

Oppose H.R. 1806 - The America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2015

In 2007, the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology passed bipartisan, landmark legislation – the *America COMPETES Act of 2007* (P.L. 110-69) – based on recommendations from the 2005 National Academies’ report *Rising Above the Gathering Storm*. The report found that the scientific and technological building blocks critical to our economic leadership are eroding at a time when many other nations are gaining strength. The *America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010* (P.L. 111-358) continued the Committee’s commitment to strengthen American competitiveness through sustained investments in science, innovation, and education.

Just one year after the scientific community expressed its overwhelming opposition to the Majority’s two partisan authorization bills, the *FIRST Act* and the *Department of Energy Research and Development Act*, bills that were so bad they were never even brought to the House floor, the Chairman has decided to combine them into one appalling bill and call it an *America Competes Reauthorization*. H.R. 1806 is an *America Competes* bill in name only. It does nothing to further our scientific and innovation enterprise.

There are many, many problems with this bill. To give an indication of some of the most egregious issues, the bill:

- Keeps overall R&D funding in the bill flat – simply adds funding to accounts the Majority favors at the expense of those it doesn’t.
- Cuts social, behavioral, and economic (SBE) sciences research by 55% from the FY 2015 appropriated levels and cuts geosciences by 8%. NSF is the primary source of federal support for SBE sciences, which represent less than 4% of the total NSF budget. The Geosciences directorate at NSF, in addition to funding climate science, has a broad portfolio that includes ocean sciences, natural hazards research, space weather, and the polar programs. Both of these directorates fund research essential to our national and economic security and overall well-being.
- Fails to fully fund the agency’s operations account, putting into severe jeopardy the cost and schedule of NSF’s new headquarters being built in Alexandria, Virginia as well as NSF’s ability to fill urgently needed positions and to upgrade its IT systems to improve agency accountability and efficiency.
- Includes a misguided and potentially dangerous attempt to impose a level of political review on NSF’s gold-standard merit-review system, thus encouraging researchers, peer-reviewers, and NSF program officers alike to play it safe, discouraging high-risk research and out-of-the-box thinking that is essential to the progress of science.
- Bars the results of any DOE-supported fossil energy R&D activity from being ‘used for regulatory assessments or determinations by Federal regulatory authorities’ which could essentially ban the EPA or FERC from using the most up-to-date research results when they set rules to protect our air, land, and water and prevent health hazards to our children and elderly associated with fossil fuel use.
- Cuts Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) R&D by almost 30%, or \$496 million, below FY 2015 appropriated levels, and cuts ARPA-E by 50%, or \$140 million, below FY 2015 levels. EERE and ARPA-E are both essential to our efforts to help secure our nation’s energy future.

Who Opposes H.R. 1806?

- Alliance to Save Energy
- American Academy of Political and Social Science
- American Anthropological Association
- American Association for the Advancement of Science
- American Association of Petroleum Geologists
- American Association of Physics Teachers,
- American Educational Research Association
- American Geophysical Union
- American Geosciences Institute
- American Institute of Biological Sciences
- American Institute of Physics
- American Institute of Physics
- American Meteorological Society
- American Physical Society
- American Political Science Association
- American Psychological Association
- American Society for Microbiology
- American Sociological Association
- Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography
- Association of American Universities
- Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
- AVS: Science & Technology of Materials, Interfaces, and Processing
- Biophysical Society
- Business Council for Sustainable Energy
- Center for Small Business and the Environment
- Clay Minerals Society
- Coalition for National Science Funding
- Computing Research Association
- Consortium for Ocean Leadership
- Consortium for Ocean Leadership
- Consortium of Social Science Associations
- Council of Undergraduate Research
- Department of Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz
- Ecological Society of America
- Energy Sciences Coalition
- Environment America
- Environment and Energy Study Institute
- Environmental Defense Fund
- Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology
- Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences
- Geological Society of America
- Incorporated Institutions for Seismology
- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.
- Law and Society Association
- League of Conservation votes
- Learning and Education Academic Research Network
- National Association of Geoscience Teachers
- National Association of Marine Laboratories
- National Cave and Karst Research Institute
- National Ground Water Association
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Paleontological Research Institution
- Princeton University
- Research!America
- Seismological Society of America
- Sierra Club
- Society for Mining, Metallurgy, and Exploration, Inc.
- Society of Independent Professional Earth Scientists
- Soil Science Society of America
- STEM Education Coalition
- Taskforce on American Innovation
- The Optical Society
- The Pew Charitable Trust
- Truman National Security Project – Operation Free
- Union of Concerned Scientists
- United States Permafrost Association
- University Corporation for Atmospheric Research