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Wednesday, March 6, 2019

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Poll: Overwhelming Majority of Americans Support More Federal Science Funding

88 percent of voters believe it's important for the federal government to fund science and technology research, and 75 percent would feel more favorable toward a congressional candidate who supports increasing funding

Washington, DC -- A [new national survey](#) shows definitively that funding for science and technology research is an important issue to American voters, and that they expect Congress to use science in policymaking. This sentiment also transcends party, with large majorities of both Democrats and Republicans agreeing that science should be well-funded and drive decision-making. The bipartisan online survey of 1,500 registered voters was conducted from September 28 - October 8, 2018, by leading firms Hart Research and Echelon Insights, on behalf of a diverse group of organizations committed to advancing U.S. science and technology, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Chemical Society, the Consortium of Social Science Associations, the Council on Competitiveness, and IEEE-USA.

The survey found that a full 88 percent of voters believe it's "very" or "fairly" important for the federal government to fund science and technology research. Voter support for federal science research is driven by a number of key factors, chief among them the fear that a lack of increase in science and technology research funding could weaken national security (90 percent), and that the U.S. is falling behind in educating youth in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) (87 percent).

"Support among voters for sustained increases in federal science and technology funding is both broad and deep, and cuts across party lines," said Geoff Garin, president of Hart Research. "Voters connect investments in science and technology to key economic, security, and healthcare goals, and they believe it is important for the United States to be a world leader in science and technology. As a result, large majorities have a favorable view of members of Congress who support the necessary funding to ensure America's leadership."

Other [key findings](#) include:

- 86 percent of voters would support a proposal for the federal government to increase funding for science and technology research each year over the next 10 years, including 92 percent of Democrats, 84 percent of Independents, and 79 percent of Republicans.
- 84 percent say it's "very" or "fairly" important that the United States stay ahead of China as a world leader in science and technology research (49 percent already believe the U.S. is falling behind China when it comes to science and technology research).
- 75 percent of voters said they would feel more favorable toward a congressional candidate if they supported an increase in federal funding for science and technology research, while 67 percent said they would feel less favorable toward a candidate who did NOT support an increase in funding.
- 86 percent of Democrats, 83 percent of Independents and 69 percent of Republicans agree that science, not elected officials' principles and policy views, should drive decision-making.
- Voters believe the federal government should prioritize funding to help develop new medicines and medical technologies, and increase national defense and cybersecurity. Developing efficient and cleaner renewable energy sources and managing and dealing with natural disasters came in closely behind.

"At a time when it feels like voters across party lines are divided on nearly everything, the importance and value of science and technology research is a unifying issue," said Kristen Soltis Anderson, partner and co-founder of Echelon Insights. "Keeping us healthy, safe, and competitive as a nation are things people of both parties can rally around, and voters clearly think science is essential to those goals."

The release of the poll comes as the Trump administration is poised to release its proposed budget for the federal government's fiscal year (FY) 2020. Currently, the United States faces both increased global

competition as other countries increase their investments in science and technology research and budget caps that could make funding U.S. research more challenging.

To view the full poll results, please visit: <https://hartresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Federal-Science-Funding.pdf>

To reach Hart Research and Echelon Insights for further comment on the poll, please contact Meredith Kesler at mkesler@mrss.com or 202-478-6158.

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Hart Research Associates is one of the leading public opinion research firms in the United States. In its 47 year history the firm has conducted more than 8,000 public opinion surveys and has administered and analyzed interviews among more than three million individuals. Its client base represents five major sectors: labor unions, nonprofit institutions and advocacy organizations, politics and public policy, business and industry, and the media. Hart counts numerous sitting members of Congress among its clients.

Echelon Insights is a research firm that helps clients get smarter about how they communicate, how they use their resources, and who they reach. Echelon was founded to merge traditional opinion research, analytics, and digital intelligence, in order to help clients optimize their message, audience, and delivery. Our unique mix of skills allows us to apply a broader range of tools to answer the most essential research questions. Our team brings experience working for Presidential campaigns, Fortune 500 corporations, and major leading nonprofits. Echelon is based in Alexandria, VA.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is the world's largest general scientific society and publisher of the journal *Science*, as well as *Science Translational Medicine*; *Science Signaling*; a digital, open-access journal *Science Advances*; *Science Immunology*; and *Science Robotics*. AAAS was founded in 1848 and includes more than 250 affiliated societies and academies of science, serving 10 million individuals. The nonprofit AAAS is open to all and fulfills its mission to "advance science and serve society" through initiatives in science policy, international programs, science education, public engagement and more.

The American Chemical Society (ACS) is a non-profit scientific and educational organization, chartered by Congress, with nearly 157,000 chemical scientists and engineers as members. The world's largest scientific society, ACS advances the chemical enterprise, increases public awareness of chemistry, and brings its expertise to state and national matters.

The Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) is a nonprofit advocacy organization working to promote sustainable federal funding for social and behavioral science research and federal policies that positively impact the conduct of research. COSSA serves as a united voice for a broad, diverse network of organizations, institutions, communities, and stakeholders who care about a successful and vibrant social science research enterprise. The COSSA membership includes professional and disciplinary associations, scientific societies, research centers and institutes, and U.S. colleges and universities.

The Council on Competitiveness is the only group of corporate CEOs, university presidents, labor leaders and national laboratory directors committed to ensuring the future productivity of the nation and inclusive prosperity for all Americans.

IEEE-USA serves the public good and promotes the careers and public policy interests of nearly 180,000 engineering, computing and technology professionals who are U.S. members of IEEE.