

NATIONAL CREDIT UNION ADMINISTRATION

CENTRAL LIQUIDITY FACILITY

Provides limitation of \$1,500,000,000 on CLF lending activities from borrowed funds as proposed by the House and Senate.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Appropriates \$1,000,000 as proposed by the House and the Senate. Within this amount, \$800,000 is provided for technical assistance to low-income and community development credit unions. Funds are available for two years as proposed by the House. The Senate had proposed that funds be available until expended. The conferees reiterate language proposed by the Senate encouraging NCUA to continue to develop technical assistance in rural areas.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

The conferees agree that the language included in House Report 108-674 and Senate Report 108-353 is to be complied with unless specifically addressed to the contrary in this conference report and the statement of the managers.

The conferees agree that the National Science Foundation is to abide by the reprogramming requirements set forth in the House report requiring prior Committee approval for any transfers in excess of \$500,000 or any change that could be construed as policy or a change in policy, instead of \$250,000 as proposed in the Senate report.

The conferees agree that the National Science Foundation is to present its fiscal year 2006 budget justification submission in the traditional appropriations account structure with detailed information on program, project and activity funding levels and all proposed changes. The Foundation is directed not to format or integrate its strategic

themes of “People,” “Tools,” and “Ideas” into the detailed appropriations justifications but instead may provide them as supplementary information. The conferees direct the Foundation to submit a template for its fiscal year 2006 budget justification to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and Senate that complies with this direction no later than December 15, 2004.

RESEARCH AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

Appropriates \$4,254,593,000 for research and related activities instead of \$4,151,745,000 as proposed by the House and \$4,402,320,000 as proposed by the Senate.

The conferees agree to continue funding for the costs of Foundation employees hired under the Intergovernmental Personnel Agreements (IPA) Act under this account instead of consolidating funding for such costs under the Salaries and Expenses account as proposed by the House. New language is included to limit the amount available for such purposes to the amount requested in the Foundation’s budget for fiscal year 2005.

The conferees have included bill language that provides up to \$350,000,000 for polar research and operations support, as proposed by the House and \$95,000,000 for a comprehensive research initiative on plant genomes for economically significant crops, as proposed by the Senate. Language is also included as proposed by the Senate and carried in previous years regarding distribution of funding against statutory minimum and maximum levels. The House did not include similar language. Language proposed by the Senate is not included authorizing the payment of travel expenses from this account. The House did not include similar language as requested in the budget. The conferees understand that deletion of this language will not impact travel costs associated with

Foundation staff hired under the IPA Act since such costs are eligible to be funded under this account.

Notwithstanding the language in the House and Senate reports designating the allocation of funds, the conferees have agreed that the allocation among programs and directorates is to be determined by the Director of the Foundation, unless specifically noted herein. The Foundation is to submit its proposed operating plan to the Committees on Appropriations of the House and the Senate within ~~thirty~~ ^{sixty} days of enactment of this Act that addresses the Foundation's highest research priorities. In developing this plan, the Foundation is urged to maintain the proper balance between interdisciplinary research and single-issue research in core disciplines.

The conference agreement provides \$95,000,000 for plant genome research on economically significant crops as proposed by the Senate. The House did not address this matter.

The conferees do not object to the allocation of not to exceed \$6,000,000 for continued planning and design for the National Ecological Observatory Network if the Director of the Foundation determines such funding is warranted. The conferees reiterate the language in the House report regarding the National Research Council's recommendations regarding this project. The conferees concur that funding provided may be used for a new class of Science and Technology Centers if the Director of the Foundation determines such funding is warranted when measured against other priorities within the agreed upon total for this account.

The conferees do not object to the allocation of not to exceed \$5,000,000 for completion of a design and development study for the Giant Segmented Mirror Telescope

if the Director of the Foundation determines such funding is warranted based upon private sector interest and commitment, other astronomical science needs, and subject to approval by the National Science Board.

The conference agreement does not provide any funding for the new Workforce for the 21st Century program. The Foundation is encouraged to work with the Committees to develop a more refined and descriptive proposal for future consideration.

The conference agreement does not provide any funding for a new Innovation Fund.

The conferees understand that discussions between the National Science Foundation and the Smithsonian Institution are ongoing and have been productive. With respect to Smithsonian researchers' access to NSF funding, the Committee expects the Foundation to treat any proposal submitted by non-Federal employees of the Smithsonian whose salaries are not part of appropriated accounts to be treated in the same manner as any academic proposal. (5)

The conferees reiterate the direction in the Senate report requiring NSF to include multi-year budget estimates and future budget impacts for multi-disciplinary and mid-level activities in the annual operating plan and in future budget requests.

MAJOR RESEARCH EQUIPMENT AND

FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION

Appropriates \$175,050,000 for major research equipment and facilities construction instead of \$208,200,000 as proposed by the House and \$130,420,000 as proposed by the Senate. Included within the appropriated amount is \$49,700,000 for

construction of the Atacama Large Millimeter Array aperture-synthesis radio telescope; \$47,350,000 for EarthScope; \$48,000,000 for continued research and development of the IceCube Neutrino Detector Observatory in Antarctica; \$15,000,000 for the Integrated Ocean Drilling Program (IODP); and \$15,000,000 for the Rare Symmetry Violating Processes Program.

Funding for the NEON program is addressed under the Research and Related Activities account.

EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Appropriates \$848,207,000 for education and human resources instead of \$842,985,000 as proposed by the House and \$929,150,000 as proposed by the Senate.

The conferees agree to continue funding for the costs of Foundation employees hired under the Intergovernmental Personnel Agreements (IPA) Act under this account instead of consolidating funding for such costs under the Salaries and Expenses account as proposed by the House. New language is included to limit the amount available for such purposes to the amount requested in the Foundation's fiscal year 2005 budget. Language is also included as proposed by the Senate and carried in previous years regarding distribution of funding against statutory minimum and maximum levels. The House did not include similar language.

The conferees agree to the following funding levels and directives within this

account:

Program	FY 2005 Request	House	Senate	Conference Agreement
Math & Science Partnership	\$80,000,000	\$82,500,000	\$110,000,000	\$80,000,000
EPSCoR	\$84,000,000	\$94,440,000	\$95,000,000	\$94,440,000
Elementary, Secondary & Informal Education	\$172,750,000	\$175,457,000	\$187,750,000	\$183,412,000
Undergraduate Education	\$158,850,000	\$160,301,000	\$162,430,000	\$154,905,000
Graduate Education	\$173,880,000	\$155,950,000	\$173,880,000	\$155,950,000
Human Resources Development	\$107,940,000	\$115,343,000	\$126,060,000	\$119,500,000
Research, Evaluation & Communication	\$73,940,000	\$64,494,000	\$73,940,000	\$60,000,000

Within this level of funding for Elementary, Secondary and Informal Education, \$63,565,000 has been provided for the Informal Science program.

Of the amount appropriated for Undergraduate Education, \$45,500,000 is for the Advanced Technological Education program; \$25,485,000 is for the STEM Talent Expansion Program (STEP); and \$7,950,000 is for the Robert Noyce Scholarship Program. No funds are provided for the Workforce for the 21st Century program.

Within the funding level for Human Resource Development, \$35,300,000 is provided for the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation program; \$25,420,000 is provided for the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Undergraduates (HBCU) Program; \$14,910,000 is provided for the Alliance for Graduate Education and Professoriate; \$16,000,000 is provided for the Centers of Research Excellence in Science and Technology (CREST) program and ~~HBCU~~ Research University Science and Technology (THRUST) initiative within CREST; \$2,510,000 is provided for Model Institutions for Excellence; and \$9,920,000 is provided for Tribal Colleges. While the conferees agree that eligibility for THRUST should not exclude CREST recipients, NSF is directed to first use fiscal year 2005 program funds to fully fund multi-year awards to recipients of THRUST.

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

Appropriates \$225,000,000 for salaries and expenses instead of \$249,970,000 as proposed by the House and \$269,000,000 as proposed by the Senate.

At the request of the Foundation, the conferees have agreed to continue funding the costs of personnel employed by the Foundation under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA's) under the "Research and Related Activities" and the "Education and Human Resources" appropriations accounts. These costs have been set within each account at \$25,954,000 and \$5,500,000 respectively. No funding has been included in the "Salaries and Expenses" account for this purpose. The conferees note that the \$31,454,000 provided for the IPA program in fiscal year 2005 is approximately a 10 percent increase over the fiscal year 2004 level for the program. The conferees are pleased that the Director has assured the Committees that the cost of the IPA program

will be shown in a more transparent way in future budget submissions. As a part of this process the conferees expect the fiscal year 2006 budget justification materials to include a single consolidated schedule showing all personnel costs for the Foundation.

The conference agreement provides sufficient resources to maintain existing staffing levels at the Foundation. Within the total amount provided for this account, the Director may, at his discretion, devote additional resources to address permanent staffing at the agency and address computer system needs, particularly for the FastLane system.

The conferees reiterate the direction in the Senate report regarding staffing support to the Deputy Director of Large Facilities and expect the fiscal year 2005 operating plan to identify the actions taken regarding this matter.

office of the)  NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD

Appropriates \$4,000,000 for the National Science Board as proposed by the Senate, instead of \$3,950,000 as proposed by the House.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Appropriates \$10,110,000 for the Office of Inspector General as proposed by both the House and the Senate.

The conferees request that the IG conduct a review of the portion of the Foundation's total budget devoted to administrative and other overhead expenses and how these costs compare to similar costs at other large research agencies.