THE NEXUS OF SCIENCE AND CONGRESS

SHAPING THE RESEARCH LANDSCAPE THROUGH REAUTHORIZATION LEGISLATION

Paul McKinley : AIP Mather Policy Intern
House Committee on Science, Space & Technology

- Established in 1958 in the 85th Congress in response to the Space Race
- **Standing committee** in the House (20 total)
  - (16 in the Senate)
- House Science Committee in 2020 and the 116th Congress
  - 34 members (18 Democrats; 16 Republicans)
  - 5 Subcommittees
  - **Jurisdiction over most non-defense R&D**
  - Exclusive jurisdiction over NASA, NIST, OSTP, and NSF

Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

Ranking Member
Frank Lucas (R-OK)
House Science Subcommittees

- Environment
- Energy
- Space & Aeronautics
- Research & Technology
- Investigations & Oversight

House Science Committee
Reauthorization for the National Science Foundation

- **Authorization**: statutory provision that defines authority of the government to act
  - Establish or continue (reauthorize) federal agencies, programs & projects
  - Set funding levels for Congressional appropriations (not the same as providing funding)

- **National Science Foundation (NSF)**
  - Independent government agency (requires reauthorization)
  - Funds roughly 25% of basic research at American colleges/universities
  - 7 directorates overseeing fundamental research in science & engineering
NSF Reauthorization Act of 2020

Key Sections

- **Funding:** Authorizing funding increases for FY 2021-2025
  - $7.1 b. -> $17.8 b. over 5 years

- **Non-Funding**
  - STEM Education/Workforce
  - Broadening participation in STEM
  - Fundamental research
  - Research Infrastructure
  - Establish a new Convergence Research & Innovation (CRI) Directorate

(Chart: Courtesy of Dr. Sara Barber, House Science professional staff)
Status of the bill (House of Representatives)

We are here

Feb. 2020
Initial Drafting

Aug. 2020
Introduction and Committee Referral

Variable Timeline due to COVID-19

Committee Consideration
Floor Scheduling
House Floor Consideration
Coordination with the Senate
Presidential Consideration

Stakeholder input
Why is Stakeholder Feedback Important?

- **House Science = Congressional point of contact for the science community**
- **Who are our stakeholders?**
- **Feedback:**
  - Total number of stakeholders: 65
  - Number of responses: 49
  - Total suggestions: 346
- **What does feedback look like?**
  - Ranges from small fixes to entire provisions
Key Areas of Feedback

- **Establishment of new CRI Directorate**
  - Added component to NSF structure
  - Funding flexibility for high risk/high reward research
  - Multiple perspectives on how to roll out effectively

- **Broadening Participation**
  - Combatting discrimination and sexual harassment
  - Increasing diversity among faculty

- **Fundamental Research**
  - Ethics and open data repositories
Significance in the Long-term

- Necessary cross-sector dialogue
- Science is a critical component of public discourse, now more than ever
- Congressional funding and support of NSF helps maintain U.S. leadership in R&D
Thank you to SPS and the House Science Committee for a wonderful summer experience!

Questions?