

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

4201 WILSON BOULEVARD
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22230

February 4, 2013



OFFICE OF THE
DIRECTOR

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski:

This letter is in reply to your request for information regarding the impact of a possible sequester on the National Science Foundation's (NSF) operations and activities.

At NSF, the central focus of our planning efforts will be predicated on the following set of core principles:

- First and foremost, protect commitments to NSF's core mission and maintain existing awards
- Protect the NSF workforce
- Protect STEM human capital development

By adhering to these principles and the government-wide guidance provided in OMB memorandum M-13-03, "Planning for Uncertainty with Respect to Fiscal Year 2013 Budgetary Resources," the Foundation will best accommodate the possible sequestration reductions in ways that minimize the impact on our mission, both short- and long-term.

We do know, however, that the required levels of cuts to our programmatic investments would cause a reduction of nearly 1,000 research grants, impacting nearly 12,000 people supported by NSF, including professors, K-12 teachers, graduate students, undergraduates, K-12 students, and technicians.

Vital investments in basic research, leading edge technology, and STEM education would be jeopardized. Impacted areas could include:

- NSF-wide emphasis on sustainability, including vital investments in clean energy research;
- Major investments critical to job creation and competitiveness, such as advanced manufacturing and innovation;
- Advances in cybersecurity aimed at protecting the Nation's critical information technology;
- Pathbreaking efforts to improve pre-college and undergraduate education, including new investments to transform undergraduate science courses.

Major Research Equipment and Facilities Construction funding at \$160 million or less in FY 2013 will result in the termination of approximately \$35 million in contracts and agreements to industry for work in progress on major facilities for environmental and oceanographic research. This would directly lead to layoffs of dozens of direct scientific and technical staff, with larger impacts at supplier companies. In addition, out year costs of these projects would increase by tens of millions because of delays in the construction schedule.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this look at possible impacts of a sequester on the Foundation. Please let me know if you have any additional questions, and as always, thank you for your strong support of the Foundation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Subra Suresh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Subra" and last name "Suresh" clearly distinguishable.

Subra Suresh
Director