

House Committee on Science
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**BOEHLERT APPLAUDS PASSAGE OF "LANDMARK" APPROPRIATIONS BILL, PRAISES
LEADERSHIP OF CHAIRMAN WOLF**

SSJC Bill Fully Funds President's American Competitiveness Initiative

WASHINGTON - House Science Committee Chairman Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY) applauded House passage today of a key appropriations bill that fully funds the President's American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI). Boehlert also praised Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA), the chairman of the Appropriations subcommittee that crafted the bill, for his leadership in addressing America's economic competitiveness challenges.

The Science, State, Justice and Commerce (SSJC) appropriations bill (H.R. 5672), which funds the majority of the nation's science agencies, including the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), passed the House by a vote of 393 to 23.

The legislation funds NSF and the core laboratory programs at NIST, two of the three key agencies in the ACI, at the President's full requested levels of \$6.02 billion and \$467 million, respectively. The third ACI agency, the Department of Energy's Office of Science, received full funding in the Energy and Water appropriations bill that passed the House on May 24.

Under the ACI, which the President unveiled in his State of the Union address in January, the three agencies are slated to have their budgets doubled over the next 10 years. Earlier, this month, the Science Committee reported out a package of bills that would authorize key aspects of the ACI (H.R. 5356 and H.R. 5358).

The SSJC bill also restores proposed cuts to science and aeronautics programs at NASA, while enabling the Vision for Space Exploration to move forward. At a March 6 Science Committee hearing, leaders in the scientific community testified that the proposed cuts to NASA's science programs would have a devastating impact on the agency's ability to carry out its missions and would set a pattern that would make it difficult to attract and retain space and earth scientists. The House-passed SSJC bill restores \$100 million above the President's request for aeronautics research, and \$75 million above the request for space science.

Chairman Boehlert delivered the following floor statement yesterday during debate on the bill:

Mr. Chairman:

I rise in strong support of this bill, and I want to thank my friend, Chairman Frank Wolf, for working so closely with me on the science portions of this bill.

The passage of this bill may be looked back on as a landmark moment in American history. That probably sounds like hyperbole, but I mean it. This bill put us on course to enact the President's American Competitiveness Initiative, which will double the combined budgets of three key science agencies, the National Science Foundation, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, and the Department of Energy's Office of Science, which already received appropriations in the Energy and Water bill.

These agencies, which are not exactly on the tip of everyone's tongue, are keystones of our nation's economic future. Our nation will remain strong and prosperous only if we remain innovative. And we will only remain innovative if we have the most robust research and education enterprise in the world. And it is these agencies that help enable the U.S. to lead the world in science, math and engineering education and in research.

And I want to especially thank Chairman Wolf for supporting education funding as well as research funding in this bill, particularly for supporting the Noyce Scholarship Program at NSF, which attracts top science and math majors into teaching.

I also want to thank Chairman Wolf for the way he handled appropriations for NASA. I have said repeatedly, and the authorization Act we passed last year says clearly, that NASA must be a multi-mission agency. With this bill, the House will be putting money where its mouth is. Without interfering with the lunar mission, this bill puts desperately needed funding back in science and aeronautics.

I would like to see even more money going into science, particularly earth science, but this bill is a good start. And I'm especially pleased that the bill text includes explicit funding levels for science and aeronautics.

Finally, given competing priorities, I think the bill does the best it can for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, although, of course, I hope that, as in past years, the final numbers are higher. I appreciate the language Chairman Wolf included in the report, drawing attention to the concerns we all share about the future of the polar satellite program, NPOESS.

So I urge my colleagues to support this forward-looking, landmark bill. And again, I thank the Chairman for being such a bold and active partner on competitiveness issues.

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