

May 8, 2018



The Honorable John Culberson, Chairman  
The Honorable Jose Serrano, Ranking Member  
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies  
H-310 U.S. Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Serrano:

As you draft Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 appropriations for the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies; we urge you to provide robust funding to the agencies and programs that support the nation's infrastructure. Specifically, we ask that there is a strong commitment in providing research, development, and innovation in new materials, technologies, and processes to modernize and extend the life of infrastructure, expedite repairs or replacement and promote cost savings. ASCE's *2017 Infrastructure Report Card* rated the overall condition of the nation's infrastructure a cumulative grade of "D+". Moving forward, it is critical to leverage infrastructure funding by developing new and innovative materials and processes through the programs at the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Department of Commerce's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

#### **National Science Foundation (NSF)**

ASCE joins with our many colleagues in the science and engineering community as part of the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) in supporting the recommendation of **\$8.45 billion for the NSF in FY 2019**. ASCE supports the mission of NSF and its research across all disciplines of basic scientific research to promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity and welfare; and to secure national defense. ASCE supports making the research and education activities of NSF a national priority for funding. Additionally, ASCE urges that the current system of support for basic research based upon excellence, competitive scientific merit and peer review be preserved. NSF supports a strong Engineering Directorate with healthy programs that support civil engineering research and education. This is important due to the significant amount that our nation needs to invest in preserving, maintaining, protecting, and rebuilding its infrastructure and developing resilient and sustainable communities.

#### **National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)**

ASCE urges Congress to continue the strong support of the important programs at NIST by providing **\$775 million for NIST in FY 2019**. We also urge continued support for the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) by allocated **\$1.1 million** for NIST's NEHRP responsibilities. NIST is the premier, and in most cases, the only federal institution conducting resilience research focused on the impact of multiple hazards on buildings and communities. Also, NIST provides post-disaster studies that can provide the technical basis for improved standards, codes, and practices used in the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure systems. NIST leads several national efforts within its Engineering Laboratory to develop guidance and tools to help communities improve the resilience of their buildings and infrastructure systems: Community Resilience; National

Earthquake Hazard Reduction Program (NEHRP); Fire Protection and Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI); Wind Engineering; Progressive Collapse; and Disaster and Failure Studies.

In conclusion, ASCE believes our nation must prioritize the investment needs of infrastructure to ensure public safety, a strong economy, and the protection of our environmental resources. Strategic, robust, and sustained investments, through long-term, reliable federal funding, as well as through the utilization of alternative financing mechanisms, must be made quickly if we hope to close the growing funding gap and restore America's world-class infrastructure. We thank you for your consideration of our funding requests and look forward to working with the Committee to fund these existing successful federal infrastructure programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristina Swallow". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and a long, sweeping underline.

Kristina L. Swallow, P.E., ENV SP, F. ASCE  
2018 ASCE President

cc: Representatives Rodney P. Frelinghuysen and Nita Lowey, Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Appropriations