



## SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

May 18, 2006

The Honorable Ted Stevens  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation  
508 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Stevens:

I am writing as President of the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) to express our concerns about a proposed amendment to S. 2802, which the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation is marking up today. The amendment's language is: "The Director of the National Science Foundation shall ensure that the assessment of research awards and grant proposals submitted to the Foundation, and research activity initiated by the Foundation, include consideration of the degree to which such awards and activities contribute to the enhancement of the Nation's capabilities in the areas of physical science, technology, engineering, and mathematics." The Society believes this language may not achieve its intended effect.

SAA is an international organization that, since its founding in 1934, has been dedicated to research about and interpretation and protection of the archaeological heritage of the Americas. With almost 7000 members, the Society represents professional archaeologists in colleges and universities, museums, government agencies, and the private sector. SAA has members in all 50 states as well as many other nations around the world.

Since its founding after World War II, the National Science Foundation has been one of the principle agents in the growth and flourishing of science and science education in the United States. One of the major sources of this success and therefore of the nation's success has been NSF's funding of research and training across the sciences. This is of crucial importance because it is difficult to predict what the next crucial field will be, where the major innovations will occur, where the next important solutions will emerge. Science is and must be dynamic. Allowing maximum dynamism is, we believe, the best way to achieve the goals set forward by the National Academy of Sciences in its report "Rising Above the Gathering Storm."

Thus, while the Society agrees that our capabilities in physical science, technology, engineering and mathematics do need strengthening, we urge that the nation is better served when all science is strengthened and encouraged.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth M. Ames', written in a cursive style.

Kenneth M. Ames  
President  
Society for American Archaeology