November 9, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Collins, Vice Chair Murray, Chair Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the USGS Coalition and its member organizations, we strongly urge you to support the highest possible appropriations level for the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in Fiscal Year 2027 and to complete the FY2027 appropriations process this year.

The USGS provides objective, non-regulatory scientific information that protects lives and safeguards property, supports economic development, enhances natural resource management, and strengthens national security across every state. As an agency with no operational stake in the outcomes its data describes, it is widely trusted by states, courts, insurance markets, industries, and communities. From U.S. building codes incorporating USGS seismic hazards data to bridges, dams, and flood control systems being designed around USGS streamgage records, USGS science is national infrastructure on which more than 340 million American depend. The USGS delivers essential public services whose economic and public safety benefits far exceed its federal investment.

Predictable Funding Sustains Irreplaceable Science

The science that policymakers, businesses, farmers, emergency managers, and communities depend on requires sustained, predictable investment. Much of the USGS's value lies in capabilities that take decades to build, such as scientific expertise and long-term monitoring records, some dating to the 1800s. When funding falls short or remains uncertain, that expertise is lost and those records develop gaps that cannot be filled, even if funding is restored in a later year. The resulting costs to public safety, the economy, and taxpayers will far exceed the price of robust, timely investment today.

USGS Secures America's Resources and Infrastructure

- National Security & Infrastructure Protection: The Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and intelligence agencies rely on USGS mineral supply chain analysis, seismic monitoring that help detect nuclear tests, and water and hazard data for guiding military installations.
- Energy & Mineral Independence: USGS geologic mapping, including the Earth Mapping Resources Initiative (Earth MRI), identifies the domestic critical minerals and energy resources American manufacturing needs.
- Disaster Preparedness & Response: USGS earthquake, volcano, flood, wildfire, and landslide monitoring saves lives and billions of dollars. Earthquakes alone cost the nation an estimated $14.7 billion a year.

USGS Safeguards Water, Land, and Public Health

- Water & Land Resource Management: Farmers, businesses, and local governments rely on USGS water data for drought planning, water allocation, and infrastructure. The USGS is also the primary federal source of contaminant data for the more than 43 million Americans on private wells.
- Ecosystem Science & Public Health: The Ecosystems Mission Area provides actionable data on wildlife diseases like avian influenza and Chronic Wasting Disease, invasive species that cost the U.S. economy over $21 billion a year, contaminants such as PFAS and mercury, and the habitat management that underpins the $1.1 trillion outdoor recreation economy.

Preserving Effective Grant Administration Protects These Investments

Much of the USGS's work to support research, data preservation, and public safety is done through grants and cooperative agreements with universities, state geological surveys, Tribes, and local governments, including the Earthquake Hazards Program, the National Geological and Geophysical Data Preservation Program, and the Water Resources Research Act Program. As a federal science agency, the USGS depends on selecting this work through established peer review processes that prioritize scientific merit and technical quality. The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) proposed Regulation for Federal Financial Assistance would overhaul the government-wide rules for how these awards are reviewed, issued, managed, and terminated, including new political appointee review of discretionary awards and alignment with standards unrelated to scientific merit. The USGS and its partners can only sustain multi-year monitoring and research when both their funding and the rules that govern it are stable.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that Congress:

- Provide the highest possible appropriations level for the USGS in FY2027.
- Complete the FY2027 appropriations process this year, ensuring that the agency can carry out its critical mission without disruption or uncertainty.
- Secure a permanent withdrawal, or take legislative action, that prevents OMB from finalizing or implementing the proposed rule on federal financial assistance.

From earthquake warnings to critical mineral maps, the USGS provides information Americans use every day, often without knowing its source. Congress has a long record of supporting that work on a bipartisan basis, and the Coalition looks forward to working with you to sustain it in FY2027.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and your commitment to the scientific foundation that underpins our nation's resilience and prosperity.

Sincerely,

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