FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 11, 2012

CONTACT: Barry Toiv
barry_toiv@aau.edu; 202-408-7500

AAU CRITICIZES VOTE TO ELIMINATE NSF FUNDING OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Following is a statement by Hunter Rawlings, President of the Association of American Universities, on a House vote on May 9 to prevent the National Science Foundation from funding political science studies. The provision was included in the FY13 Commerce, Justice, State appropriations bill, which the House passed on May 10.

The Association of American Universities is disappointed that the House voted to eliminate National Science Foundation support for political science research important to our nation’s democracy and international relations. The nation’s research universities will work hard to ensure that the Senate does not go along with this ill-conceived action.

The fact is that NSF support for this peer-reviewed research has enhanced our nation’s understanding of citizenship, government, and political systems, movements, and processes around the world. Specific topics have included how we can encourage democracy, impacts of natural disasters on local communities and states, understanding and combatting terrorism, preventing war and settling conflicts, and other ways of improving foreign policy. Far from being frivolous, this research can improve and save lives and strengthen our efforts to promote peace, democracy, and effective governance at home and abroad.

Given the problems we face in our own nation and around the world, the study of the topics that NSF funds in political science may be more important than ever. It is a relatively small amount of money, but this funding has a major impact on our nation’s wellbeing. We believe that as Members of Congress learn more about the valuable political science research NSF supports, they will ultimately reject this proposal.

# # # # #

The Association of American Universities is an association of 59 preeminent U.S. research universities and two Canadian counterparts organized to develop and implement effective national and institutional policies supporting research and scholarship, graduate and professional education, undergraduate education, and public service in research universities. AAU issued a separate statement yesterday on the overall appropriations process thus far.

Please visit us at www.aau.edu and follow us on Twitter at @AAUniversities.