



National  
Communication  
Association

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Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the National Communication Association and its thousands of members, I ask you to reject any legislatively mandated restrictions on the national science agenda.

Last month, as you know, Oklahoma Senator Tom Coburn (R) introduced an amendment to the 2013 Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act (H.R. 933) calling for the certification by the National Science Foundation that all funded political science research promotes "national security or the economic interests of the United States." This amendment was adopted by the Senate on a voice vote on March 20, 2013 and H.R. 933 passed as amended later that day, becoming Pub. L. 113-6 with President Obama's signature on March 26, 2013.

As the president of a learned society with approximately 8,000 members around the country who conduct research in a discipline other than political science, I write to you with serious concern about the damage the Coburn amendment does to the scientific enterprise in the United States. Historically, independent peer review of proposals for research funding, separate from political vagaries, has been the hallmark of America's commitment to high quality, cutting-edge research. While we appreciate Congress's prerogative in setting federal spending priorities, we urge you to preserve and protect the critical process of independent peer review that locates decisions about the value of specific research topics and projects with researchers who have relevant expertise and background.

Again, we ask you to please reject any future legislatively mandated restrictions on the national science agenda.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Steven A. Beebe, Ph.D.  
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Regents' and University Distinguished Professor  
Chair, Department of Communication Studies  
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