

NSF budget hearing for FY 2018

June 7, 2017

On June 7, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies held a hearing to discuss the President's fiscal year (FY) 2018 budget request for the National Science Foundation (NSF). Chairman John Culberson (R-TX-7) emphasized the overarching bipartisan support for the NSF and its goals in his opening statement.

The President's FY 2018 budget request proposes cuts to NSF's budget for the first time in the agency's 67-year history; overall, the request includes an 11% decrease in funding for NSF compared to the FY 2017 enacted amount. During the hearing, members of the subcommittee heard testimony from Dr. France Córdova, Director of NSF, who expressed her concern that the proposed budget would force NSF to reduce the amount of grants and awards given to universities across the nation, and let go of key resources and assets such as the Greenbank Observatory in West Virginia. When questioned by Ranking Member José Serrano (D-NY-15), Dr. Córdova assured the subcommittee that the NSF is not preemptively implementing cutbacks within the FY 2017 budget and will not plan their allocations for FY 2018 until Congress passes an FY 2018 appropriations bill.

Representative Matt Cartwright (D-PA-17) also asked about rumors of selective funding for certain NSF projects based on priorities of the Executive Branch. Dr. Córdova insisted that investing in a greater diversity of disciplines leads to better science and that such selective action would be detrimental to the goals of the NSF.

Source: U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations
