

**ESCOP Budget and Legislative Committee (BLC): <http://escop.info/committee/blc/>
 January 2024 Agenda- **Members & Liaisons**
 Tuesday, January 23, 2024 3pm (CT)/4pm (ET)**

Attendees: Members and Liaisons: Alton Thompson, Vernon Jones, Gary Pierzynski, Derek McLean, Wendie Cohick, Steve Lommel, Shawn Donkin, Anton Bekkerman, Gary Thompson, Cindy Morley, Caron Gala, Elizabeth Stulberg, Gary Mayo (for Paula Geiger). Guests: Rick Rhodes, Bret Hess, Doug Steele, Jennifer Horton, Flannery Bethel, Caron Gala, Chris Hamilton, Bill Hoffman.

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) Wendie Cohick (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 (BHS)</p> <p>Executive Vice-Chair Gary Thompson (SAAESD ED) Cindy Morley (SAAESD)</p>
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Meeting Agenda:

- Welcome – Anton
 - Introductions - New member Wendie Cohick (Rutgers)
- Approval of the November meeting notes – Anton
 - **Approved by Acclimation**
- Approval of today’s agenda – Anton
 - **Approved with addition-** BAA Vision Document Update- this was sent via email but neglected to be included in the original agenda.
- BAA Vision Document
 - Vision topics with accompanying aspirational statements were submitted on behalf of the BLC to the agInnovation chair and discussed by the CAC. The final document incorporating CAC input was submitted as the agInnovation response to the BAA BAC/CLP request. Topics and aspirational statements align with the BLC priority areas.
 - **If you have any comments, email Anton, Gary T. or one of the other Executive Directors.**
- DC update – Elizabeth
 - Congress passed a 3rd round of continuing resolutions that extend through March 1 & 8.

- Outlook for completing FY24 appropriations is positive as top line numbers have been established for defense and non-defense, including a national security supplement (Ukraine, Israel, etc.). Getting close to an agreement that will require bipartisan support to move forward.
- Farm Bill: no one thinks the farm bill will be passed this year.
 - Glenn “GT” Thompson (R-PA) is ready to go and has text but is waiting until there are three weeks of floor time to debate it. With the CR going into March, it is unlikely that the House will have significant time for such a debate. Could be too far into the election cycle after March to be brought forward.
 - Senate has not discussed or negotiated on the impasse regarding new sources of funding. Some members want to repurpose IRA conservation funds but substantive discussions have not occurred.
 - Farm bill could be extended for another year.
 - If there is no Farm Bill this year, what would it mean for 1890 Scholarships?
 - Additional funding would be expected for such programs.
- CARET-BAA Meeting Advocacy Preview – Caron/Flannery
 - Registration reminder: <https://web.cvent.com/event/33e4468c-4874-4387-b5e4-63c8490055e0/summary?i=AEFF08A-22DE-4F7E-982F-E0DDC1ECE9AA&locale=en-US&tm=yQRXoUQCkH-k-NaPTcbzVgtkee9fyLc2QdYOd6qw1hE>
 - Sunday will be primarily business meetings and opening reception; Monday will be the main day for programming and advocacy training. Tuesday and Wednesday will be Hill visits.
 - Messages to communicate:
 - Theme: Investing in Capacity. Caron is developing materials that can be helpful when going to the Hill.
 - Research infrastructure remains an important focus.
 - Next week’s CARET webinar will detail each section’s justifications and impacts.
 - The Florida AES map was compelling. Any similar materials that you can develop and bring with you would be helpful. Good Graphics!
 - <https://acrobat.adobe.com/id/urn:aaid:sc:VA6C2:3fe91ea4-4cf7-465e-97cc-02f7abeabf1c>
 - Caron will send out a newsletter to the CARET Delegates and will include the new agInnovation website with it.
 - BAC and CLP are NOT meeting at the CARET-BAA meeting.
- Sun Grant Farm Bill Request – Shawn
 - Refer to the pre-meeting distributed document.
 - The fundamental issue is the 20% matching requirement that cannot be met with federal funds including unrecovered F&A. Requesting language in the Farm bill to allow the Secretary to waive the match.
 - Daniel Scholl (VPR SDSU) has been working with their congressional affairs office to add language in the Farm Bill to change the scope of the Sun Grant program to include Bio-Based products making the matching waiver a lower priority for this Farm Bill.
 - General discussion about additional strategic requests to this Farm Bill legislation.
 - If the Farm Bill is not passed by the end of the current extension, then it may be further extended by another year. New congress with potential changes in majorities that could require a change in strategy.
 - **Elizabeth will relay the current Sun Grant proposal to her LBA colleagues based on information provided by Shawn Donkin.**
- ECOP and ECOP BLC: Initiatives and Engagement – postponed

- Bill Hoffman indicated that Extension is pleased with the capacity funding coalition that Caron is putting together.
- Liaison updates
 - Gary Mayo for Paula Geiger
 - NIFA has hired a new EEO and Civil Rights Director.
 - Currently working on FY 2025 documents but should be getting budget directions for FY 2026 soon.
 - NIFA is continuing to provide technical assistance to House and Senate staff on the Farm Bill.
- Other business
 - The February BLC meeting is scheduled during the CARET-BAA meeting in Washington, DC, and most of the directors on the BLC will be making Hill visits and attending the meeting.
 - **Anton and Gary T. will update the group regarding cancellation or rescheduling the February meeting.**