

June 16, 2023

Senator Jeff Merkley
Subcommittee Chairman
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

Senator Lisa Murkowski
Subcommittee Ranking Member
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

Dear Chairman Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski,

The undersigned organizations respectfully request the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies include a provision in a Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations package that recognizes the importance of professional societies to the Federal workforce.

Congress should encourage federal agencies to recognize the valuable role professional societies hold in assuring sound scientific management principles are applied to resources management through strengthening competencies of the federal workforce. Federal employees benefit greatly from participation in professional societies, which provide opportunities for continuing education, access and contribution to scientific journals, and meaningful interaction with other professionals. Such networking is key to enhancing collaboration between federal, state, and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and private industries.

Increasing federal employee participation in professional societies of any discipline can substantially contribute to maximizing the efficiency and efficacy of an agency's ability to serve the American people. Professional societies are committed to supporting their members throughout each stage of their career. These organizations offer opportunities for professional development—such as certification programs and leadership training—and ways to invest in the next generation. Professional societies can also be a driving force behind initiatives to promote a diverse, thriving workforce and engage all members of a profession.

Societies enable professionals to enhance their networks and broaden their understanding of prominent issues relevant to their field through annual conferences, scientific publications, and training workshops. These professional interactions and collaborations can help to cultivate innovative thinking, facilitate scientific debate, and spur new discoveries.

We look forward to working with you as you move towards finalizing FY 2024 appropriations.

Sincerely,

American Association of Geographers
Aquatic Plant Management Society
Ecological Society of America
Forest Stewards Guild
North Central Weed Science Society
Northeastern Weed Science Society
Society for Ecological Restoration

Society for Range Management
Society of American Foresters
Society of Wetland Scientists
Southern Weed Science Society
The Wildlife Society
Weed Science Society of America
Western Society of Weed Science