THE NEXUS OF SCIENCE AND CONGRESS

SHAPING THE RESEARCH LANDSCAPE THROUGH REAUTHORIZATION LEGISLATION

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SPS

U.S. House of Representatives Committee on
Science, Space & Technology

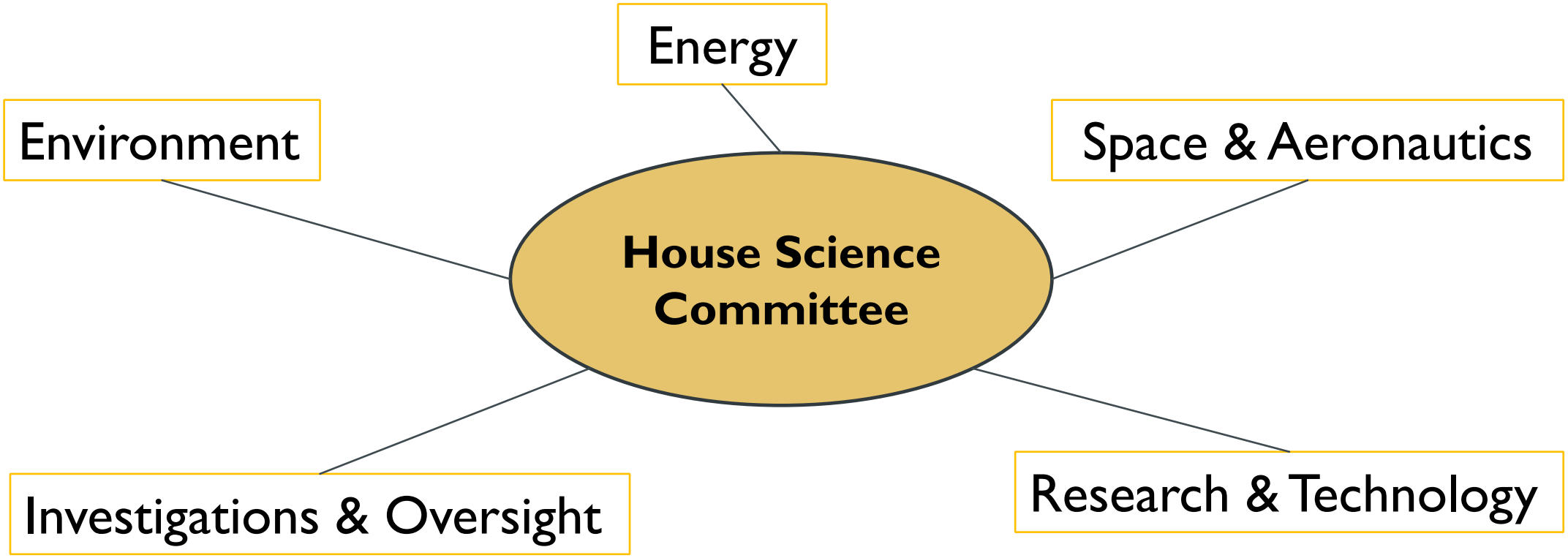
House Committee on Science, Space & Technology

- Established in 1958 in the 85th Congress in response to the Space Race
- **Standing committee** in the House (20 total)
  - (16 in the Senate)
- House Science Committee in 2020 and the 116th Congress
  - 34 members (18 Democrats; 16 Republicans)
  - 5 Subcommittees
  - **Jurisdiction over most non-defense R&D**
  - Exclusive jurisdiction over NASA, NIST, OSTP, and NSF

Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

Ranking Member Frank Lucas (R-OK)

House Science Subcommittees



Reauthorization for the National Science Foundation

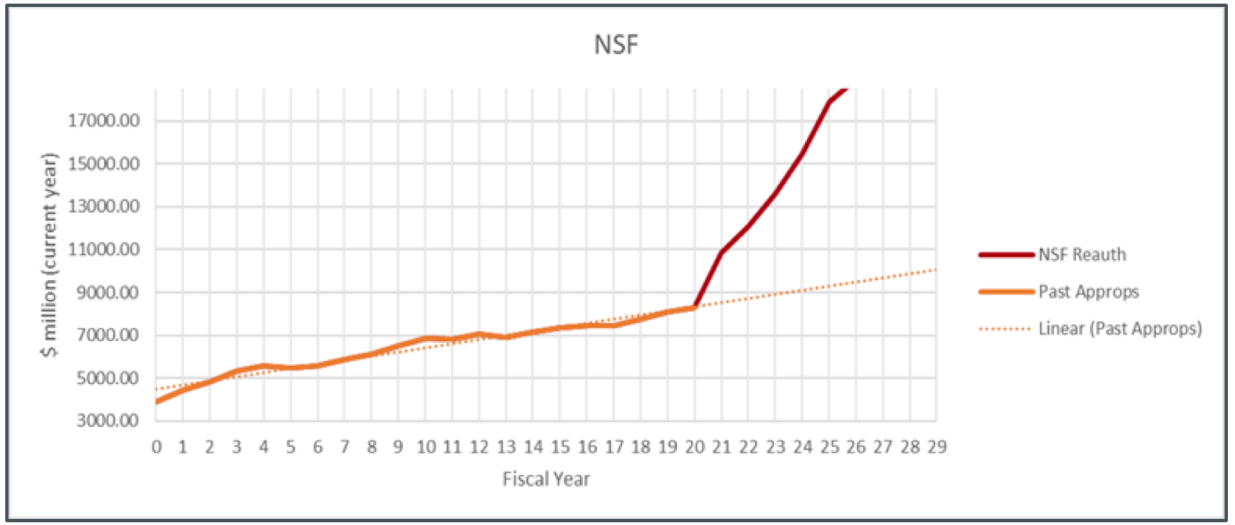
- **Authorization:** statutory provision that defines authority of the government to act
  - Establish or continue (reauthorize) federal agencies, programs & projects
  - Set funding levels for Congressional appropriations (**not** the same as providing funding)

- **National Science Foundation (NSF)**
  - Independent government agency (requires reauthorization)
  - Funds roughly 25% of basic research at American colleges/universities
  - 7 directorates overseeing fundamental research in science & engineering

NSF Reauthorization Act of 2020

Key Sections

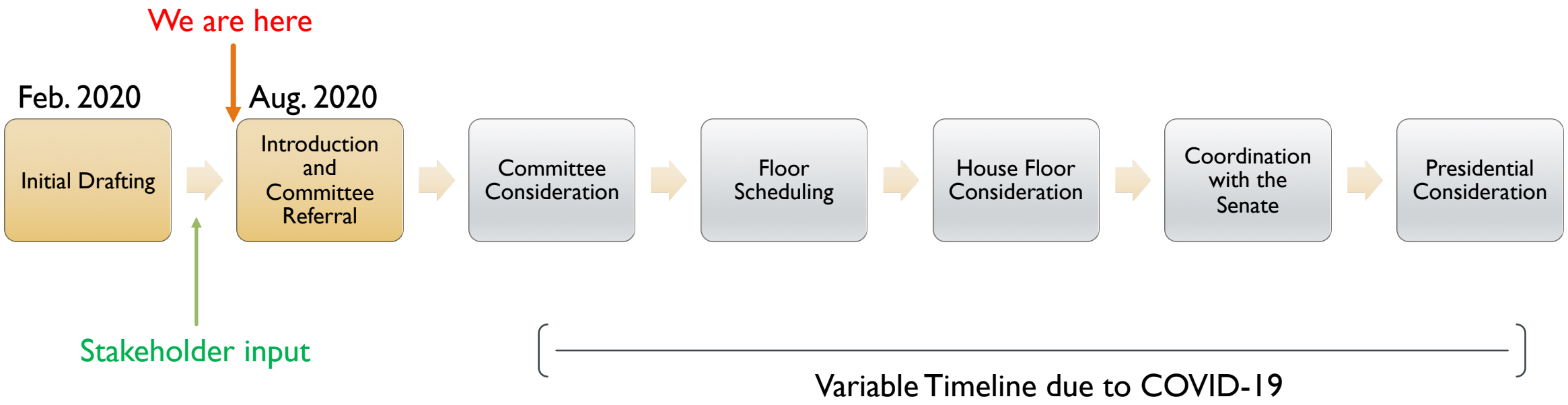
- **Funding:** Authorizing funding increases for FY 2021-2025
  - $7.1 b. -> $17.8 b. over 5 years



Courtesy of Dr. Sara Barber, House Science professional staff

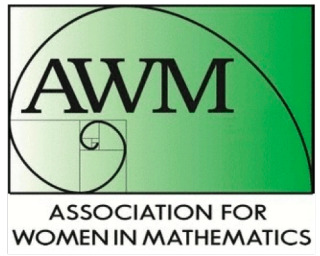
- **Non-Funding**
  - STEM Education/Workforce
  - Broadening participation in STEM
  - Fundamental research
  - Research Infrastructure
  - Establish a new Convergence Research & Innovation (CRI) Directorate

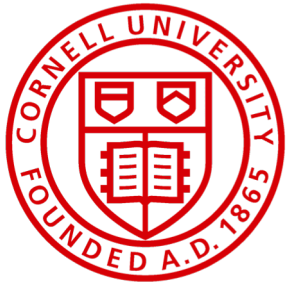
Status of the bill (House of Representatives)



Why is Stakeholder Feedback Important?

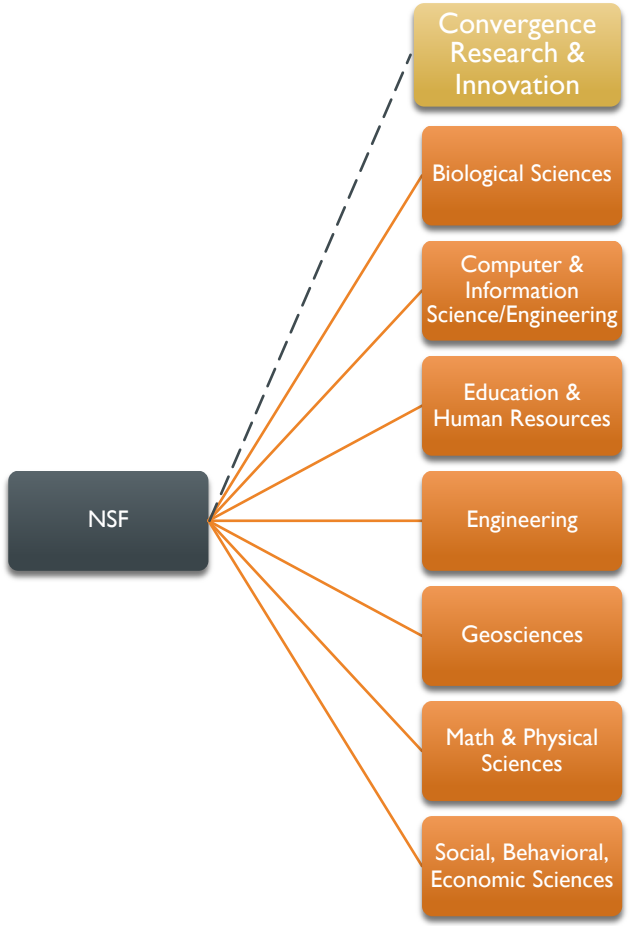
- **House Science = Congressional point of contact for the science community**
- **Who are our stakeholders?**
- **Feedback**:
  - Total number of stakeholders: 65
  - Number of responses: 49
  - Total suggestions: 346
- **What does feedback look like?**
  - Ranges from small fixes to entire provisions





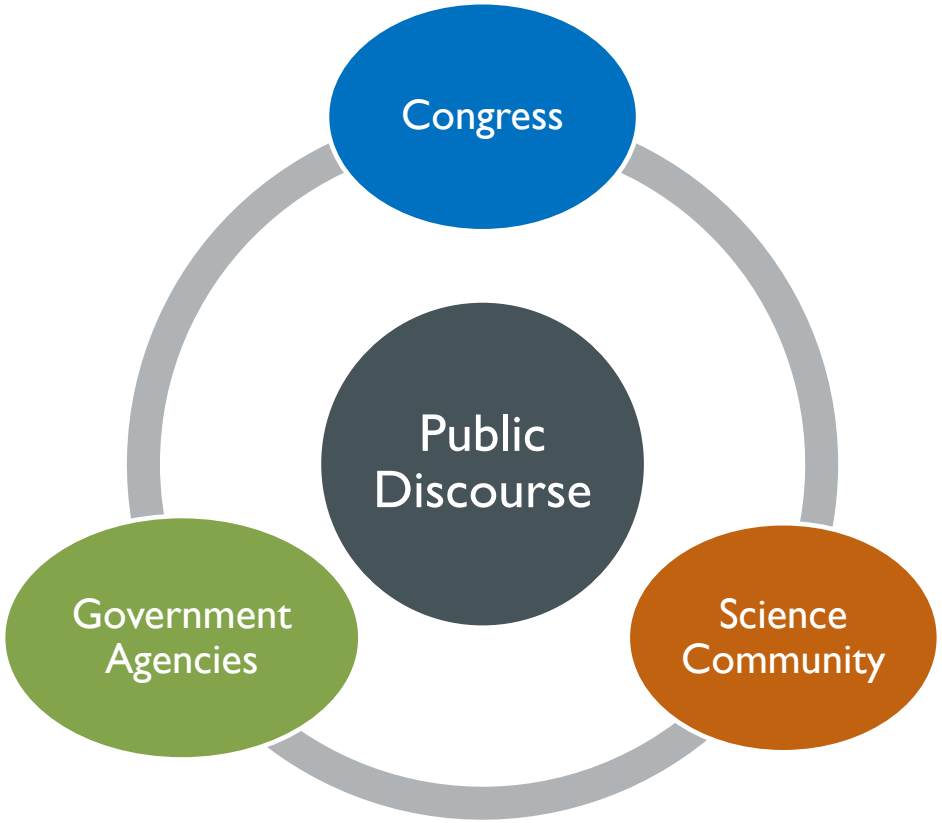
Key Areas of Feedback

- **Establishment of new CRI Directorate**
  - Added component to NSF structure
  - Funding flexibility for high risk/high reward research
  - Multiple perspectives on how to roll out effectively
- **Broadening Participation**
  - Combatting discrimination and sexual harassment
  - Increasing diversity among faculty
- **Fundamental Research**
  - Ethics and open data repositories



Significance in the Long-term

- Necessary cross-sector dialogue
- Science is a critical component of public discourse, now more than ever
- Congressional funding and support of NSF helps maintain U.S. leadership in R&D



Thank you to SPS and the House Science Committee for a wonderful summer experience!

Questions?

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