaborations advance public health and clean energy, the development of responsible and equitable artificial intelligence utilizing its national AI research institutes, semiconductors, and other national priorities under NSF's 10 big ideas that include harnessing the data revolution and convergence research.^{4,5} Through the regional innovation engines awards which serve as regional science and technology development centers enriching local communities, NSF has nearly 500

¹ [PLAW-117publ167.pdf \(SECURED\) sec10303 authorization of appropriations](#)

² [Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations | NSF - National Science Foundation](#)

³ [NSF's 10 Big Ideas, National Science Foundation, Alexandria, VA](#)

⁴ [NSF Collaborations with Federal Agencies and Others, National Science Foundation, Alexandria, VA](#)

⁵ [Ten Big Ideas](#)

partners covering the entire country and includes academia, industry, small business, nonprofits, investors, federal agencies, and state, local, and tribal governments.^{6,7}

Train the next generation of scientists from diverse backgrounds: NSF plays a key role in creating educational pathways and supporting the accessibility of scientific education, training scientists from diverse backgrounds to promote scientific excellence, advancing AI, and promoting national security such as by supporting increased research security. Businesses have learned that increased inclusivity means there will be an increase in creativity and problem solving, which is crucial in scientific discovery too. It can even increase productivity when hiring is based on the best talent rather than if a person looks like a typical researcher.⁸ The Eddie Bernice Johnson Inclusion across the Nation of Communities of Learners of Underrepresented Discoverers in Engineering and Science (INCLUDES) Initiative is another way to broaden participation in STEM careers of groups that have been historically excluded. There is also the Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCOR) program which continues to recruit talented individuals nationwide both by geography and by type of institution.⁹ Experienced scientists not only mentor the next generation, but some also start new businesses as entrepreneurs.

There is also a pressing need to expand our scientific enterprise across all disciplines as well as diversify the STEM workforce. Our country needs to cultivate the talent of our domestic workforce while continuing our ability to attract and retain international professionals (26 percent) compared to U.S. born (24 percent). One way is to increase the percentage of grants NSF is able to fund. Recent data demonstrates that NSF was able to fund only 26 percent of the high-quality research proposals that were submitted which is a drop from its FY 2020 funding rate of 28 percent^{10,11,12} While the trend in NSF awards is improving, there are still deserving proposals that do not receive funding, leaving a rich portfolio of unfunded research opportunities to explore that could lead to the next breakthrough to revolutionize our economy¹³

Meanwhile, according to the National Science Board's Science & Engineering (S&E) Indicators 2024 report, China is the top overall producer of S&E publications and international patents¹⁴ Additionally, over the past decade, China has significantly increased its share of global science, technology and innovation capabilities.¹⁵ Six countries combined produced more than 50 percent of the worldwide peer-reviewed S&E publications in 2022: China (27 percent), the United States (14 percent), India (6 percent), Germany (3 percent), the United Kingdom (3 percent), and Japan (3 percent) (Figure 18)¹⁶

⁶ [2025-Budget-Rollout-Fact-Sheet.pdf](#)

⁷ [AI_Research_Institutes_Map_2023.pdf](#)

⁸ [Advancing Scientific Excellence Through Inclusivity in the NIH BRAIN Initiative](#)

⁹ [Who We Are - The NSF Eddie Bernice Johnson INCLUDES National Network](#)

¹⁰ [National Science Board - News - NSB News Release: New Report Details Recent Trends in NSF Awards](#)

¹¹ [FY_2021_Merit_Review_Digest.pdf](#) pg. 7

¹² [NSF by the Numbers](#)

¹³ [NSB's NSF FY 2021 Merit Review Digest](#)

¹⁴ [nsb20243.pdf](#)

¹⁵ [nsb20243.pdf](#)

¹⁶ [nsb20243.pdf](#) Figure 18

Our recommendation of at least \$16.7 billion for NSF is \$7.65 billion (84 percent) above the FY 2024 enacted level.¹⁷ This will allow NSF to further attract highly qualified early-career researchers, fund more high-quality research proposals, and increase NSF's average award size.¹⁸

¹⁷ [CJS FY 23.pdf \(senate.gov\)](#) NSF in CJS bill and [NSF FY 2023 budget of \\$9.5 billion](#)

¹⁸ [CHIPS and Science Act, 2022, Sec. 10601 Early-Career Research Fellowship Program, page 268](#)

**Testimony on behalf of the
Population Association of America/ Association of Population Centers
Regarding the Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations for the Census Bureau
National Science Foundation, Bureau of Justice Statistics and National Institute of Justice**
Submitted to the
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
The Honorable Harold Rogers, Chairman and
The Honorable Grace Meng, Ranking Member
Submitted by: Mary Jo H. Mitchell, Director, Government and Public Affairs
Population Association of America/Association of Population Centers

Thank you, Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Meng and other distinguished members of the Subcommittee, for this opportunity to express support for the Census Bureau, National Science Foundation (NSF), National Institute of Justice (NIJ), and Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). These agencies are important to the [Population Association of America \(PAA\)](#) and [Association of Population Centers \(APC\)](#), because they provide direct and indirect support to population scientists and the field of population, or demographic, research overall. In FY 2026, we urge the Subcommittee to recommend the following funding levels for these agencies: Census Bureau, \$2 billion; NSF, \$9.9 billion; NIJ, \$60 million; and BJS, \$75 million.

The PAA and APC are two affiliated organizations that together represent over 3,000 social and behavioral scientists and the over 40 population research centers that receive federal funding and conduct research on the individual, societal, and environmental causes and consequences of population change. Population scientists, including demographers, economists, sociologists, epidemiologists, and statisticians, conduct scientific and applied research, analyze changing demographic and socio-economic trends, develop policy and planning recommendations, and train undergraduate and graduate students. Their research expertise covers a wide range of issues, including adolescent health and development, aging, health disparities, immigration and migration, marriage and divorce, education, social networks, housing, retirement, and labor. They compete for funding from the NSF and NIJ and rely on data produced by the nation's statistical agencies, including the Census Bureau and BJS, to conduct research and research training activities.

The Census Bureau

The Census Bureau is the premier source of data regarding U.S. demographic, socio-economic, and housing characteristics. While PAA/APC members have diverse research expertise, they share a common need for access to accurate, timely data about the nation's changing socio-economic and demographic characteristics that only the U.S. Census Bureau can provide through its conduct of the decennial census, American Community Survey (ACS), and a variety of other surveys and programs.

As you know, in FY 2025, the U.S. Census Bureau was flat funded at its FY 2024 level, \$1.382 billion. While this amount was approximately \$28 million above the level recommended by the House Appropriations Committee, it was about \$195 million below what the Administration requested and well below the \$2 billion that census stakeholders had urged Congress to

provide. Further, and more alarmingly, the Bureau's FY 2025 amount is \$103 million below the agency's FY 2023 funding level. Census stakeholders are concerned that the agency's funding trajectory is moving in the wrong direction as ramp up to the midpoint in the decennial census planning cycle.

PAA and APC urge the subcommittee to provide the Census Bureau with \$2 billion in FY 2026 as recommended by The Census Project. Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 is a crucial year in the ramp up to the 2030 Census in which preparations and costs begin to exponentially increase. In FY 2026, the Census Bureau will conduct the 2026 Census Test in six geographically and demographically diverse sites nationwide. The test is a critically important component of the decennial census planning cycle in which the Bureau evaluates new enumeration strategies and data collection technologies in the field. As we learned in the run up to the 2020 Census, shortchanging funding for testing at this point in the planning process introduces greater risk to a successful outcome. Adequate support for decennial census preparations now will reduce the risk of requiring unplanned, additional funding in the peak years at the end of the decade and improve the agency's ability to conduct an inclusive, accurate, and cost-effective count in 2030.

In addition to fulfilling its Constitutional mandate to prepare for the next decennial census, the Bureau needs robust funding to sustain and enhance its other operations and surveys, including the American Community Survey and Population Estimates Program, which monitor changes in the U.S. population throughout the decade and guide the annual allocation of over \$2.8 trillion in federal funding.

National Science Foundation (NSF)

For over 75 years the mission of NSF has been to promote the progress of science; to advance the nation's health, prosperity, and welfare; and to secure the national defense. NSF is the funding source for about 27 percent of all federally supported basic research conducted by America's colleges and universities, including basic behavioral and social research. The NSF Directorate of Social, Behavioral, and Economic (SBE) Sciences funds approximately 65 percent of basic, university-based social and behavioral sciences research in the nation.

Understanding the implications of complex population dynamics is vital to the agency's mission, and in particular the SBE Directorate, which is the primary source of support for the population sciences within the NSF. Within its Research Infrastructure in the Social and Behavioral Science Program, the SBE Directorate funds critical large-scale longitudinal surveys, such as the Panel Study of Income Dynamics and General Social Survey, which inform pressing policy decisions and provide empirical evidence to help policymakers formulate effective decisions. The Directorate also participates in cross-cutting, interdisciplinary initiatives of interest to population scientists, such as the *Confronting Hazards, Impacts, and Risks for a Resilient Planet* initiative and the *Centers of Research Excellence in Science and Technology* program.

PAA and APC, as members of the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF), are alarmed by rumors suggesting the new Administration will propose cutting the NSF budget by more than 50 percent in FY 2026. We urge the Subcommittee to restore strong support for the agency and provide NSF with \$9.9 billion in FY 2026. This amount, while below what NSF stakeholders urged last year (\$11.9 billion), will ensure the agency can maintain its core mission and sustain

ongoing research and research training commitments. Further, this overall funding level would enable the NSF SBE Directorate to continue its support of social science surveys and a robust portfolio of population research projects.

Bureau of Justice Statistics and National Institute of Justice

After years of declining budgets, PAA and APC are participating in the Friends of Justice Research and Statistics coalition to raise awareness about the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and National Institute of Justice (NIJ). Both agencies are important sources of data and funding for population scientists conducting research on topics such as prisoner reentry, the social and environmental dynamics of health and crime, and the effects of incarceration across the lifespan. The coalition's recommendations, which PAA and APC support, would provide BJS with \$75 million and NIJ with \$60 million in FY 2026.

Thank you for considering our requests and for supporting federal programs that benefit the population sciences under the subcommittee's jurisdiction.

Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) Program

A Proven Resource for Law Enforcement

Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Testimony

Submitted by David Hall, Chair, RISS National Policy Group

For more than 50 years, law enforcement and public safety agencies have turned to the **Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS) Program** for secure, cost-effective, proven, innovative, trusted, and evidence-based services and resources. Agencies across the country, particularly small, rural, and tribal agencies, may not have the budget or resources to obtain the support and services provided by RISS anywhere else. The RISS Centers play a critical role in sharing intelligence and information with law enforcement across the country while protecting privacy and civil liberties. RISS enables officers to connect across jurisdictions to identify new investigative leads and links, solve crimes, promote officer safety, and aid in successful case resolution. Communities across the country continue to grapple with the ongoing fentanyl and synthetic opioid crisis, increased incidents of threats to schools, violent gangs, human trafficking, targeted violence, violence at the border, and persistent threats from cybercriminals, specifically in cryptocurrency fraud. RISS must be supported and bolstered so it can continue to meet the ever-changing needs of law enforcement. **RISS is a proven resource for law enforcement.** It is respectfully requested that RISS be funded in **FY2026 at \$55 million.**

RISS is composed of six regional centers and the RISS Technology Support Center (RTSC). RISS is locally managed by policy board members consisting of police chiefs, sheriffs, colonels, commissioners, and other law enforcement leaders in each RISS Center's multistate region. An executive director operates each RISS Center. The RISS Centers work regionally and nationwide to respond to each region's unique criminal problems while working together on a nationwide basis to strengthen and advance criminal justice priorities. The RTSC maintains, operates, and enhances the RISS secure infrastructure and applications.

RISS supports law enforcement across the country by focusing its efforts on three priorities: **Investigative Case Support; Secure Information and Intelligence Sharing; and Officer Safety, Deconfliction, and Law Enforcement Wellness.** RISS receives hundreds of shared success stories from agencies and officers showcasing how RISS services and resources are used to solve crimes and keep officers safe. To read real-life stories from each state, visit www.riss.net/Impact.

Investigative Case Support

RISS provides professional, accurate, and effective products and services that combat crime, help resolve criminal investigations and successfully prosecute offenders. RISS, through its six regional centers, offers law enforcement agencies and officers a full range of critical support services and resources and provides expertise and technical assistance to the field. **Below are highlights of results and productivity in FY2024:**

- Developed **31,390 analytical products**, such as case-related maps, link charts, and 2D and 3D crime scene diagrams.
- **Loaned 2,895 pieces of specialized investigative equipment**, such as cameras, recorders, and other devices, to agencies, including small and rural agencies.
- Sponsored or co-sponsored **1,633 training opportunities** and **helped train 63,726 individuals.**

- Responded to **365,626 requests for research and technical assistance**, which helped identify suspect addresses, monikers, criminal associates, and other investigative information.
- Provided opportunities to share information with **more than 10,600 law enforcement agencies and more than 141,400 authorized law enforcement personnel**.
- Provided **one-on-one support** through the **RISS field services staff and field-based solutions**.
- Provided **financial support** for investigative efforts.
- Developed law enforcement-sensitive **publications and briefings**.

In addition, there were **more than 2.7 million inquiries to RISS resources**, with **more than 1.1 million hits**.

Secure Information and Intelligence Sharing

RISS provides law enforcement and the criminal justice community with an unprecedented level of collaboration among officers and agencies while ensuring that **privacy and civil liberties are protected**. The RISS information sharing services facilitate and foster communication among thousands of officers and agencies across jurisdictions. RISS prioritizes security, adheres to nationally recognized standards, and constantly and diligently ensures that its assets are protected.

The **RISS Secure Cloud (RISSNET)** connects systems, provides bidirectional information sharing, and offers a single search of connected systems. RISSNET provides access to **hundreds of resources and millions of records**. Many of these systems are owned and operated by RISS partners who use RISSNET to securely share information with a broader and vetted law enforcement community. RISS has also developed and maintains resources accessible via RISSNET, including the following:

- **RISS Criminal Intelligence Database (RISSIntel)**—a modern, flexible system which provides a real-time online federated search of **more than 60 systems** containing **millions of records**.
- **RISS Money Counter Network (RISS MCN)**—stores currency serial numbers and compares them to currency submitted by officers in previous cases via a secure RISS-designed application.
- **RISS Property and Recovery Tracking System (RISSProp)**—houses pawn, secondhand, and other shop transactions and helps agencies identify and return stolen property and connect cases.
- **RISSLeads Investigative Website**—generates investigative leads, enables secure collaboration, and facilitates multijurisdictional information sharing.
- **RISS Master Telephone Index (RISS MTI)**—compares and matches telephone numbers in law enforcement investigations.
- **RISS Drug Pricing Reference Guide**—enables officers to search for comparable prices on narcotics; serves as a price guide when assessing the value of seizures and contraband; and identifies supply, demand, and popularity trends within the drug market.

Officer Safety, Deconfliction, and Law Enforcement Wellness

Officer safety, deconfliction, and law enforcement wellness are cornerstone priorities for the RISS Program. Event deconfliction is an essential component of agency operations as it protects law enforcement officers and citizens, supports operational integrity, strengthens information sharing, reduces risk and liability, and enhances investigative efforts. Officers involved in high-risk operations can enhance their safety and the safety of their communities by using an event deconfliction system.

Each day, law enforcement officers face emerging threats that affect their physical well-being and their mental wellness. RISS provides resources to enhance officer safety and law enforcement wellness.

The **RISS Officer Safety Event Deconfliction System (RISSafe)** maintains data on planned law enforcement investigative events submitted for inclusion to identify and alert affected agencies or officers of potential conflicts. RISSafe is used in conjunction with mapping software to verify data on event locations when an event is entered into the system. A conflict results when certain elements are matched between two or more events. Immediately, a notification is then made to the affected agencies or personnel regarding the identified conflict. Since the inception of RISSafe, **more than 3.1 million operations** have been entered, resulting in **more than 613,000 identified conflicts**. Without identifying these conflicts, officers may have interfered with another agency's or officer's investigation, links between cases may have been lost, or officers or citizens may have been unintentionally hurt or killed. RISSafe is accessible on a **24/7/365 basis** and is available at **no cost** to **all law enforcement agencies**. Currently, **29 RISSafe Watch Centers** are operational, 23 of which are operated by organizations other than RISS.

The **RISS Officer Safety and Wellness Website** provides secure access to vetted, trusted information and materials on topics, including armed and dangerous individuals and situations, concealments, officer safety videos, law enforcement wellness, and training. Recognizing the dangerous nature of everyday law enforcement activities, officers must have the necessary information, resources, and tools to combat crime and maintain their own safety and that of their fellow officers. The website is available to all sworn law enforcement officers. RISS remains committed to supporting and safeguarding our nation's law enforcement.

RISS Accomplishments in FY2024

Below are **highlights of specific and unique RISS accomplishments in FY2024** that continued moving RISS forward in its three focus areas.

- Expanded the number of **available RISSNET resources to more than 300**, most of which are databases or systems owned by partner entities that use RISSNET to broaden their information sharing reach to a broader vetted law enforcement audience.
- The **RISS MCN** continued to help officers deconflict and manage information about money used in criminal activities. **More than 700 agencies in all 50 states (plus Guam) are using RISS MCN**.
- **RISSProp**, which contains **more than 30.7 million records**, helped officers solve burglaries, organized retail crime, and other crimes while identifying and recovering stolen items. Since its inception, RISSProp has helped officers recover **more than \$16.1 million in property**.
- Developed and deployed the **RISS Mobile App**.
- Through the critical resources available via RISSNET, as well as other RISS resources, **more than 70.8 million records** are available to authorized users.
- The **RISS MTI** continued to help officers find communication links between suspects.
- Supported **federal efforts** and **nationwide partnerships** to expand information sharing and available resources to law enforcement.
- Continued providing partners with the ability to establish secure, full-function **collaboration websites** on a nationwide, regional, local, or team level.

- The **RISS Drug Pricing Reference Guide** continued to help officers assess the value of seizures and contraband and identify trends in the drug market.
- Continued to develop **School Action Response Plans**, which contain data, photographs, and floor plans critical for officers to effectively navigate an active shooter or other situation.

RISS FY2026 Needs and Proposed Activities

Funding will support the six regional RISS Centers, including current operations and the technology component, as well as the following efforts:

Investigative Case Services

- Provide additional investigative support for violent and gun crimes, extremist activities, human trafficking, narcotics trafficking, cybercrimes, cryptocurrency, and other emerging crimes.
- Invest in software, applications, and resources to support analytical services and digital forensics.
- Replace and obtain new specialized equipment and provide technical expertise and training to agencies regarding the capabilities and implementation of the latest investigative tools, technology, and services.
- Develop, promote, and deliver trainings and other educational resources, including regional and nationwide conferences in the areas of human trafficking, narcotics, and homicide.
- Expand the development and distribution of School Action Response Plans.
- Expand support for organized retail crime investigations and initiatives.

Information and Intelligence Sharing Solutions

- Enhance the RISS Mobile App.
- Expand and further strengthen authentication and security protocols.
- Integrate RISS resources to expand deconfliction capabilities, streamline officer access to RISS resources, and enhance resource accessibility.
- Increase the number of agencies utilizing the RISS MCN, offer training, and develop educational materials.
- Onboard and connect additional systems to RISSIntel and educate partners on its functionality.
- Expand RISSProp throughout the RISS Center regions.

Officer Safety and Wellness Efforts, Including RISSafe

- Enhance and further expand RISSafe and the RISS Officer Safety and Wellness Website.
- Develop focused campaigns to educate officers and leaders on the critical importance of deconfliction, officer safety, and law enforcement wellness.
- Work with deconfliction partners to enable target deconfliction capabilities.

The criminal justice landscape changes and evolves daily, and our nation's law enforcement professionals face new challenges every day. RISS seeks to support law enforcement by providing critical investigative services, resources, information and intelligence, officer safety, training, and more. Our nation should continue to invest in and support RISS. RISS continues to demonstrate its value to the criminal justice community and has continued to be a force multiplier for half a century, helping law enforcement agencies save time and money as they protect and serve our nation's citizens and communities. RISS is grateful for the opportunity to provide this testimony at your request and appreciates your ongoing support. For additional information, visit www.riss.net.

R. Chris Stock, President
Stronger America Through Seafood, Inc.



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May 8, 2025

Representative Hal Rogers
Chair
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Grace Meng
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Rogers and Ranking Member Meng,

Stronger America Through Seafood, a coalition of industry partners representing the seafood supply chain, is working in support of increased U.S. production of healthful, sustainable, and affordable seafood. We are writing today to request that you support \$19 million for the Office of Aquaculture and \$5 million for the Aquaculture Cooperative Institute within NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), robust funding for the National Centers for Coastal and Ocean Science within NOAA's National Ocean Service, and \$18 million in funding for the Sea Grant Aquaculture Research program in NOAA's Oceanic and Atmospheric Research in the fiscal year 2026 Commerce, Justice and Science (CJS) Appropriations Act.

We also request the language below be included in the related Explanatory Statement: "The Committee recognizes the significant potential for development of American offshore aquaculture to increase U.S. production of healthful, sustainable and affordable seafood. As the fastest growing food production sector in the world, responsible aquaculture development presents opportunities for meaningful economic growth in coastal communities and among their supply chain partners, while ensuring that Americans have access to responsibly farmed local seafood. The National Marine Fisheries Service Aquaculture program's 5-Year strategic plan for aquaculture will support a U.S. aquaculture industry as part of a competitive domestic seafood sector. The Committee fully supports the activities of the Aquaculture Program and includes \$19,000,000 to implement this strategic plan, including continued work on Aquaculture Opportunity Areas, environmental assessments, science-based tools and modeling and increased economic development programs."

Open ocean aquaculture is widely recognized by the scientific community as one of the most environmentally sustainable ways to produce protein. Aquaculture has become the fastest growing food production sector in the world, responsible for nearly all global seafood supply growth since the 1990s.

R. Chris Stock, President
Stronger America Through Seafood, Inc.

While aquaculture is used widely around the world to complement wild harvest, it remains an untapped industry here in the U.S. We thank the President for his executive order in this term and his previous term that are intended to expand aquaculture and strengthen our nation's seafood industry.

The U.S. currently ranks only 18th in aquaculture production globally and imports up to 85% of its seafood – half of which is estimated to come from aquaculture in other countries. The single biggest reason is the lack of a clear regulatory pathway for permitting new projects, particularly offshore in open ocean waters. This challenging reality has forced many American businesses to invest in other countries.

The expansion of aquaculture in U.S. federal waters presents a unique opportunity to build an American seafood industry that can support working waterfronts with infrastructure investments and jobs, enhance sustainable ecosystems and guarantee healthful, locally sourced protein for American consumers.

As you may know, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)'s Aquaculture Program continues to actively coordinate across agencies towards a comprehensive regulatory foundation for aquaculture. This process includes siting analysis for future Aquaculture Opportunity Areas (AOAs) in federal waters, interagency coordination on National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) review and Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), development of science-based tools and modeling, and associated economic development programs like workforce training and community planning that will ensure the economic benefits of aquaculture are realized across all stakeholder groups.

Further, the Fiscal Year 2024 CJS Appropriations bill provided for a new Cooperative Institute (CI) to support the sustainable development of aquaculture in the U.S. to address the seafood import deficit and benefit the economy. The CI will help the agency fulfill the tenets of the NOAA Aquaculture Strategic Plan. We strongly support the launch of the CI in 2025 without delay.

We believe a funding level of \$19 million for the Office of Aquaculture and \$5 million for the CI will adequately support the sustainable development of aquaculture in the U.S., address the seafood import deficit, and benefit the economy.

In addition, we fully support the work of the NCCOS for its role in the development of the AOAs and the coastal planning tools it offers to assist managers, planners, and industry with sustainable aquaculture development.

Finally, we seek \$18,000,000 for Sea Grant Aquaculture Research. SATS supports this program for its critical work to develop and commercialize new technologies for finfish aquaculture and to engineer ocean-based infrastructure. Sea Grant conducts research and provides technical

Stronger America Through Seafood
*Securing a stronger America through increased U.S. production
of healthful, sustainable, and affordable seafood.*

R. Chris Stock, President
Stronger America Through Seafood, Inc.

assistance and outreach to aquaculture producers, resource managers, scientists, and consumers to ensure the safety and quality of sustainably cultured seafood products. We believe this program makes critical progress in helping achieve the goals laid out in the President's recent Executive Order on Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness.

We also support adequate staffing at NOAA, which is currently under a hiring freeze. With the agency's staff currently down 30% due to vacancies and retirements, ensuring these positions are filled is essential to the development of a stronger American seafood industry.

By prioritizing domestic aquaculture, you will support the growth of an American seafood community that is resilient to economic and climate changes and is part of a holistic approach to a greater sustainable food strategy, as well as help achieve the President's goal, laid out in his executive order, of making the United States "the world's dominant seafood leader."

We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you to ensure domestic aquaculture production is a priority now for a secure future.

Respectfully,



R. Chris Stock, President
Stronger America Through Seafood



Outside Witness Testimony from: Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM)

Submitted by: Alejandro Aceves, Vice President for Science Policy, SIAM and Suzanne L. Weekes, Chief Executive Officer, SIAM

Submitted to the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Committee on Appropriations, United States House of Representatives

Testimony on the Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations for the National Science Foundation

May 9, 2025

Summary: This written testimony is submitted on behalf of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM) to ask you to support the National Science Foundation (NSF) in fiscal year (FY) 2026 by providing NSF with at least \$9.9 billion. It is critical that we renew prioritization of research investments in FY 2026 and protect research from further cuts. Research funded by NSF is critical to ensuring that the U.S. maintains its leadership in science and technology amid a global R&D landscape that is becoming increasingly competitive. This includes strong funding for the Research and Related Activities Account (R&RA) that supports key applied mathematics and computational science programs in the Division of Mathematical Sciences and the Office of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure as well as the Directorate for STEM Education (EDU) that addresses fundamental challenges in mathematics and STEM education and workforce development. SIAM opposes the devastating cuts proposed in the budget request, which could lead to a massive rollback in our competitiveness, innovation, and future STEM workforce.

Full Statement: On behalf of SIAM, we submit this written testimony for the record to the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of the U.S. House of Representatives.

SIAM has over 13,000 members, including applied and computational mathematicians, computer scientists, data scientists, numerical analysts, engineers, statisticians, and mathematics educators. They work in industrial and service organizations, universities, colleges, and government agencies and laboratories all over the world. In addition, SIAM has almost 500 institutional members, including colleges, universities, corporations, and research organizations. SIAM members come from many different disciplines but have a common interest in applying mathematics in partnership with computational science to solve real-world problems, which affect national security and industrial competitiveness.

We would like to emphasize that SIAM appreciates your Committee's recognition of the critical role of the National Science Foundation (NSF) and its support for mathematics, science, and

Testimony for the House Appropriations Committee – Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee (5/9/2023)–Page 1

engineering in enabling a strong U.S. economy, workforce, and society. We understand the difficult fiscal environment that we all face. However, we are deeply concerned about the potential for significant cuts to NSF in FY 2026, which will harm NSF's critical research, infrastructure, and workforce investments and damage our research ecosystem.

Today, we submit this testimony to ask you to reconfirm Congresses support of NSF in FY 2026 and beyond. ***In particular, we join with the research and higher education community and request that you provide NSF with at least \$9.9 billion in funding for FY 2026.*** This level of funding would bring NSF back to its FY 2023 funding level after it already faced cuts in FY 2024 and FY 2025. NSF needs bold growth to protect U.S. competitiveness as countries such as China are rapidly increasing their science and engineering investments. At least \$9.9 billion in funding is needed to ensure NSF can meet Congress's vision for the agency, launch new programs in priority areas such as artificial intelligence, quantum science, and biotechnology, invest in transformational breakthroughs to address resilience and security and catalyze energy innovation, and provide sustainable growth to the core research and education activities undergirding our science and technology ecosystem.

Through its critical Directorates, NSF serves a unique and critical function supporting all areas of science and engineering to further innovation and seed the knowledge and technologies for a strong future America. NSF provides essential federal support for applied mathematics and computational science, including more than 57 percent of all federal support for basic academic research in the mathematical sciences. Of particular importance to SIAM, NSF funding supports the development of new mathematical models and computational algorithms, which are critical to making substantial advances in such fields as neuroscience, energy technologies, genomics, and nanotechnology. In addition, new techniques developed in mathematics and computing research often have direct application in industry. Modern life as we know it – from search engines like Google to the design of modern aircraft, from financial markets to medical imaging – would not be possible without the techniques developed by mathematicians and computational scientists using NSF funding. NSF also supports mathematics education at all levels, ensuring that the next generation of the U.S. workforce is appropriately trained to participate in cutting-edge technological sectors and that students are attracted to careers in mathematics and computing.

SIAM supports NSF's efforts to expand its mission towards transforming innovation ecosystems with the Directorate for Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships (TIP) and encourages Congress to give NSF the resources it needs to fully carry out programs such as Regional Innovation Engines and enabling support for NSF priorities in artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies, security, and broadening participation. Even before the launch of the new TIP directorate and other new programs authorized in CHIPS and Science, NSF was unable to fund more than \$2 billion worth of research proposals rated "very good or higher" each fiscal year.

The nation's investment in NSF has yielded numerous scientific advances that have contributed to economic growth nationwide. This work has been built on federal partnerships with universities

Testimony for the House Appropriations Committee – Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee (5/9/2023)–Page 2

that enable research. Proposals to cap facilities and administrative (F&A) costs would cripple this partnership, deeply harming the research enterprise and our nation's ability to produce cutting-edge research. These costs support research security, shared computing resources, and other critical aspects of research. We urge the Committee to stop NSF from executing the harmful policy it has announced.

Core programs of the NSF have stagnated in recent years and should be supported. These foundational investments underpin advances across many science and engineering challenges. NSF plays an essential role in advancing critical technologies where the U.S. is facing major competition from China such as artificial intelligence and strategic computing. NSF environment and energy funding supports grid resilience, wildfires, extreme heat, earth systems modeling, and many other areas of national importance. Social science investments underpin cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, infrastructure planning, decision making, and many other areas. Cuts to research set us backwards when we need to be massively scaling up to stay competitive.

SIAM urges strong investment in the Research and Related Activities account (RRA) to enable robust funding for the Division of Mathematical Sciences (DMS), the Office of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure (OAC), and other core programs and crosscutting initiatives for essential mathematical and computational science research, workforce development programs, and early career researcher support.

NSF Division of Mathematical Sciences

The NSF Division of Mathematical Sciences (DMS) in the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS) provides core support for all mathematical sciences. DMS also funds national mathematical science research institutes; infrastructure, including workshops, conferences, and equipment; and postdoctoral, graduate, and undergraduate training. The activities supported by DMS and performed by SIAM members, such as modeling, analysis, algorithms, and simulation, underpin advancements across science and engineering and provide new ways of obtaining insight into the nature of complex phenomena, such as the power grid, software for national security applications, and the human body.

Sustained investment in DMS is critical because of the foundational and cross-cutting role that mathematics and computational science play in sustaining the nation's economic competitiveness, national security, and health. DMS has taken a leadership role in promoting partnerships with other agencies and foundations to leverage federal funding for maximum impact. For example, DMS has recently launched new programs in Digital Twins with the Air Force, NIH Office of the Director, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). In addition, DMS funding supports a broad array of activities in artificial intelligence, modeling, analysis, algorithms, and simulation that underpin advancements across science and engineering. New investments in quantum science are also under consideration to better engage the mathematical sciences community in quantum research as quantum computing matures towards applications and readiness for programming. Agencies such as the Department of Defense (DOD) and National



Institutes of Health (NIH) depend on the NSF-supported applied math and computational sciences ecosystem to fulfill their missions as they build on NSF-funded modeling, algorithm, and simulation breakthroughs and leverage the workforce trained using NSF support.

NSF Office of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure

Work in applied mathematics and computational science is critical to enabling effective use of the rapid advances in information technology and cyberinfrastructure. Programs in the NSF Office of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure (OAC) in the Directorate for Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE) focus on providing research communities access to advanced computing capabilities to convert data to knowledge and increase our understanding through computational simulation and prediction. SIAM endorses OAC's effort to create the NAIRR pilot as well as OAC's broader role advancing high performance computing to meet critical national security needs, fully leverage computing technology for economic competitiveness and scientific discovery, and positioning the U.S. for sustained technical leadership. The full NAIRR has potential to transform and dramatically scale AI innovations, but must be paired with robust research and workforce funding to reach its full impact and enable a robust ecosystem.

Supporting the Pipeline of Mathematicians and Scientists

SIAM supports EDU and its programs like *Improving Undergraduate STEM Education* (IUSE) and *Graduate Research Fellowships*, which are key to advancing STEM professional development and developing the next generation of mathematicians, scientists, and engineers. EDU also plays a critical role developing a STEM literate citizenry through its K-12 focused investments. SIAM notes that mathematical education is foundational to STEM learning across disciplines, and NSF should continue to fund development of mathematical and computational skills. SIAM supports *CAREER* awards and other workforce programs crucial to early career faculty professional development. NSF must invest in domestic talent to remain global leaders in innovation while the country continues to welcome the best and brightest talent from abroad. NSF broadening participation programs build workforce capacity and help expand the U.S. STEM talent base. We ask Congress to reject cuts to NSF broadening participation programs.

Conclusion

We would like to thank you again for your support of NSF that enables the research and education communities it supports, including thousands of SIAM members, to undertake activities that contribute to U.S. health, security, and economic strength. Congress needs to protect research from further cuts and provide NSF with sustained growth to maintain our competitive edge in science and technology. We ask that you provide robust support of these critical programs in FY 2026 and put us on track to dramatically scale emerging technology investments as bipartisan majorities have emphasized are critical to our national security and competitiveness. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony to the Committee on behalf of SIAM.



Official Written Testimony in Support of Fiscal Year 2026 National Science Foundation Appropriations and Language, and Department of Justice Appropriations and Language

Submitted to the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies;
Committee on Appropriations
United States House

May 9, 2025

Submitted by
Dr. Scott Tannenbaum, President, Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology

On behalf of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP), we are pleased to provide this written testimony to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies for the official record. In this testimony, SIOP urges the Subcommittee to consider four requests:

- Provide the requested amount of \$9.9 billion for the National Science Foundation (NSF), including strong support for the Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE);
- Encourage NSF to explore next steps for the agency's efforts on AI impact on the American workforce;
- Invest in research at NSF on workforce participation of individuals with disabilities; and
- Support workforce evaluation and technical assistance at the Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services Office.

Appropriations Support for NSF: SIOP is an international community of scientists, academics, practitioners, consultants, and students of industrial and organizational (I-O) psychology, which examines how to enhance human well-being and performance in organizational and work settings. I-O psychologists are helping to address critical challenges such as implementation of AI-based systems in workplaces, rapid scaling of the workforce key technology areas, recruitment and training for law enforcement, and burnout among healthcare professionals.

Through SBE, NSF supports basic research to develop a scientific evidence base for improving the performance, effectiveness, management, and development of organizations and the workforce. The findings developed through this federal investment enhance business practices, policymaking, and collaboration. SBE has been highly responsive to the transformative events of the past few years. For instance, NSF SBE has provided the foundation for I-O psychologists to understand how technologies like AI affect American workers and ensure the workforce is prepared to fully realize the possibility of AI while mitigating potential harms. Other applications of I-O psychology include transitioning veterans and service members to civilian jobs, and identifying individuals with capacity for high-stress jobs in law enforcement or cybersecurity, among many others.

6635 W. Central Ave., #105, Toledo, OH 43617

T: (419) 353-0032 * F: (419) 352-2645 * www.siop.org



Given NSF's critical role in supporting fundamental research and education across science and engineering disciplines, **SIOP supports an overall FY 2025 NSF budget of \$9.9 billion.** SIOP requests continued and robust support for the NSF SBE Directorate, which funds important research studies, enabling an evidence base, methodology, and measurements for improving organizational function, performance, and design across sectors and disciplines.

Future of Work: SIOP encourages NSF to take additional actions to holistically address societal challenges across emerging technology areas, especially as they pertain to the workforce and workplace. SIOP appreciates NSF's recent efforts that address this issue, including the launch of the Responsible Design, Development, and Deployment of Technologies (ReDDDoT) and Experiential Learning for Emerging and Novel Technologies (ExLENT) programs. However, these programs represent a small portion of NSF's budget.

To this end, NSF should expand dedicated programming for research to identify and mitigate disruptive impacts to end-users of these technologies, especially in the workplace. This research should seek to relieve job loss and achieve a productive, augmented workforce with high levels of employee wellbeing. I-O psychologists have been heavily involved in research to address the impact of new technologies in the workplace, including robotics and artificial intelligence (AI). For example, to address the unique challenges and considerations that arise when using AI-based assessments and hiring procedures, SIOP released *Considerations and Recommendations for the Validation and Use of AI-Based Assessments for Employee Selection*.¹

NSF could make significant progress toward these goals by launching a revitalized version of the Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier initiative (FW-HTF).² FW-HTF was one of NSF's "10 Big Ideas" for cross-disciplinary investment that had a vision to "support multi-disciplinary research to sustain economic competitiveness, to promote worker well-being, lifelong and pervasive learning, and quality of life, and to illuminate the emerging social and economic context and drivers of innovations that are shaping the future of jobs and work."³ While there have been a few one-off solicitations in recent years, the program as a largescale investment priority largely sunset just when global competitiveness trends and complementary federal investments in new technology areas made its work even more pressing. Congress should encourage NSF to redouble their commitment in this space by evaluating scientific needs for the next phase of FW-HTF and developing a plan to launch this new effort.

Requested Report Language

¹ <https://www.siop.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Considerations-and-Recommendations-for-the-Validation-and-Use-of-AI-Based-Assessments-for-Employee-Selection-January-2023.pdf>

² <https://www.nsf.gov/eng/futureofwork.jsp>

³ <https://new.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/future-work-human-technology-frontier-core>



Future of Work—The Committee encourages NSF to increase dedicated investments in research that addresses disruptions to the workforce and workplace brought on by emerging technologies. This could include a revitalized version of the Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier Initiative to harness multi-disciplinary research on the adoption and broader impacts of key technology focus areas in the workforce and workplace.

Research on Individuals with Disabilities: While NSF has made great strides in ensuring that the benefits of its funded research impact all our nation's individuals and communities, there still exists research gaps around participation of individuals with disabilities in the workplace. Ensuring full participation of all individuals in the workforce will help the nation address critical workforce shortages and expand perspectives considered when developing new advancements. I-O psychologists have expertise in recruiting, training, and supporting these individuals to maximize strengths.

Despite this pressing need, NSF has not fully invested in research on how to best support these communities. SIOP requests that Congress encourage NSF to prioritize research on individuals with disabilities' participation in the workforce via new offerings, Dear Colleague Letters, and other mechanisms.

Department of Justice (DOJ) Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office: DOJ's COPS Office is responsible for advancing the practice of community policing by the nation's state and local law enforcement agencies through information and grant resources. COPS grant programs target important policing needs, such as the Hiring Program (CHP), which has grown substantially in recent years and will provide \$156.6 million for law enforcement agencies in FY 2024. Hundreds of law enforcement agencies have benefited from CHP, but little is known about recipients and the unique issues they face in key areas like recruitment and retention. Collectively, COPS recipients make up an ideal study group to explore important questions over factors that drive people toward careers in policing, as well as what may drive people away.

COPS has made progress toward addressing evidence-based solutions, signing a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) with SIOP in September 2022. The MOU is the first COPS has signed with a scientific society to increase the knowledge and application of I-O in law enforcement and to help cultivate more safe and effective law enforcement workplaces. Congress should encourage COPS to build on this momentum to support the development of studies to help COPS awardees better understand what works and how to more effectively leverage federal funding to support their communities. This should include funding for COPS to support an evaluation study of its largest program, CHP, to help COPS better understand common recruitment, hiring, and retention practices and leverage the findings to target future federal assistance.

Requested Report Language

Workforce Study – The Committee recognizes the importance of the COPS Hiring Program, but is concerned that little is known about specific challenges facing grantees. The Committee

6635 W. Central Ave., #105, Toledo, OH 43617

T: (419) 353-0032 * F: (419) 352-2645 * www.siop.org



encourages COPS to carry out a voluntary assessment of COPS Hiring Program recipients to understand workforce challenges facing police departments, identify best practices, and collect other findings to better target future technical assistance programming. In carrying out this study, the COPS Office shall enter into a partnership with qualified organizations with extensive expertise in workforce and workplace sciences, such as I-O psychology.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer SIOP's support for NSF social and behavioral sciences research, the future of work, research on neurodiverse individuals, and workforce studies via the DOJ COPS Office. Please do not hesitate to contact SIOP should you have any questions.

Additional information is also available at www.siop.org.

Written Public Witness Testimony in Support of Fiscal Year 2026

Funding for sustained Arctic Science Research from
 the National Science Foundation and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Submitted to the United States House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations
 Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Submitted by
 Melissa Shapiro, J.D., Arctic Policy Lead, Woodwell Climate Research Center

May 1, 2025

On behalf of the Arctic Research Program at Woodwell Climate Research Center (“Woodwell Climate”), I am pleased to provide this written testimony to the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies for the official record. Woodwell Climate scientists and experts are dedicated to advancing research on permafrost thaw, wildfires, and other natural disturbances in the Arctic that are destabilizing the safety and security of the region.¹ We partner with scientists from across the circumpolar North and with Alaska Native Villages in the Yukon-Kuskokwim delta to collect the best data on these environmental hazards and contextualize this information for US government leaders.

With this motivation, Woodwell Climate **respectfully requests that the Subcommittee:**

- (a) advocate for increased funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF) on the order of \$9.9 billion;**
- (b) adopt Report language that directs the National Science Foundation - Directorate for Geosciences - Office of Polar Programs - to dedicate not less than \$5 million annually for the development of enhanced climate models; and**
- (c) advocate for no less than \$7.5 billion in overall funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).**

These requests are respectfully offered in this spirit of collaboration and with the recognition that urgent policy action is required to safeguard the integrity of the Arctic region. Further justification for each of these requests is offered below.

The Critical Role of NSF Supported Research in Safeguarding US-Arctic Interests

NSF is the only federal agency supporting foundational science and engineering across disciplines. Core programs power our scientific ecosystem, support early career scientists, and

¹Arctic, Woodwell Climate, <https://www.woodwellclimate.org/research-area/arctic/>; in 2022, Arctic scientists at Woodwell Climate Research Center launched “Permafrost Pathways” which leverages expertise of leading institutions to address climate mitigation strategies, including enhanced monitoring and modeling of permafrost thaw processes across the Arctic. See <https://permafrost.woodwellclimate.org/>.

enable initial discoveries that feed translational programs. This ecosystem lies at the heart of our nation's competitiveness, particularly in the area of emerging technologies—and Congress has previously acknowledged NSF's importance via the reauthorization of NSF in 2022 via the *CHIPS and Science Act* (P.L. 117-167), which targeted \$16.7 billion for the agency in FY2025.

Unfortunately, NSF's core programs cannot advance new research without adequate funding and levels have been steadily decreasing in recent years: The FY 2024 funding for NSF was reduced by five percent (or almost \$500 million) compared to FY 2023 (not including supplemental funding). While Woodwell Climate understands that the difficult fiscal climate has necessitated budget cuts across federal agencies, the steady depletion of NSF's resources is antithetical to US priorities and interests—particularly with respect to the Arctic region, where scientific research underlies strategic decisionmaking.

Cuts to NSF funding will inevitably jeopardize this research: In FY 2024, the state of Alaska received \$47.7 million in NSF funding over 68 awards. This figure does not include the range of Arctic-related research conducted by research institutions outside the state, like Woodwell Climate, which has 5 awards focused on research in the Arctic totaling over \$2.5 million, including one on building resilient Arctic communities to permafrost thaw hazards. Together, this research is helping the US government to improve its design and retrofit of military installations, critical infrastructure and utilities, transportation, and community resilience.

Woodwell Climate therefore advocates for **\$9.9 billion in overall funding for NSF. These funds are essential for enabling NSF to continue bolstering US competitiveness and national security by funding highly meritorious research; building and fostering US STEM education and workforce development; and supporting scientists and engineers with cutting-edge facilities and new technologies deployed in the Arctic region.**

The Need for NSF to Support Predictive Models that Include Missing Arctic Processes

Woodwell Climate's Arctic program examines the impacts of climate change in the circumpolar North, where temperatures are rising three to four times faster than the global average.² These rising temperatures are exacerbating a host of natural disturbances and hazards across Alaska and the greater Arctic, including permafrost thaw—*i.e.*, the loss of perennially frozen soil that underlies roughly 15% of the exposed land surface in the Northern Hemisphere. Permafrost is estimated to contain at least 1.4 trillion tons of carbon, or more than twice the amount of carbon as is currently in the atmosphere. Based on our current temperature trajectory, loss of permafrost could release GHG emissions, including carbon dioxide and methane at levels rivaling the highest-emitting countries over the next century.³

Predictive models, like Earth System Models (ESMs), are instrumental for better understanding these future scenarios and informing U.S. government interventions designed to avoid the worst

² Rantanen, M., et al. (2022). The Arctic has warmed nearly four times faster than the globe since 1979 (2022). *Commun Earth Environ* 168 (3). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43247-022-00498-3>

³ Natali, S. M., Bronen, R., Cochran, P., Holdren, J. P., Rogers, B. M., & Treharne, R. (2022). Incorporating permafrost into climate mitigation and adaptation policy *Environ. Res. Lett.* 17 091001. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/ac8c5a>.

effects for the region. The 2022-2026 Arctic Research Plan developed pursuant to the Arctic Research Policy Act of 1984 (15 U.S.C. §4108), for example, recognizes computational models as “foundational” to all research activities concerning the Arctic region and beyond. The Research Plan specifically notes that ESMs provide a framework for understanding interactions among components of the Arctic and between the Arctic and the global system across a range of scales and complexity.

Yet to date, most ESMs that are used to inform government decision-making are missing critical disturbance processes arising from the Arctic region. Physical and biochemical processes, including surface hydrology, snow cover, soil decomposition and vegetation changes are largely underrepresented in the simulations. Most notably, permafrost thaw, including abrupt thaw, and interactions between permafrost and high-latitude wildfires are not adequately considered. The IPCC 6th Assessment Report (AR6), published in 2021, noted with *high confidence* that permafrost will continue to thaw and will lead to carbon release to the atmosphere—*however*, only two of the 11 models available to the IPCC included representation of permafrost carbon. Neither of those ESMs included important processes such as abrupt thaw or interactions between permafrost and vegetation cover change or wildfire.

The Subcommittee should recognize the significant implications of this ESM discrepancy: Without fully accounting for system feedbacks that accelerate carbon loss in high latitudes, the US cannot adequately safeguard the region from extreme hazards and environmental threats.⁴ This vulnerability creates a heightened risk for those living in the region and for federal interests that extend beyond Alaska. Accordingly, **Woodwell Climate respectfully recommends report language to this Subcommittee that would effectively indicate a tonal shift in previous federal ESM funding priorities:**

Arctic Research.-- The Committee supports the continued investments in Polar Programs research funding pursuant to federal priorities set forth in the Arctic Research Plan and National Strategy for the Arctic Region. Recognizing the relevance of Arctic research for national mitigation responses, the Committee directs the National Science Foundation to fund research of Earth System model development that prioritizes improved representation of Arctic feedbacks, including permafrost carbon, on global climate at not less than \$5 million annually.

With a directive to emphasize and allocate requisite funding for ESM development projects, Woodwell Climate expects that NSF will receive an influx of relevant research proposals, particularly those that seek to incorporate missing system feedbacks such as permafrost thaw. The funds may also help to support longer-term investments in training members of the ESM and modeling community and provide the time needed for additional benchmarking and evaluation that is required to trace performance of more complex models. By supporting this language, this Subcommittee would further signal recognition that predictive models, machine learning, and other emerging technologies are foundational to national security and hazard mitigation.

⁴ Natali, S. M., Holdren, J. P., Rogers, B. M., Treharne, R., Duffy, P. B., Pomerance, R., & MacDonald, E. (2021). Permafrost carbon feedbacks threaten global climate goals. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 118(21). <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2100163118>.

The Critical Role of NOAA in Preparing the Arctic for Weather Emergency and Disasters

NOAA is one of the world's leading generators and hosts of environmental intelligence from the Arctic region. In addition to improving scientific monitoring of changing Arctic systems and linkages to mid-latitudes, NOAA develops resources to help provide knowledge and tools pertaining to weather, ecosystem health, river and sea ice conditions, transportation, food security and subsistence activities, and living marine resource management in the Arctic region. NOAA further uses models to better forecast, predict, and raise alerts regarding Arctic conditions, including weather patterns and disturbances that may present extreme risks to communities, critical infrastructure, and industry.

These trends are not limited to the far North: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) estimated the United States experienced 28 weather and climate related disasters costing at least \$1 billion each and totaling over \$92 billion, in 2023. The number of catastrophic climate and weather events continues to increase annually, impacting the nation's security, economy, infrastructure, and public health and safety. Ongoing efforts by NOAA to monitor, map, and model such trends is the first line of defense against these potentially catastrophic events.

Maintaining robust and predictable science funding for NOAA is therefore critical for our nation's security and for the United States to remain a world leader in climate, atmospheric and oceanic science, research, natural resources management, and technology. Accordingly, Woodwell Climate advocates for no less than \$7.5 billion in overall funding for NOAA in FY2026.

This funding level will ensure the continuation of a globally-renowned research service which generates leading intelligence, like the annual Arctic Scorecard. It will also support programs critical for Arctic security, including mapping coastlines and elevation changes that reinforce safe navigation and shipping activities; stabilize marine fisheries and ocean resource initiatives; and uphold the operation of multiple offices, laboratories, ships, and points of partnership in Alaska that provide a substantial source of employment for the state. This support will also allow the agency to continue to build partnerships with industry, which improves the nation's ability to turn science into real-world success, and with community stakeholders who are critical to locally-informed solutions and public education.

Conclusion

Woodwell Climate strongly urges the Subcommittee to recognize the importance of the government-supported scientific research in the Arctic region for enhancing the Nation's security. Accordingly, Woodwell Climate respectfully requests the adoption of report language that supports a directed effort by NSF to fund ESM development; adequate levels of funding for NSF Arctic research; and adequate levels of funding for NOAA operations in FY2026.

On behalf of Woodwell Climate, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions about Woodwell Climate or the Arctic Program's scientific research.

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