



AAG

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
of GEOGRAPHERS

March 27, 2018

Omnibus Appropriations Bill Includes AAG-Supported Increases for Research Agencies

On March 23, President Trump signed a \$1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill that funds the federal government through the end of Fiscal Year 2018 (September 30). The legislation provides increased appropriations for many programs of importance to geographers, as detailed below. The AAG has repeatedly supported robust funding for federal science agencies, and we will continue to promote the value of research programs as Congress moves on to consideration of 2019 budgets.

The **National Science Foundation** will receive \$7.8 billion, an increase of \$300 million (4 percent) from the FY 2017 level. The increase is directed to the Foundation's Research and Related Activities account, which includes funding for the Geography and Spatial Sciences program. The AAG had urged funding increases for NSF and has endorsed \$8.45 billion in appropriations for the agency in FY 2019.

The **National Institutes of Health** has been appropriated \$37.1 billion for FY 2018, an increase of \$3 billion (8 percent). Each of the 27 individual NIH Institutes and Centers will receive an increase of at least 5 percent as a result of the bill.

Appropriations for the **U.S. Geological Survey** were increased by \$63 million (6 percent) to \$1.1 billion in the legislation, which specifically rejected the proposed elimination of a key earthquake research program.

The **Department of Education** received \$70.9 billion, an increase of \$3.9 billion (6 percent) over FY 2017 levels. Included is an extra \$8 million for the Institute of Education Sciences. Also, Congress rejected several Trump Administration proposals related to overhauling the student loan system and downsizing the Department's Office of Civil Rights.

Congress provided \$5.9 billion for the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**, which is \$234 million (4 percent) above last year's enacted level. This appropriation rejected draconian cuts proposed by the Administration, including to NOAA's climate and other research programs.

The **National Aeronautics and Space Administration** was appropriated \$20.7 billion, a \$1.1 billion boost (5 percent) that includes funding for earth science and education programs that had been eliminated in the Administration's budget request.

In addition to these budget increases, the bill also provided an important win for research advocates through a provision that clarifies that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention may provide funding for research on gun violence. Previously, the agency had been operating under a policy that precluded such funding. The AAG recently endorsed a [letter](#) organized by March for Science and the American Psychological Association supporting this change.

Unfortunately, the omnibus does not include a fix for the popular DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) program. Last September, the AAG sent a [letter](#) to Congressional leaders urging them to pass legislation that would allow the nearly one million DACA recipients to remain in the U.S. on a permanent basis. Our letter was endorsed by almost 25 organizations and universities, including the NAACP.

As always, we encourage AAG members and others to reach out to your elected officials to express your own views on issues of importance to you.