

ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC): <http://escop.info/committee/blc/>

May 2023 Agenda- **Members & Liaisons**

Tuesday, May 23, 2023. 3:00pm (CT)/4:00pm (ET)

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://uada.zoom.us/j/99810222789?pwd=cFk2Z0Mrek1YOVNVSmRSY3ByRjVUUT09>

Password: 030119, Or join by phone: +1 312 626 6799 (US Toll) or +1 646 558 8656 (US Toll)

Attendees: Anton Bekkerman, Gary Thompson, Cindy Morley, Bridget Krieger, Scott Senseman, Sreekala Bajwa, Gary P, Jennifer Tippetts, Doug Steele, Elizabeth Stulberg, Glenda Humiston, Alton Thompson, Vernon Jones, Katie Frazier, Chris Hamilton, Jeanette Thurston; Doug Steele, Steve Lommel, Paula Geiger

**Committee Members:**

<p><b>Chair:</b> Anton Bekkerman (NERA) <b>Past Chair:</b> Glenda Humiston (WAAESD) <b>Incoming Chair:</b> Steve Lommel (SAAESD)</p> <p><b>Members:</b> Alton Thompson (ARD) Vernon Jones (ARD) Gary Pierzynski (NCRA) Marty Draper (NCRA) Puneet Srivastava (NERA) Steve Lommel (SAAESD) Scott Senseman (SAAESD) Sreekala Bajwa (WAAESD) Shawn Donkin (WAAESD)</p>	<p><b>Liaisons:</b> Jason Henderson (ECOP) Katie Frazier (CARET) Caron Gala (APLU) Elizabeth Stulberg (Lewis-Burke, Advocacy) Paula Geiger (NIFA) Laura Jolly (BHS)</p> <p><b>Executive Vice-Chair</b> Gary Thompson (SAAESD ED) Cindy Morley (SAAESD)</p>
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1. Welcome – Anton
2. Approval of the April meeting notes – **Approved by acclamation.**
3. Approval of today’s agenda – **Approved by acclamation.**
4. DC update – House appropriations and more – LBA
  - Markup of the House agricultural appropriations bill expected today or tomorrow was put on hold, most likely until the debt ceiling is resolved.
  - The House ag appropriations bill is reflective of total funding in the debt ceiling bill that was passed by the House but is unlikely to pass the Senate.
  - As written, NIFA would receive a slight decrease.
    - It is unclear which accounts would be cut but AFRI received a \$5M increase.
    - Extension and integrated funding will be roughly flat. This is a good sign that the advocacy around research is working.
    - Removing low priority programs is suggested that could result in zeroing out some NIFA lines (no intel on which if any lines would be cut).
  - Policy language is included, which is unusual for an Ag bill: Significant reduction in climate hubs and prohibition of DEI initiatives.
    - Policy riders (SNAP and abortion, etc.) are included but this bill won’t pass to the entire floor. Concern about information impacting our priority programs buried in the bill.
    - Notify LBA if you notice anything unusual (don’t assume they see everything).
  - SCRI waiver is in the statutory language. RFA does not appear to be supported in the statutory part of the bill (was previously an amendment).

- Once the debt ceiling agreement is finalized, we will need to evaluate our FY25 ask (priorities) and LBA will make recommendations to FANR.
  - Long-term and short-term strategies need to be considered.
    - Plan for multi-year objectives but adjust based on current reality.
5. Member and liaison survey responses – Anton
- Major themes identified: climate change, food security is national security, advancing precision agriculture and the role of AI, food systems and nutrition’s role in health and wellness, infrastructure, leading the world in innovation, plant and animal breeding, fostering cross-agency collaborations.
  - Capacity, competitive and infrastructure relative importance for advocacy: capacity most important, competitive very important, infrastructure split between most important and important.
  - Primary BAC coalitions: CARET, AHS, CES, 1890 Research, CGA
  - Impact statements to highlight (lots of options, see survey results). Examples- Biosecurity, Health disparities, plant breeding, wildfire smoke.
  - Next steps:
    - Need to fully utilize our tag line “Ag Innovation-Science that feeds the world.”
    - Elevator version on what we are currently doing and what we could do with adequate funding.
    - Security and resilience resonate at the legislative level.
    - BAC framework document has places to insert some of the ideas for national messaging.
    - CARET would like to work more closely with us. They want to see that the material they receive reflects our priorities.
    - Aligning with CGA is important to ensure our messages match up with our institutions.
    - CGA reps in general understand the value of the experiment station section but would be good to have a primer on these programs.
    - CGA reps need materials that make the argument for capacity funding.
    - Explain why experiment stations are good for their state and why capacity funding is critical.
  - Liaison Survey- The results of this survey showed the value of liaisons to BLC meetings:
    - Understanding legislative priorities in research, opportunity to share updates.
    - Provide more guidance about what the liaisons can bring to the BLC.
    - Meetings are useful to build the coalitions.
6. FY25 Advocacy Priorities Framework recap/discussion – All
- BAC June 16<sup>th</sup> deadline
    - Include funding levels in the document.
    - Plan for best case scenario but also look at low level benchmarks.
  - Two strategies:
    - 14% (keeps with funding levels consistent with China, India, and others) – actually need this level of funding.
    - 2% plus inflation rate (5%) to keep our trajectory at a constant level - don’t go below because it puts food security in danger.
  - Need to align with ARD for the 1890 requests – both strategies will be presented to ARD.
  - **Moving forward- Gary and Anton will initially edit our portion of the document and will send it around to the group with a reasonable deadline.**