

COMMITTEE ON
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND
TECHNOLOGY**
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



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**Statement of Research Subcommittee Chairman Larry Bucshon (R-Ind.)
Hearing on “An Overview of the National Science Foundation Budget for Fiscal Year 2014”**

Chairman Bucshon: Good afternoon and thank you to everyone here for today’s Research subcommittee hearing. I am pleased to welcome Acting Director Dr. Marrett and President Dr. Arvizu to discuss NSF’s priorities for fiscal year 2014. Thank you both for coming.

Before we begin today’s hearing, I would like to make a few comments about the President’s proposed FY 2014 budget. Today, our national debt stands at almost \$17 trillion dollars. 62 cents of every dollar is spent on our entitlement programs and everyone agrees these are the largest drivers of our debt. Before President Obama took office, approximately 19 cents of every dollar was spent on Medicare and Medicaid. Four years later, this has risen to 23 cents of every dollar. Without reform this trend will continue.

Before my time in Congress, as a cardio thoracic surgeon in Evansville, Indiana, I saw first-hand how these spiraling costs were crowding out funding for other federally funded programs, like scientific research and development.

Instead of showing leadership, the President has spent his time in office defending a health care law which makes matters worse. The Administration has offered no path forward on Medicare and Medicaid other than cutting funding for provider reimbursement, risking access to quality healthcare for our nation’s senior citizens.

I don’t see any evidence that Obama-care will lower medical costs in the future; instead it irresponsibly adds to our yearly deficit and total national debt in spite of the misguided rhetoric to the contrary from the Administration.

Unfortunately, the President’s proposed Fiscal Year 2014 budget boils down to accounting gimmicks. Because of this administration’s failed leadership and failed economic policies, we are left with the non-targeted cuts in sequestration and ongoing record deficits and debt. Washington’s inability to address these fiscal issues is hampering the ability of our economy to recover from the recession.

Hardworking Americans who stand to benefit from the research and technology our country develops will be the victims. House Republicans have tried to address these issues by passing responsible budgets for the past three years. However, we don’t control Washington. Our friends on the other side of the aisle have offered up budgets with higher taxes and more spending, that does not address significant entitlement reform, but also never balances.

I stress, if we do not address our mandatory spending programs, funding for all other federal government programs will continue to feel the financial pinch.

Imagine the high-paying jobs that will result when today's basic scientific discoveries turn into tomorrow's marketable technologies. Tomorrow's prosperity depends on what we do today. Back to our present situation, and the current year budget for the NSF. We must now focus on answering, "what is the appropriate role of the Federal government in funding science research?" I believe by asking this and related questions, we can create a stronger, more efficient NSF, nimble enough to tackle the numerous scientific challenges of tomorrow.

As a nation, we must focus on our scientific priorities and stretch every dollar for maximum benefit. As an example, do we really need a study entitled "The International Criminal Court and the Pursuit of Justice" that was funded for \$260,000 by the NSF? I think it's a nice luxury to have people study this topic. But it's not something that we need NSF to fund. This type of research is more appropriately funded by private entities or other government agencies.

Our charge is to ensure the American taxpayer is getting value for their hard earned dollars that we spend on research through the NSF. I strongly support NSF funding in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, engineering, cyber security, and STEM education. Although the scientific community is not facing an ideal fiscal environment, I still believe that America's best and brightest scientists will continue to persevere and produce the innovations and discoveries of tomorrow.

We should support the hard-working scientist who stays up all night to repeat her experiments and doggedly pursues her ideas, because she believes she is onto a great discovery and will answer the big questions in her field. After visiting several universities and colleges in Indiana earlier this month, my faith and optimism in the scientific community is stronger than ever. But for American science to succeed, we must make sure that the NSF remains focused on its scientific goals and missions.

I look forward to the thoughtful discussion that will ensue. I would also like to thank Ranking Member Lipinski and everyone participating in today's hearing.

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