

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND
RELATED AGENCIES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICES AND
GENERAL GOVERNMENT

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April 3, 2009

The Honorable Alan Mollohan
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
H-310, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank Wolf
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Wolf:

As you begin drafting the FY2010 Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations bill, I respectfully request your support for the following projects in or near the 7th district of Texas.

To simplify your task and to help control federal spending, I apply a rigorous filter to every spending request I receive. I tell everyone who asks me for federal funding that the starting answer is "no" and that "yes" is very hard to earn. I will not even consider a request from a private individual or a private company because I think it will unavoidably lead to problems. Then it must be an absolutely essential project of great public benefit that falls within the confines of the U. S. Constitution's grant of authority to Congress, and it must be in dire need of federal funding to assure the continuation of the work in question. Even if these conditions are met, I still filter out quite a few projects because of the dangerously large federal deficit and the unsustainable national debt. After all these filters are applied, I then try to limit the projects I consider to medical or scientific research at the Texas Medical Center or NASA, critical flood control or transportation projects, or defending our borders and our national security. I am especially supportive of nanotechnology research because it will totally transform our lives forever by helping us cure human diseases at the earliest stages when only a few cells are involved, by improving human productivity as well as the efficiency of every device that runs on electricity, and by helping to make America energy independent.

1. **Texas Border Sheriff's Coalition:** \$6,000,000 in the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Byrne Grant account to pay for overtime, hire additional deputies, and purchase equipment for the Sheriffs along the Texas-Mexico border to secure the border from drug and human smugglers.

Texas Border Sheriff's Coalition was organized on May 4, 2005 and is represented by the Chief Law Enforcement Officer of each respective county along the Texas-Mexico border. Texas Sheriffs are empowered by the Texas Constitution to protect the lives, property, and the rights of the people, maintain order and security in the United States along the Texas border with the Republic of Mexico to enforce the law impartially, and provide police service in partnership with other law enforcement agencies and community partners. Sheriffs are totally accountable to the people of their county.



The Texas border county sheriffs have received funding from Congress in the last 3 appropriations cycles to defend our borders. They are using this funding to put more deputies on the streets, purchase equipment, and reduce illegal crossings.

2. **City of Houston:** \$500,000 in the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, COPS account for the Houston interoperability initiative, to purchase communications equipment so the City's first responders, bomb squad, and SWAT team can communicate with other regional law enforcement agencies, including the Harris County Sheriff's Office, Village Police, Jersey Village Police, West University Place Police, and the Bellaire Police.

The City of Houston will use this funding to acquire interoperable communications equipment so that the city's first responders can communicate on a 700MHz trunked public safety radio system that will provide full and continuous interoperability with the 800MHz regional radio system. Communications in the Houston area are hampered by incompatible and aging equipment, disparate radio systems, and limited funding. First responders in Houston are responsible for protecting the highest density of critical infrastructure in Texas, including the Port of Houston, the petrochemical industry, the largest medical center in the world, and extensive commercial assets.

3. **City of Houston:** \$500,000 in the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Byrne Grant account for the Houston Police Department's Targeted Narcotics Enforcement Team to dismantle and disrupt drug trafficking organizations.

The Targeted Narcotics Enforcement Team (TNET) is an enforcement group whose mission is to carry out investigations addressing the broad spectrum of drug trafficking in and through the Houston region. Their goal is to identify, target, and disrupt or dismantle major drug trafficking organizations operating on a regional scale. TNET also works through its coalition of investigators, attorneys, inspectors, and citizen groups to target the dealers and end users that make the DTOs' work profitable. With drug violence spilling over into the streets of Houston, this funding will help provide resources needed for TNET to continue their mission.

4. **The JASON Project:** \$500,000 in the Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Operations, Research and Facilities account for the development of standards-based science curriculum for middle school students and professional development programs to increase teacher effectiveness.



America's economic prosperity rests on scientific and technological prosperity. Every major organization representing education, business and government has documented the critical situation in U.S. science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education and issued a call for aggressive action. The longer U.S. students spend in school, the more their science and math test scores decline compared with students from other countries. This initiative by The JASON Project will be used to develop a standards-based science curriculum for middle school students,

and professional development programs to increase teacher effectiveness. These materials will help prepare U.S. students to enter a competitive global workplace in the STEM fields, enabling our nation to remain at the forefront in research, development and technology.

JASON will continue to collaborate with NOAA - as well as National Geographic, NASA, the U. S. Department of Energy and other agencies on the Federal support enables JASON to make its curriculum units available free online to students and teachers everywhere, and helps underwrite the print curriculum, professional development and the National Argonaut Program, in which select teams of students and teachers join leading scientists in the field and become featured in the curriculum as role models.

5. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: \$5,000,000 in the Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Oceanic and Atmospheric Research Operations account to conduct research into carbon sinks through ocean fertilization.

Many leading scientists have expressed deep concern about rapid increases in carbon dioxide levels in the Earth's atmosphere. The Commerce, Science, Justice Appropriations Subcommittee received valuable testimony on this subject from the Director of Woods Hole Institute this year.

To provide Congress with the most effective, rapid and safe mechanisms for reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide without drastic reductions in U.S. industrial production, Congress should designate funding for NOAA to conduct thorough research into carbon sinks through ocean fertilization using nano particles of iron oxide, for example.

Since the beginning of life on Earth, the oceans have been responsible for removing up to 90% of the excess carbon dioxide from our atmosphere, and dust storms have been the principal source of iron dust that fertilize and encourage plankton growth. This natural process can be enhanced without unnecessarily acidifying the ocean using nano particles of iron oxide, which are more readily absorbed by plankton, which then become food for larger animals, so on and so forth. This technique is apparently so effective that the scientist who developed it has repeatedly stated, "Give me a tanker of iron ore, and I will give you an Ice Age." A technique so successful it could potentially trigger an Ice Age certainly needs to be carefully studied. At a time of economic recession and job loss, it is important that Congress explore ocean fertilization to remove excess carbon dioxide from Earth's atmosphere.

Additionally, I would like to submit report language for the following projects:

1. NASA – Space Shuttle

In order to preserve America's leadership in manned space exploration, it is necessary to fully fund our nation's manned space program to shorten the gap between the retirement of the Shuttle and the launch of the new Ares and Orion spacecraft. It is important to remember that NASA is self-insured, and while Congress provided funding for a new Shuttle to replace the tragic loss of the *Challenger*, Congress has not reimbursed NASA for the loss of the *Columbia*. No price can ever be placed on the lives lost on those two missions, and the Committee recognizes that sufficient funding is necessary to keep the manned space program moving forward.

2. NASA – Outer Planets

In February of 2009, after a detailed competitive review by the world's leading planetary scientists and senior NASA leadership, NASA formally decided that the top priority Outer Planet flagship mission was the Jupiter Europa Orbiter/Lander which would launch by 2020. This NASA review also decided that a mission to Saturn's moon, Titan, would follow later in that decade. In each of the past five Appropriations bills, the Congress and this Committee have repeatedly reaffirmed their strong support for the Jupiter Europa Orbiter/Lander as the current Decadal Survey's top priority Outer Planet flagship mission, therefore the Committee endorses NASA's decision and directs NASA to provide adequate funding of at least \$30 million in FY10 to begin a Phase A new start for the Jupiter Europa Orbiter/Lander mission, and to release an Announcement of Opportunity for Instrument selection and to explore the possibility of an earlier launch in 2018.

3. NASA – Mars Program

Exploring Mars remains one of NASA's most challenging and exciting endeavors. The Committee supports a robust Mars Exploration Program and provides funds for the completion of the Mars Science Laboratory, for launch in 2011.

4. NASA – SIM Lite

Building on NASA's decades of investment in interferometric capabilities and technologies, funding is provided to complete the detailed formulation phase of a "SIM-Lite" mission that would meet the requirements laid out in the most recent decadal surveys for an astrophysics mission.

5. NASA – Earth Science

The Committee supports the development of Tier 1 missions in support of NASA's Earth Science program. These missions, in coordination with small and medium class missions being developed by the agency, are critical to address global challenges in climate change and other areas.

Additionally, I support fully funding the NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research budget at its authorized level (Public Law 111-11). The Ocean Exploration and Research budget allows U.S. scientists to study the many features of the oceans with the most current and advanced technologies available.

Finally, I support fully funding the President's FY2010 budget request for the Marshals, U.S. Attorneys, and FBI to implement Operation Streamline from Brownsville to San Diego. Operation Streamline is currently in effect in the Laredo, Del Rio, and Yuma Border Patrol Sectors and successfully prosecutes under existing law all drug smugglers and illegal aliens apprehended by the Border Patrol.

Should your office need any additional information, please contact Jeff Morehouse at 5-2571.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my requests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Culberson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

John Culberson
Member of Congress