

Published on *American Geosciences Institute* (<https://www.americangeosciences.org>)

Home > House spending bill cuts NSF funding to Geoscience Directorate

House spending bill cuts NSF funding to Geoscience Directorate

May 20, 2015

On May 20, the House Appropriations Committee passed the fiscal year (FY) 2016 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies spending bill with language setting directorate-level funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF), a change from current agency-level funding. Although the bill provides a \$50 million increase in funding for NSF overall, opponents to the bill dislike the directorate-specific cuts to the NSF Geosciences (GEO) and Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) Directorates.

In an effort by the committee to emphasize fields considered “critically relevant” to the nation’s interests, \$257 million have been cut from GEO and SBE and placed in the budgets of NSF’s Biological Sciences, Engineering, and Mathematical and Physical Science Directorates.

The FY 2016 funding mark fell \$329.3 million below the Administration’s requested level and received criticism from many Democrats on the House floor, who felt the directorate funding levels were “disappointing.” Committee Ranking Member Nita Lowey (D-NY) pointed out that congressional reach into NSF directorates was “universally opposed across the scientific community.”

Chairman John Culberson (R-TX) recognized the need for additional funding to the GEO and SBE directorates but emphasized the need to prioritize “critical activities,” especially under current sequestration levels. The bill passed the full Committee by voice vote.

Sources: E&E News, Appropriations Committee
