

USDA Research Relocation and Reorganization

Perspectives from Former USDA Chief Scientists and Administrators

Featuring

The Honorable Stephen Censky

Deputy Secretary, USDA

Catherine Woteki

Former USDA Under Secretary

Gale Buchanan

Former USDA Under Secretary

Susan Offutt

Former ERS Administrator

Scott Swinton (Moderator)

Past President, AAEA; Michigan State



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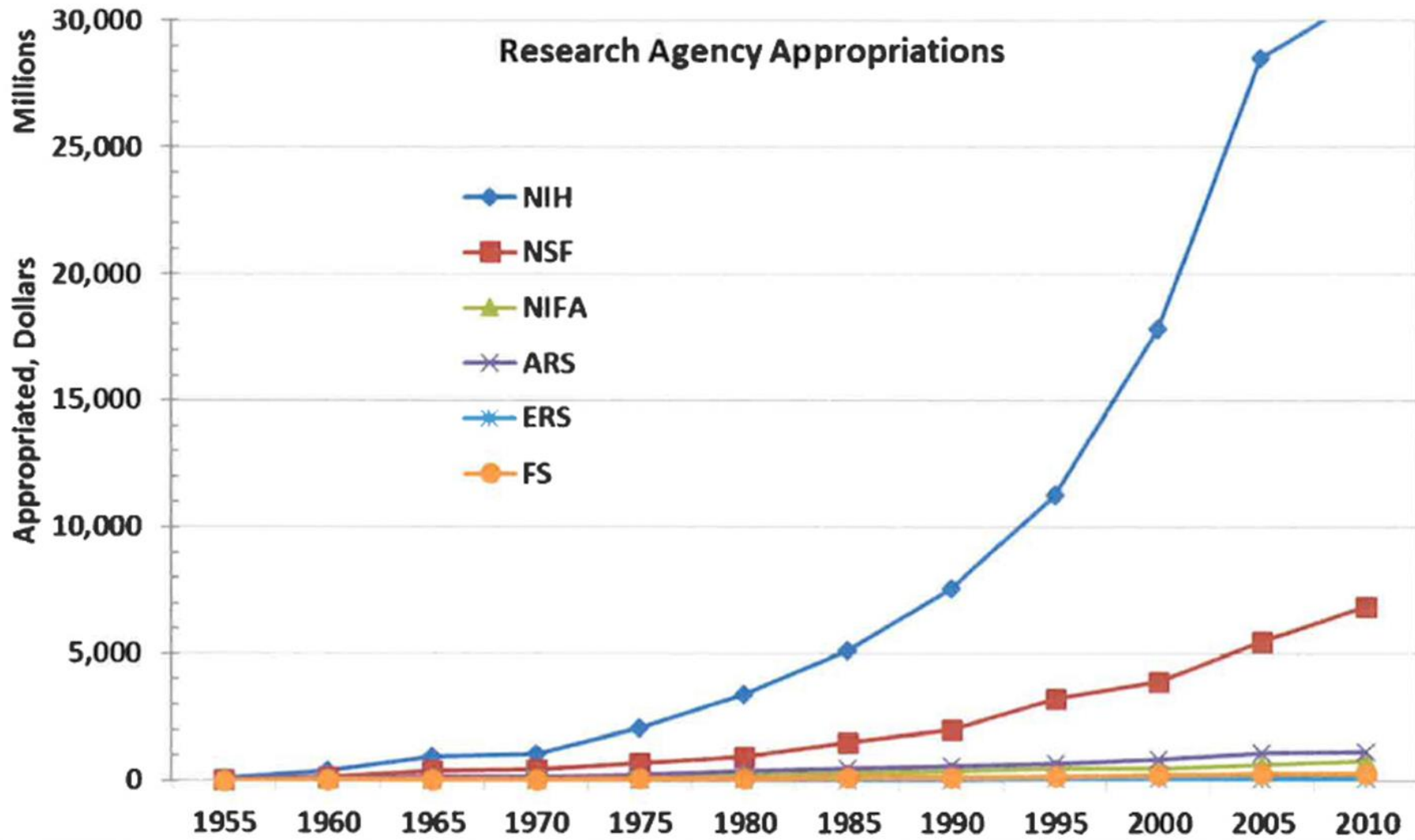
- Today's webinar is being recorded and will be available at APDU website, apdu.org, in next few days.
- All webinar participants are in listen-only mode. You can hear us, we can't hear you.
- If you have any questions for our speaker, please type them into the **Questions** box which you'll see in the Gotowebinar interface.
- You can submit questions at any point during the webinar, but we will hold them until the end of the presentation.
- Join the conversation online: [#NIFA_Strong](#) [#ERS_Strong](#)

***Make “no little” plans for they have
no magic to stir men’s blood.***

— Daniel Burnham

Relocating NIFA and ERS is a “no little” plan.
Unfortunately, it is a poor “no little” plan.

Instead, let’s invest to ensure agriculture’s future
success.



Recommendations for USDA

- Delay any further actions on relocation until questions raised by Congress and stakeholders can be addressed
- Convene formal public comment period to solicit feedback from research community, engage stakeholders and address concerns
- Provide data and analysis used to inform decision to relocate:
 - Employee hiring, recruiting and retention data
 - Data on anticipated staff losses and plans to recruit, hire and train
 - Cost-benefit analysis, including estimated costs associated with relocation
 - Detailed timeline for relocation, and transition plan to maintain core functions of each agency

Congressional Actions Needed

Appropriations

- Hold oversight hearings to obtain answers to questions raised
- Request an independent study—including a cost-benefit analysis—of the problems USDA is trying to address and the ramifications of their proposed fix
- Delay any proposed relocation and reorganization until questions and concerns from stakeholders and Congress can be addressed
 - i.e. withhold any further appropriations for relocation expenses
 - i.e. deny any reprogramming requests to cover relocation expenses

Agriculture Committees (aka “Farm Bill”)

- Hold oversight hearings to obtain answers to questions raised
- Based on responses, consider whether the new farm bill should prohibit reorganization or relocation

What Can You Do??

Raise public visibility

- Increase media coverage (op-eds, letters to the editors, in-depth reporting)
- Share online: blogs, social media (blogs, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook ...)

Continue to build the coalition

- Reach out to key stakeholders (land-grants, state departments of agriculture, commodity groups, professional associations)
- Mobilize other concerned constituents (action alerts, researcher petitions)

What Can You Do??

To become more involved with keeping NIFA and ERS strong and independent, contact:

- For ERS, Steve Pierson, Director of Science Policy, American Statistical Association, pierson@amstat.org
- For NIFA, Juli Obudzinski, Deputy Policy Director, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, jobudzinski@sustainableagriculture.net

Has your organization signed the community letters to Congress or sent its own?

- www.tinyurl.com/ERS-Strong

Do you know of former senior officials willing to sign onto letters?

- www.tinyurl.com/StrongERS4USDA

Questions?

- Please submit them through the GoToMeeting questions feature