

Scientists and the New Congress: Using Your Voice to Advocate for Nutrition Research

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FASEB and ASN

- ASN is a FASEB member
- ASN participates in FASEB Public Affairs activities
- Shared interests and common goals
 - Funding for nutrition research at NIH
 - Funding for nutrition research at USDA
 - Implementation of NIFA
 - Farm Bill reauthorization



Today's Agenda

- Identify federal agencies that fund nutrition research
- Understand the budget and appropriations process
- Discuss role of scientists as advocates
- Review status of current funding for nutrition research
- Discuss advocacy tips and best practices
- Learn about tools and resources to use in your advocacy efforts
- Participate in an interactive exercise

Federal Agencies Funding Nutrition Research

NIH



- Funds ~90% of public sector nutrition research
- FY 2010:
 - Nutrition research - 4,500 projects, \$1.43 B
 - Obesity research - \$824 M
- Leading contributors are NHLBI, NCI, NIDDK
- Implications of nutrition for chronic diseases
- Increasing focus on obesity and related diseases

Federal Agencies Funding Nutrition Research

USDA

- Funds most of remaining ~10% of public sector nutrition research not funded by NIH
- **National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)**
 - Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Competitive Grants Program
 - FY 2010 Nutrition and Health Challenge Area - \$25 M
- **Agricultural Research Service (ARS)**
 - FY 2010 Nutrition Research: \$90 M
 - Intramural Human Nutrition Research Program and Research Centers
- **Economic Research Service (ERS)**
 - FY 2010 Nutrition Research: \$15.8 M



Federal Budget & Appropriations Process

FEBRUARY

- President submits budget request to Congress

MARCH – APRIL

We are here

- Congress adopts “Budget Resolution” (overall budget blueprint)
- Appropriations Subcommittees hold hearings to review agency budget requests

JUNE - JULY

- Appropriations Subcommittees “mark-up” (review/amend) and approve individual bills
- Individual bills are debated/amended and passed by full House and Senate

SEPTEMBER - ???

- Conference committees reconcile differences between House and Senate bills
- Conference agreements approved by the House and Senate
- Bills sent to President for signature/veto

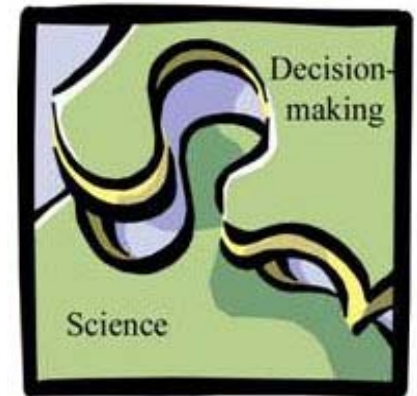
Funding for Nutrition Research: Key Decision Makers

- House Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee (LHHS)
- Senate Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee (LHHS)
- House Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA Appropriations Subcommittee
- Senate Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA Appropriations Subcommittee

FDA = Food and Drug Administration

Scientists as Advocates

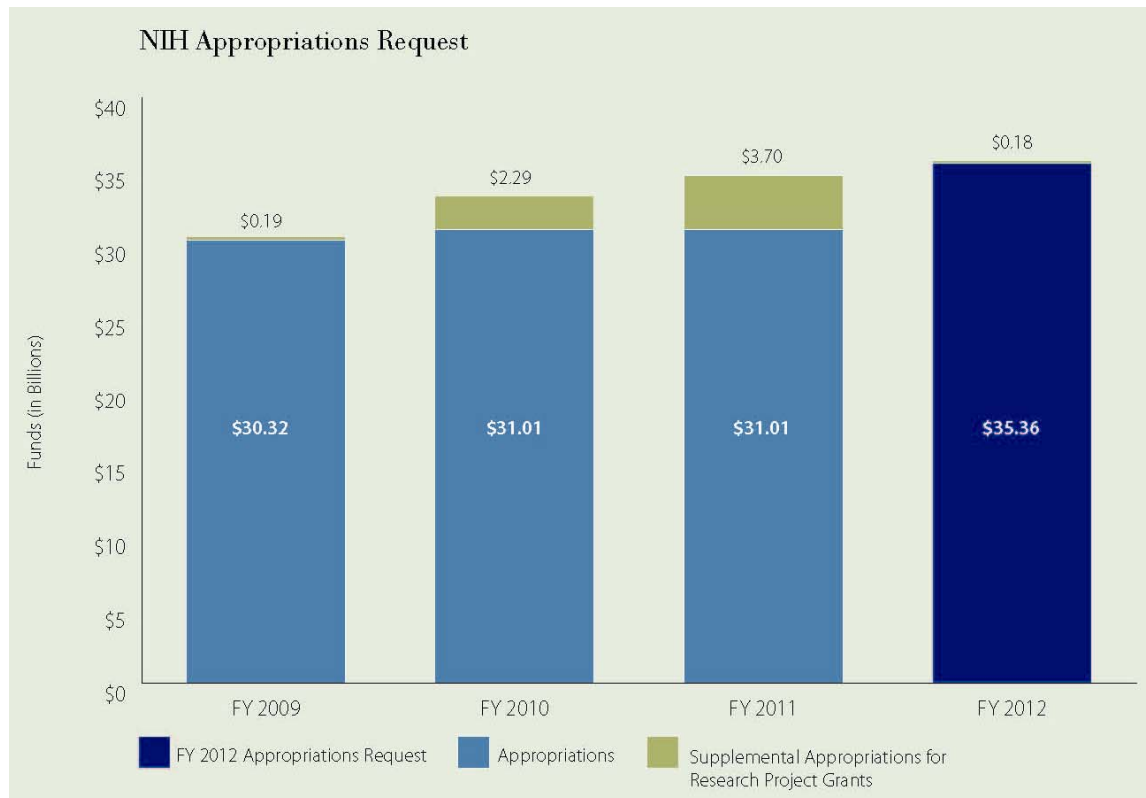
- Scientists have credibility and expertise
- Not enough for national organizations to advocate on behalf of science—lawmakers want to hear from their own constituents
- You are the best advocate for your interests!



Getting Started

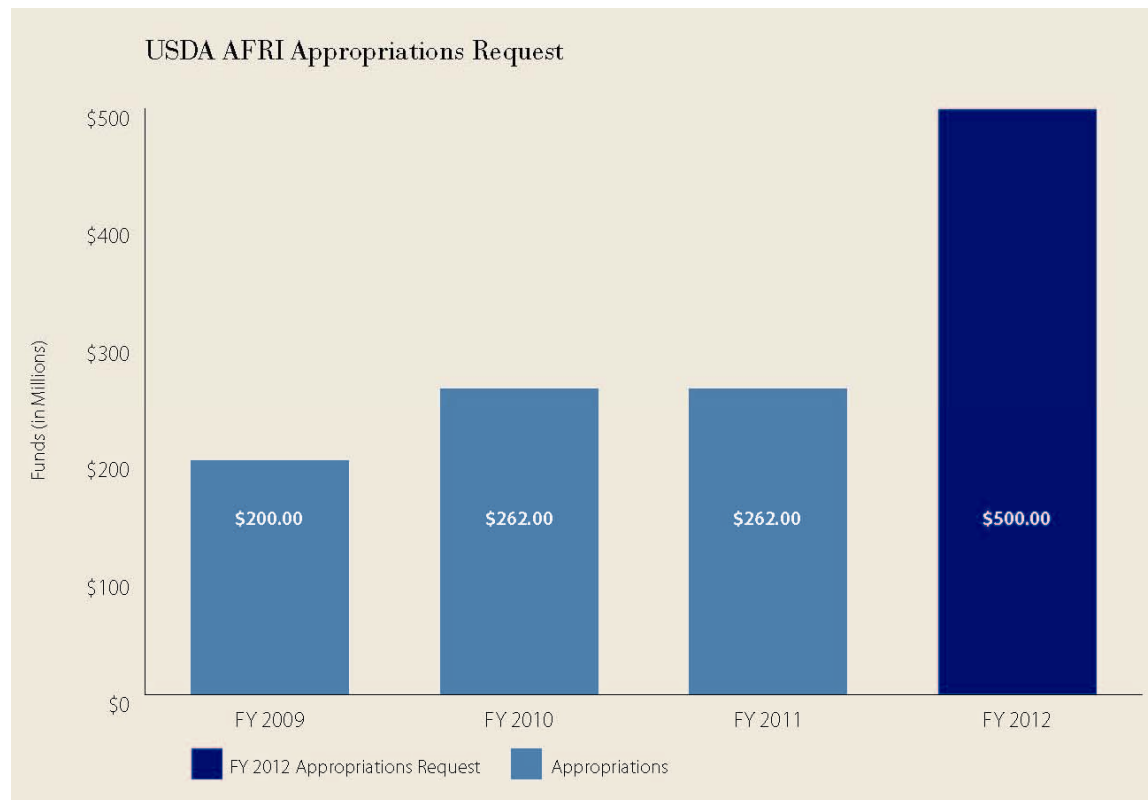
- Your message should be clear and specific
 - *Increase funding for AFRI to \$500 million in FY 2012*
- Personalize your message
 - *How does funding for nutrition research affect you?*
- Use data to support your position
 - *2008 Farm Bill recommended \$700 million for AFRI*
- Be aware of trade-offs and be prepared to address them
 - *What funding level is achievable?*
 - *What are the other options?*

Current Status of NIH Funding



- FY 2011 (Estimates):
 - NIH: \$31 B
 - Nutrition: \$1.43 B
 - Obesity: \$823 M
- FY 2012 (Requests):
 - NIH: \$32 B
 - Nutrition: \$1.46 B (est.)
 - Obesity: \$837 M (est.)
- FASEB FY 2012 NIH Recommendation: \$35 B

Current Status of USDA Funding



- FY 2011 (Estimates):

- NIFA: \$1.48 B
- **AFRI: \$262 M**
- ARS: \$1.26 B
- ERS: \$15.8 M

- FY 2012 (Requests):

- NIFA: \$1.36 B
- **AFRI: \$ 325 M**
- ARS: \$1.15 B
- ERS: \$16.4 M
- Earmarks eliminated

- FASEB FY 2012 AFRI Recommendation: \$500 M

Advocacy Tips & Best Practices

- Address one issue in each message; include it in the subject line
- State your purpose for writing in the first sentence
- Identify a specific bill/legislation you are writing about
- Clearly state your position on the bill/ issue and why you support/oppose it
- Include relevant facts and explain why the issue matters to you
- Make a specific request
- Include your postal address in the message
- Keep it short, polite, and to the point
- Use proper grammar, punctuation, and writing style
- Address your message to a specific staff person or use House/Senate website forms:

<https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>

http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm



Building Effective Relationship With Your Elected Officials

- Establish connection with members and their staff – e.g. college alumni, church, hometown, local business, volunteer group, etc.
- Note the connection along with the contact information of anyone you speak to so you can refer back to it later
- Sign-up to receive constituent newsletters via email
- Find your elected officials on Facebook, Twitter, or other social networking sites
- Attend town hall meetings held by your member of Congress
- Communicate on a regular basis – at least once every few months
- Document visits in your organization or institution's newsletter (with photos as appropriate)

For More Information...

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Newsletter Mailing List:

http://lyris.faseb.org/subscribe/faseb_washington_update.htm

To Receive E-Action Alerts:

<http://www.capwiz.com/faseb/mlm/verify/>

Responses You May Hear

- “If you want more money for nutrition research, you need to tell us what other program(s) to cut.”
- “Aren’t several federal agencies and programs already allocating resources to obesity research and prevention?”
- “I’m concerned about possible duplication of nutrition research projects underway at NIH and USDA.”
- “What funding mechanism (competitive or formula) should be used to fund USDA research projects affected by elimination of earmarks?”
- “Sen./Rep. is supportive of nutrition research, but there’s nothing he/she can do in the current budget climate.”