

ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee  
November 28, 2017  
**MINUTES**

**Participants:**

William Brown	Jim Moyer
Dave Benfield	John Wraith
Michael Harrington	Josh Stull
Doug Steele	Saied Mostaghimi
Rick Rhodes	Cheryl Achterberg
George Hopper	Jim Richards
David Leibovitz	Sarah Lupis (recording secretary)
Gary Thompson	

**Approval of agenda:** Bill Brown reviewed the agenda. It was unanimously approved by acclamation.

**Meeting minutes:** A couple changes to the participant list were made and the minutes were approved with those changes by acclamation.

**Continuing resolution:** Jim Richards from Cornerstone reviewed the current situation with the continuing resolution. At this time, it is predicted to get resolved in December (omnibus appropriations.) but it could get pushed back to January. He predicts a tax reform bill will be on the President's desk by Dec 12<sup>th</sup> and an omnibus appropriations bill will be next on the table.

**BAC Charge on Strategic Realignment of small program lines:** The ESCOP and ECOP B&L Committees were both given a verbal charge to look at realignment of small program lines, using Cornerstone as a resource. The 2017 approved budget contains a number of small lines, and others that could also be potentially combined under single lines. Appropriation Committee members and staff would like to see a simpler budget with fewer lines. Mike Harrington relayed that he and Sonny Ramaswamy discussed the importance of maintaining program integrity if lines are realigned. In the 2015 Experiment Station director's survey, many directors were in favor of combining certain lines—tactical science, for example (e.g., IPM, etc.).

There was extensive discussion about the potential for reorganizing funding lines and it was recognized that there could well be significant pushback from stakeholders. The discussion concluded with Gary Thompson and George Hopper urging the group to stay the course for consolidation of lines, be transparent, and develop a draft proposal before the group/system talks themselves out of it (as the conversation trended at times on this call). There was great consensus for this.

Following some feedback and guidance from Cornerstone, each B&L group will create a draft. BAC meets on January 16<sup>th</sup> and wants a progress report by then. Cornerstone will submit a draft by December 4<sup>th</sup>. ESCOP B&L will meet again before December 18<sup>th</sup>—Sarah/Mike will send out a doodle poll.

**NIFA Listening Sessions:** Friday is the deadline for stakeholder feedback for the NIFA listening sessions.