



AMERICAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY

Enhancing and sharing humanity's scientific understanding of the universe since 1899.

February 4, 2014

Senator Barbara Mikulski
Chair, Committee on Appropriations
Chair, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Richard Shelby
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Diane Feinstein
Chair, Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Lamar Alexander
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and
Water Development
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Frank Wolf
Chair, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
233 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Chaka Fattah
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
2301 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Mike Simpson
Chair, Subcommittee on Energy and Water
Development
2312 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and
Water Development
2186 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Mikulski, Feinstein, Shelby, and Alexander and Representatives Wolf, Simpson, Fattah, and Kaptur:

On behalf of the American Astronomical Society and its 7,500 members, I write to thank you for your subcommittees' strong support in the final FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill for the agencies that provide the lion's share of federal funding for the astronomical sciences—the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy's Office of Science.

Federally-funded research in the astronomical sciences revolutionizes our understanding of the universe and our place in it, while contributing broadly to national prosperity by driving innovation and training the next generation of critical thinkers. In just the last few years, currently operating missions in space and facilities on the ground have helped us realize the abundance of potentially habitable worlds in our Galaxy, including some in our own solar system, and have helped us better understand the relationship between our Sun and Earth, with important implications for multiple sectors of our economy.



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The strong support provided in the final FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill will help our world-leading community of researchers and engineers at federal research facilities, universities, and private companies continue their exciting work and enable unprecedented new discoveries with new ground and space-based facilities. We commend your subcommittees' broad support for all areas of the astronomical sciences and look forward to your continued partnership in the exploration of our Universe.

Sincerely,

David J. Helfand,
President, American Astronomical Society

cc: Representative Harold Rogers, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
Representative Nita Lowey, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations
Members, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Members, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Members, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Members, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development