



Alternative Fuels & Chemicals Coalition

Advocating for Public Policies to Promote the Development & Production of Alternative Fuels & Chemicals, with a Focus on Sustainable Aviation Fuels

AFCC's Capitol Hill Round Up March 2019

The Alternative Fuels & Chemicals Coalition (AFCC) began analyzing the President's FY2020 budget when it was first sent to Capitol Hill in mid-March 2019.

The first review focused on identifying the programs that are important to the alternative fuels and chemicals industries that are targeted for cuts or elimination.

AFCC's review found that **18 key programs are proposed for elimination. Another 20 priority programs are targeted for cuts in their funding levels** for FY2020.

These programs are key to stimulating **ingenuity**, supporting **innovation**, proving out and validating **new ideas**, leading to the introduction of **new products** and **new technologies**, creating **jobs**, improving the **quality of life**, **solving problems**, and driving **American competitiveness and global leadership**.

Next, AFCC went back through the previous years' appropriations bills that had been enacted for FY2016-FY2019, listing the funding amounts that had been approved for each of the priority programs that AFCC had identified.

AFCC then identified five programs that previously had been in place but had been eliminated in the FY2018 or FY2019 spending bills. These are programs that AFCC wishes to have restored at their previous funding levels.

The last group of eight programs on AFCC's list are those that are receiving full funding that AFCC wants to ensure remains intact throughout the appropriations bill writing and scoring process.

Altogether AFCC's priority list includes 51 programs -- 18 under threat of elimination, 20 facing reduced funding levels, 5 that do not show up in the President's budget or any of the FY2020 agency requests since they did not receive funding in FY2019 (or before) which AFCC wishes to restore, and 8 that AFCC wishes to ensure continue to receive full funding.

Finally, AFCC noticed that **several departments and agencies are targeted for elimination and relocation**. Of these, three stood out to AFCC.

The first of these was the **Economic Development Administration (EDA)** in the Department of Commerce (DOC). As the only federal government agency focused exclusively on economic development, the EDA plays a critical role in facilitating regional economic development efforts in communities across the nation. Guided by the basic principle that sustainable economic development should be locally-driven, EDA works directly with communities and regions to help them build the capacity for economic development based on local business conditions and needs.

A Collaborative Government Affairs Effort

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EDA's grant investments in planning, technical assistance, and infrastructure construction are designed to leverage existing regional assets to **support the implementation of economic development strategies that make it easier for businesses to start and grow and for companies that wish to develop and produce alternative fuels and chemicals to build and operate facilities.**

EDA provides economic development financial assistance to communities so they can encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in a way that works best for them. Through its network of regionally-based staff and portfolio of [flexible grant tools](#), EDA helps communities experiencing economic distress take control of their future and position themselves for economic prosperity and resiliency, thus creating favorable conditions for new and expanding companies to locate facilities in these communities.

Two agencies targeted for relocation that are of concern to AFCC are the U.S. Department of Agriculture's **Economic Research Service (ERS)** and **National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)**.

ERS is USDA's principal social science research agency. Each year, ERS communicates research results and socioeconomic indicators via briefings, analyses for policymakers and their staffs, market analysis updates, and major reports.

NIFA's mission is to invest in and advance agricultural research, education, and extension to solve societal challenges. NIFA's investments in transformative science directly support the long-term prosperity and global preeminence of U.S. agriculture.

The tie in for the alternative fuels and chemicals industry lies in the "transformative science" that NIFA supports, since the the 50+ programs for which NIFA awards grants each year offer ways to develop new pathways for the development and production of alternative fuels and chemicals and ways in which alternative fuels and chemicals can be used to carry out NIFA's key objectives, which are to:

- Advance the competitiveness of American agriculture
- Bolster the U.S. economy
- Enhance the safety of the nation's food supply
- Improve the nutrition and well-being of American citizens
- Sustain natural resources and the environment
- Build energy independence

AFCC opposes these relocations based upon the input it has received from the former USDA administrators and undersecretaries with whom it maintains contact. These administrators feel strongly that all USDA Research, Education & Economics (REE) agencies should remain within the REE Mission Area, which encompass the counties surrounding Washington, DC. They also oppose any transfer of authority to administer these agencies from the undersecretary of REE.



Uprooting these agencies would isolate them from key partnerships with other federal research agencies, front-line USDA agencies, and key stakeholders within the broader research community. It also would result in the loss of highly experienced and educated staff who would likely not move with the agencies, and harm national efforts to increase agricultural research funding.

AFCC's objective over the next few months is to advocate for the restoration and continuance of sufficient FY2020 funding levels for the 51 programs AFCC has identified, oppose the elimination of the EDA and advocate for full funding of the agency, and oppose the relocation of the ERS and NIFA.

For more information on the 51 programs and three agencies on whose behalf AFCC is advocating, see the [FY2020 Appropriations Requests](#) on AFCC's website.