



COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY**  
Lamar Smith, Chairman

For Immediate Release  
March 22, 2016

Media Contact: Zachary Kurz  
(202) 225-6371

**Statement of Research & Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman Barbara Comstock (R-Va.)**  
*An Overview of the Budget Proposal for the National Science Foundation for Fiscal Year 2017*

**Chairwoman Comstock:** I would first like to thank our witnesses for appearing today to discuss the National Science Foundation's Fiscal Year 2017 budget request and other Foundation issues.

The fiscal year 2017 discretionary budget request for NSF totals \$7.56 billion, an increase of \$100.53 million, or 1.3 percent, over the fiscal year 2016 enacted level. NSF is the primary source of federal funding for non-medical basic research and supports through 12,000 competitive grants a year over 377,000 scientists, engineers, educators and students across the country.

Basic and fundamental research is about good jobs and a secure future, and I am a strong advocate for federal support of research that advances science in the national interest.

In this budget environment, just maintaining the current level of basic research support is a big challenge, and new investments requires making difficult choices.

I recognize that this was not a decision made by our witnesses today, but I want to make clear that it is a proposal Congress is unlikely to support and does a disservice to the research community who may not understand the difference between discretionary and mandatory budgets.

I am pleased though that within the discretionary budget request, NSF is proposing to make Foundation-wide strategic investments to address one of the great challenges of the 21st Century is cybersecurity. This Committee has held multiple hearings on cybersecurity since the news over the summer that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) was the target of two massive data breaches – exposing the sensitive information of over 21 million Americans, including me and many of my constituents.

Earlier this month, I joined many technology stakeholders in my district for a round table discussion. One concern they shared is the need for an educated workforce to fill cybersecurity jobs. I am pleased that NSF's budget request includes \$70 million, a 40 percent increase, for the Cybercorps Scholarship for Service program, to recruit and train the next generation of information security professionals.

I look forward to hearing more from our witnesses about that program and other cybersecurity research NSF plans to support in Fiscal Year 2017, as well as NSF's other research and education priorities for the coming year.

###