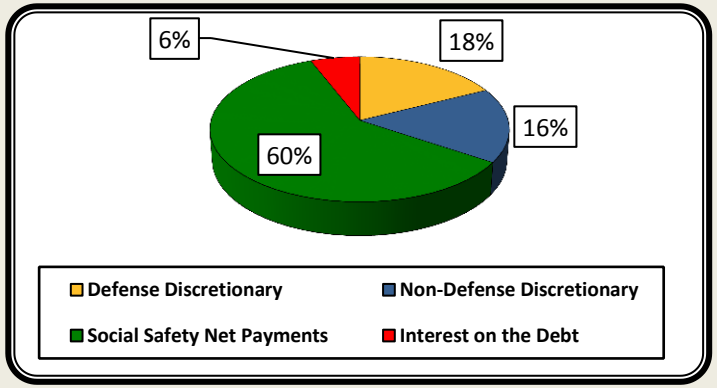
Federal Funding and Related Policy Issues Impacting the Academic Atmospheric Science Community

A Presentation for the Membership of the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research October 2014

Joel Widder, Partner
Meg Thompson, Partner
Federal Science Partners LLC

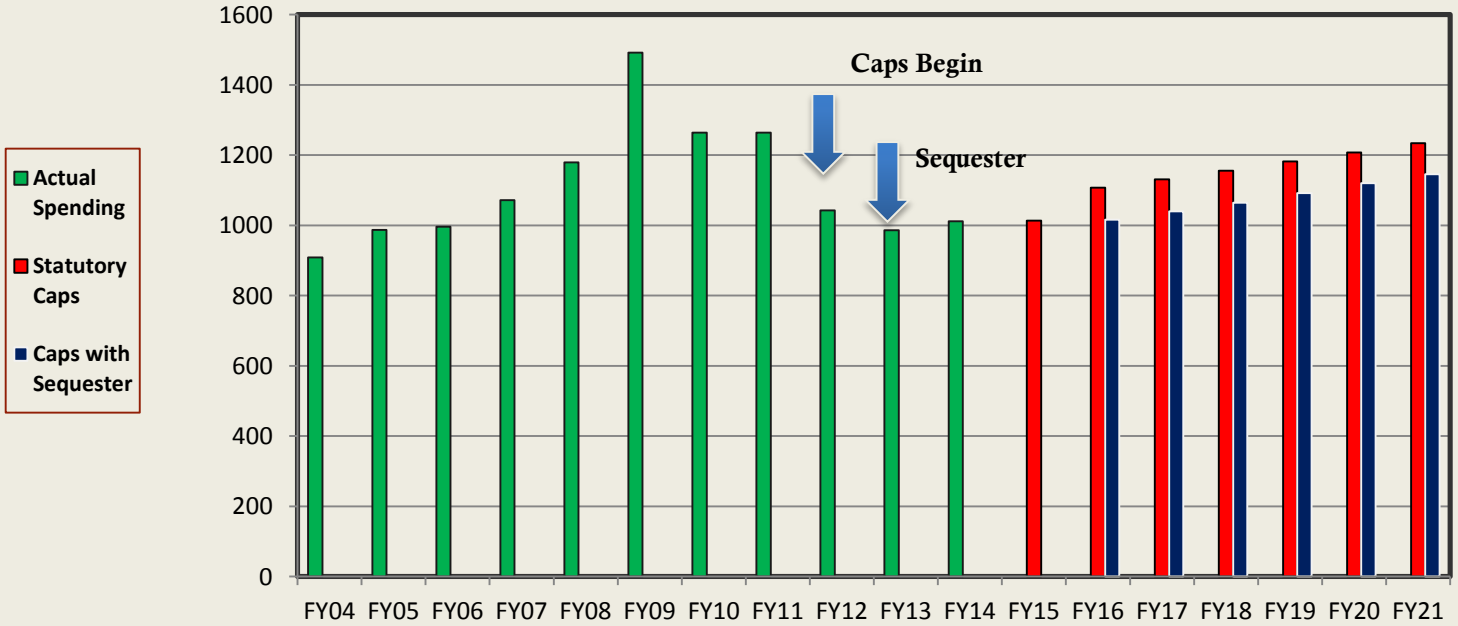
Federal Discretionary Spending Trends
What it means for the academic research enterprise



The Federal Budget at a Glance

Most of UCAR's federal support comes from the Non-Defense Discretionary (16%) wedge of the pie. According to CBO, all discretionary (defense and non-defense) spending will shrink from its current level of 34% of the total federal budget to 23% over the next ten years.

Future Federal Discretionary Funding Levels



FEDERAL SCIENCE PARTNERS

FY 2014-FY2016 Budget Situation for Discretionary Spending

- **FY 2013 – White House and Congress were unable to reach a budget agreement until half way through the fiscal year. Final agreement for FY2013 included a 5% to 8% across the board cut (sequester) on nearly all USG spending.**
- **December 2013 -- Two year budget deal reached between the White House and the Congress revises discretionary spending limits for FY 2014 and FY 2015.**
- **December 2013 agreement also removed sequesters for FY's 2014 and 2015.**
- **However, sequester is still a reality for FY2016 and beyond under current Budget Control Act.**
- **FY15 appropriations process moves forward in the House; stalls out in the Senate.**
- **FY15 begins with a Continuing Resolution that runs to December 11, 2014.**
- **Completion of FY15 appropriations is tied up with the outcome of the Nov elections.**
- **OMB and OSTP issue R&D priorities guidance to federal agencies for FY 2016 with earth observations being a newly added priority**
- **<u>Under existing budget law FY 2016 discretionary spending limit is 9% higher than FY 2015</u> – however with sequester still on the books for FY 2016 that growth is unlikely to be provided by Congress.**

FEDERAL SCIENCE PARTNERS

FY 2015 Funding Status for Key Agencies and Programs

($ in thousands)

Agency/Program	FY14 Estimate	FY15 Request	FY15 House	FY15 Senate
National Science Foundation	$7,171,916	$7,255,000	$7,474,205	$7,255,000
Research and Related	$5,808,918	$5,807,460	$5,973,645	$5,838,690
MREFC	$200,000	$200,760	$200,760	$200,760
Education & Human Resources	$846,500	$889,750	$876,000	$889,750
NOAA	$5,322,542	$5,488,735	$5,325,120	$5,420,000
NOAA Research (Ops)	$416,392	$448,794	$379,800	$430,033
NOAA Research (PAC)	$10,379	$13,379	$13,500	$13,379
Climate Research	$156,450	$188,270	$119,000	$160,000
USWRP	$4,200	$7,236	$7,300	$7,236
NOAA Weather (Ops)	$953,627	$926,853	$943,180	$954,253
NOAA Weather (PAC)	$113,619	$136,494	$136,494	$133,000
NESDIS (Ops)	$187,167	$190,609	$189,200	$189,167
NESDIS (PAC)	$1,895,966	$2,057,317	$2,032,096	$1,987,407
Cosmic II	$2,000	$6,800	$6,800	$6,800
NASA	$17,646,750	$17,460,600	$17,896,000	$17,900,000
NASA Science	$5,151,200	$4,972,000	$5,193,000	$5,200,000
Earth Science	$1,826,000	$1,770,300	$1,750,000	$1,831,900
Planetary Science	$1,345,000	$1,280,300	$1,450,000	$1,301,700
Heliophysics	$654,000	$668,900	$668,000	$671,200
US Global Change Research Program	$2,489,000	$2,500,000	$0	$2,500,000

FEDERAL SCIENCE PARTNERS

Other Legislative Issues

- **FIRST Bill in the House – reauthorization for NSF, OSTP, and STEM education for FY14 and FY15; would re-vamp NSF merit review process, little to no growth in budget for FY15; Hits funding for social sciences and geosciences**

- **America COMPETES in the Senate – reauthorization for NSF, OSTP, STEM ed along with NOAA and NASA provisions for FY15 and beyond. Provides for 5% annual growth for NSF with strong support for all science disciplines; supports current NSF merit review process.**

- **House passes Weather Forecast Improvement Bill in bipartisan fashion – House passed bill eliminates initially proposed cuts to climate research in favor of weather research; forecast improvement activities are focused on the near term**

- **Senate weather bill – under consideration for next year; likely to take a seasonal and/or annual approach to forecast improvement**

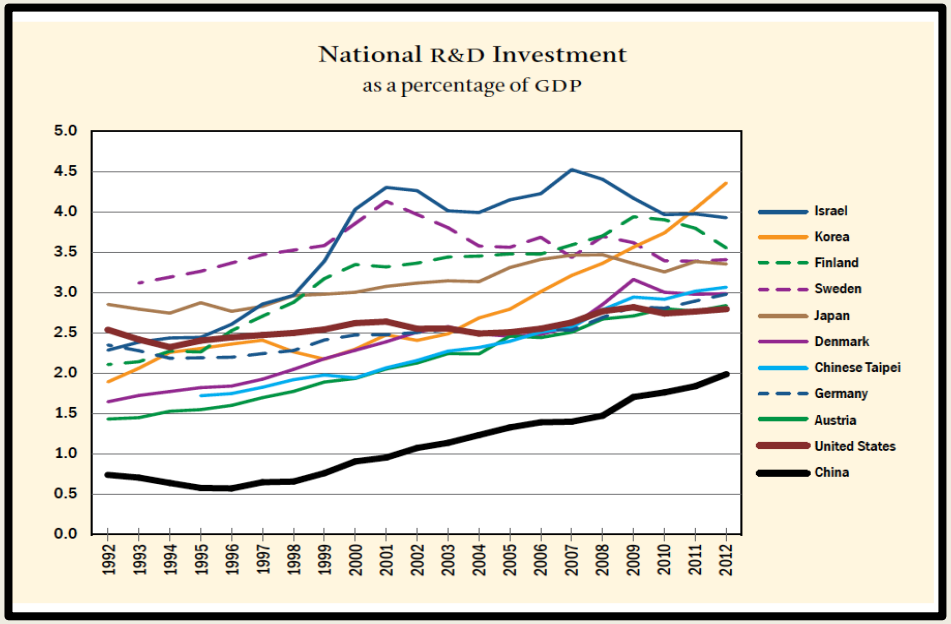
FEDERAL SCIENCE PARTNERS

Agency Developments

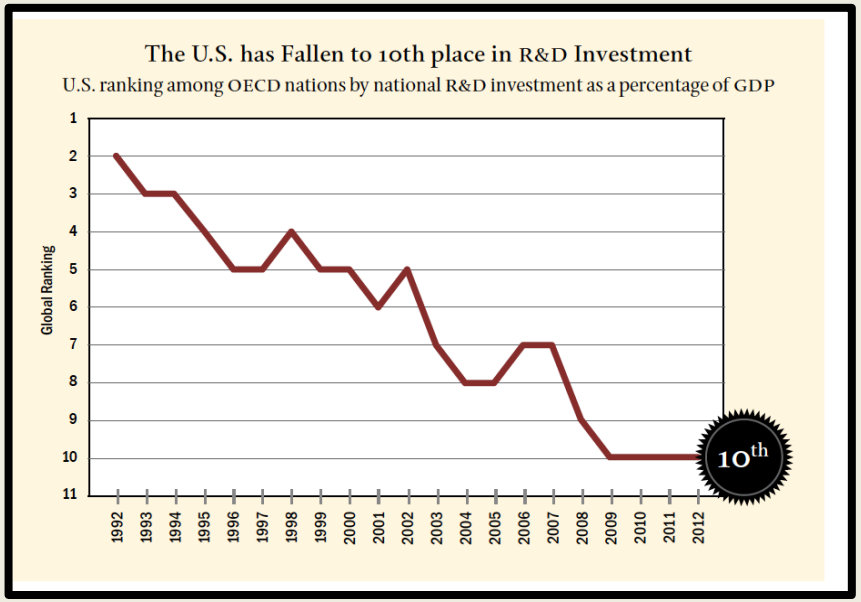
- **NOAA**
  - **Dr. Mark Schaefer NOAA Assistant Secretary for Conservation and Management departs**
  - **Dr. Robert Detrick leaves OAR; Craig McLean is acting AA for OAR; search underway for replacement**
  - **Dr. Richard Spinrad, formerly OAR AA and VPR at Oregon State, returns to NOAA as Chief Scientist**
  - **Vice Admiral Manson Brown nominated for Assistant Secretary for Observations and Prediction; requires Sen confirmation**
  - **Steve Volz named AA for NESDIS – comes from NASA Earth Sciences**
  - **OAR releases strategic plan**
  - **NWS budget restructuring – UCAR support – expected to lead to modest increase NWS support for academic research**
- **NSF**
  - **Dr. Cora Marrett, Deputy Director, steps down; Dr. Richard Buckias (formerly VPR at Purdue) is named acting Chief Operating Officer**
  - **New Division Directors for AGS and OCE: Dr. Paul Shepson from Purdue for AGS and Dr. Rick Murray, Boston University for OCE.**
  - **Dr. Pat Haar, AGS Section Head for Atmosphere**
  - **Recruitment ongoing for new director of legislative and public affairs**
- **OSTP**
  - **Brad Moran steps down from ocean/climate research policy role; Nominees for senior Associate Director positions in OSTP for Science, and Energy and Environment remain unconfirmed in Senate.**

FEDERAL SCIENCE PARTNERS

U.S. Position in the International Research Enterprise



The U.S. is failing to keep pace with our competitors' investments in R&D



Source: *Restoring the Foundation*, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, September 2014

FEDERAL SCIENCE PARTNERS

Restoring the Foundation – the Vital Role of Research in Preserving the American Dream

(Augustine/Lane Report, Sept 2014)

American Academy of Arts & Sciences

Securing America's Leadership in Science and Engineering Research – Especially Basic Research – by Providing Sustainable Federal Funding and Setting Long-Term Investment Goals

- Establish a sustainable real growth rate of at least 4% in the federal investment in basic research.
- Adopt multiyear appropriations for agencies (or parts of agencies) that primarily support research and graduate STEM education.

Ensuring that the American People Receive the Maximum Benefit from Federal Investments in Research

- Enhance the productivity of America's researchers, particularly those based at universities, by adopting best practices, streamlining burdensome regulations and practices governing federally funded research, reducing researchers' time spent writing and reviewing grant proposals, and fostering an appropriately sized and sustainable biomedical research workforce.

Regaining America's Standing as an Innovation Leader by Establishing a More Robust National Government-University-Industry Research Partnership

- Remove lingering barriers to university-industry research cooperation by helping universities reevaluate their technology transfer policies.
- Urge corporate boards and chief executives to place a higher priority on funding research in universities and to work with university presidents and boards to develop new forms of partnership that can justify increased company investments in university research.

FEDERAL SCIENCE PARTNERS

Recommended UCAR Public Policy Objectives for FY 2016

- **Prepare for engagement with new Congress in January with briefings, materials, etc. ; Prepare for engagement with new committee and subcommittee chairs/staff in the new Congress;**
- **Advocate for the health of university research enterprise including the atmospheric and geosciences, earth observations, the weather enterprise, climate research, and climate services, etc.;**
- **Actively support key recommendations in new Augustine/Lane report – *Restoring the Foundation* – with relevant decision makers;**
- **Build on UCAR's participation in policy making process with more extensive use of UCAR members – Congressional Visits Day, Congressional activities on weather forecast improvement activities; climate research; seasonal/annual forecast improvements; weather enterprise developments (weather commission), etc. to strengthen the role of the atmospheric and geosciences;**
- **Support Administration's R&D priorities with particular emphasis on basic research, climate research, and observations;**
- **Continue to strengthen UCAR relations with OMB, OSTP, NSF, NOAA, NASA, FEMA, DOD, DOE, etc.;**
- **Collaborate with like-minded organizations (i.e. AAU, APLU, Task for on Innovation, Coalition for Ocean Leadership, AGU, AMS, Weather Coalition, Friends of NOAA, etc.).**

FEDERAL SCIENCE PARTNERS