

J. Carl Maxwell
Director, Energy and Environment Policy
Office of Public Affairs
American Chemical Society
Washington DC 20036

Testimony by the American Chemical Society
*Science and Technology Programs at the Environmental Protection Agency:
The Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request*
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
February 15, 2016

As Congress and the Administration consider funding priorities for FY2017 in a tight budgetary environment, The American Chemical Society (ACS) urges policy makers to support the important work carried out by the Environmental Protection Agency's Science and Technology Program. In reviewing the President's budget request, ACS has identified two areas of focus for EPA:

1. Funding the EPA Science & Technology account at the requested amount of \$754 million and increasing support for scientific research supported by the agency, particularly through the Office of Research and Development (ORD).
2. Restoring \$10 million the Science To Achieve Results (STAR) fellowships program to the FY2016 enacted amount of \$49.8 million.

The American Chemical Society (ACS) would like to thank Chairperson Ken Calvert and Ranking Member Betty McCollum for the opportunity to submit testimony for the record on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) science and technology programs for Fiscal Year 2017.

ACS is a non-profit scientific and educational organization, chartered by Congress, representing approximately 157,000 individual chemical scientists and engineers. The world's largest scientific society, ACS advances the chemical enterprise, increases public understanding of chemistry, and brings its expertise to bear on state, national, and international matters.

We look to science to understand environmental challenges and to develop more intelligent, less burdensome solutions. Over the past two decades, demand for more scientific evidence -- whether to set or improve regulations -- has grown substantially. The amount of research envisioned in EPA-related authorizations also has increased. Nevertheless, appropriations for EPA science programs have not kept pace with the need for more and better science.

Over the last 20 years, the EPA S&T account, which includes the ORD and research programs in other EPA Offices, has fluctuated between seven and ten percent of the agency's total budget. In order for EPA set science-based national environmental standards, conduct research and environmental monitoring, and provide technical assistance to states, local governments, and businesses, the S&T account needs to increase as a percentage of the agency's total budget, ultimately to a stable ten percent level. The President's budget request is \$754 million, a roughly 2.6% increase over FY2016, and 9.2% of the total agency request. While ACS supports the Presi-

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dent's request, we urge the committee to find additional resources to boost S&T spending at EPA to eventually reach 10% of the agency budget.

In the long term, ACS recommends the ORD account should eventually receive \$646 million, consistent with its 2004 funding high point. This represents an increase of 20.5% percent relative to FY2016 funding levels. ACS strongly urges to the committee to work with EPA to boost resources for ORD to request and appropriate steadily increasing amounts to eventually reach the 2004 level. ACS recommends that the additional funds be applied to the following priority areas:

- Provide at least a \$10 million increase in funding for STAR fellowship program
- Increase funding of green chemistry and engineering to advance the development and use of innovative, environmentally benign products and processes.
- Invest in EPA's ability to recruit, develop, and retain an effective scientific workforce.
- Continue investing in federal research and technology development to reduce or avoid greenhouse gas emissions and address the potential impacts of global climate change.
- Support innovative and high-risk research to help identify and explore future environmental problems and develop new sets of technologies to solve existing problems.

The FY2016 budget request continues a pattern of flat support for science at EPA for the Office of Research & Development, which is the largest part of the S&T account. The Administration requested \$512 million for ORD for FY2017. This represents a -.2% cut in ORD resources over FY2016. The decrease, when accounting for inflation, in ORD accounts from FY2016 threatens ORD's mission to carry out world class environmental research, further damaging the government's ability to provide top notch research on behalf of the American taxpayer and ensure America's policy makers use sound scientific advice in decision making.

The Administration's proposal to reduce funding in the STAR fellowship program is a good case in point. This program is the only federal program dedicated to graduate study in environmental sciences at colleges and universities across the country. The STAR fellowships are part of a cohesive effort to characterize critical or emerging environmental problems and create solutions to address them. EPA designed this extramural research grant program to work in cooperation with a fellowship program. Together, they provide ideas, information, new discoveries, and new researchers. Today's STAR fellows will become tomorrow's environmental experts working for industry, government agencies like EPA, and academic institutions. The loss of this program's resources will further erode the agency's capability to attract an excellent workforce and will reduce the amount of scientific information available to inform agency decisions. Over the last decade, STAR fellowship funding has been reduced by over half. We urge the committee to restore funding to the appropriated level of \$49.8 million from the budget request of \$39.1 million.

ACS supports increased funding for green chemistry and engineering programs to advance the development and use of innovative products and process, reducing or eliminating the use of hazardous substances. Because chemistry and chemical products fuel the economy of every indus-

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trialized nation, the tools and strategies chemists and chemical engineers develop will be instrumental in meeting the dual challenges of protecting the environment and strengthening the economy.

ACS is a long term advocate for increased attention to research programs at EPA, both in budgetary and in management terms, and our enthusiasm for these programs remain strong

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Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
March 23, 2016

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