

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

July 2023 Agenda- **Members & Liaisons**

Tuesday, July 25, 2023 3pm (CT)/4pm (ET)

Attendees: Members: Vernon Jones, Anton Bekkerman, Steve Lommel, Scott Senseman, Sreekala Bajwa, Gary Pierzynski, Glenda Humiston, Shawn Donkin, Gary Thompson, Cindy Morley. Liaisons: Caron Gala, Paula Geiger, Elizabeth Stulberg, Laura Jolly. Guests: Jennifer Tippetts, Bret Hess, Jeanette Thurston, Chris Hamilton, Alton Thompson.

Committee Members:

<p>Chair: Anton Bekkerman (NERA) Past Chair: Glenda Humiston (WAAESD) Incoming Chair: Steve Lommel (SAAESD)</p> <p>Members: Alton Thompson (ARD) Vernon Jones (ARD) Gary Pierzynski (NCRA) Derek McLean (NCRA) Puneet Srivastava (NERA) Steve Lommel (SAAESD) Scott Senseman (SAAESD) Sreekala Bajwa (WAAESD) Shawn Donkin (WAAESD)</p>	<p>Liaisons: Jason Henderson (ECOP) Katie Frazier (CARET) Caron Gala (APLU) Elizabeth Stulberg (Lewis-Burke, Advocacy) Paula Geiger (NIFA) Laura Jolly (BHHS)</p> <p>Executive Vice-Chair Gary Thompson (SAAESD ED) Cindy Morley (SAAESD)</p>
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Meeting Agenda:

- Welcome
- Approval of the June meeting notes
 - **Approved by acclamation.**
- Approval of today's agenda
 - **Approved by acclamation.**
- Joint COPs ESCOP and BAC debrief and advocacy framework discussion
 - Presentation to the directors at the ESCOP session discussed BLC advocacy approaches that were added to the BAC framework outlining our longer-term strategy for advocacy.
 - On behalf of the BLC, George Smith presented the proposed HATCH, AFRI and RFA requests to the BAC.
 - Other section presentations also amplified what they built on last year with additional justifications.
 - Mike Boehm (BAC chair) discussed creating an advocacy roadmap that would be a 5-year plan to inform our advocacy needs and benchmark as we move forward. Timeframe is fast. Proposed BAC and CLP discuss in September. Would like this done by the time the Farm Bill is passed.
 - Our various groups and committees operate independently. Moving forward would like to work more closely with a more linear organizational structure.
 - What are the next steps for the BAC?

- Refining and honing our message. Mike will organize fly-ins of small groups of leaders.
 - BAC will approve the slate of annual appropriations requests at the APLU annual meeting.
 - CARET will invite planning committee members to present sections' requests. BLC is slated for August.
- Are we aligning with NIFA when they present their budget requests? If so, should we expand this to ARS and other USDA agencies?
 - The agency request has already been put together and waiting on the Secretary's decision about what will go to OMB in September. We are not aligned.
 - The pipeline for information into NIFA can be through Paula, Josh Stull, or Dr. Tombs.
- DC update
 - The President and Speaker McCarthy cut a deal that capped annual appropriations with a cut of \$40B to non-defense spending. Agriculture is flat and staffers think that Ag won't be cut further.
 - Two new marker bills are coming. One has been introduced in the House and looking for R/D pairs as sponsors. The other bill will be dropped on Thursday.
 - The new estimated release of Farm Bill text is the middle of September.
 - How should we be thinking strategically about making the asks going forward knowing that there will be flat funding this year and possibly next year? Same level of aggressiveness?
 - LBA suggests that we stay the course with our requests.
- WAAESD-introduced Farm Bill Modification Request
 - **Request:** *Expand the Rural Broadband Access Program priority list to include State Agricultural Experiment Stations conducting research on cropland and rangeland for use in precision agriculture and/or that will benefit community stakeholders and waive the service area restriction and matching funds for grant applications submitted by State Agricultural Experiment Stations*
 - **Request:** *Make State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAES) eligible for Conservation Innovation Grants.*
 - **Request:** *Add State Agricultural Experiment Stations (SAES) and multi-state agricultural experiment station committees to the list of eligible partners that may propose research and be included in regional conservation partnership programs.*
 - **Request:** *Waive the cost contribution of multistate committees of State Agricultural Experiment Stations for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program.*
 - **Request:** *Expand the list of priorities for applications to the Regional Conservation Partnership Program to include research to address regional questions about conservation practices and to specify regional research, in addition to local, State, and national efforts.*
 - **Request:** *The five percent cap on the use of capacity funds for employer contributions to retirement accounts should be eliminated.*
 - The Farm Bill language was written on behalf of New Mexico State University. Some of the language was very specific to NMSU and will be edited to reflect the entire system.

Gary Pierzynski - motion to approve the proposal with edits and submit to the CLP on behalf of the BLC. Shawn Donkin second. Motion passed unanimously.
- Liaison updates
 - Laura- BHHS is working on a white paper on future directions for health and human sciences.
 - Paula- NIFA, Josh Stull is back from the REE detail and Dr. Misra is ready to do meet and greets.
- Other business
 - agInnovation Fall meeting: 2:45 - 4:30 on Tuesday, September 26 is scheduled for ESS committee meetings.