

Message From The DPS Federal Relations Subcommittee

On 6-7 April 2017, our AAS/DPS Federal Relations Subcommittee (FRS) visited Capitol Hill to advocate for planetary science and to educate congressional representatives and staffers about our organization. The FRS conducts one or more such visits each year in consultation and coordination with AAS Public Policy and the Committee on Astronomy and Public Policy.

These visits are typically most effective in the spring when budget priorities are being established between the executive and legislative branches — although [this transition year is atypical](#) [1]. This year our DPS subcommittee met with 7 key offices in various states, including California, Maryland, Texas, Colorado, and Georgia.

During these visits we offered our thanks to the Congressman either directly or through the staff member we met with for their interest and support of space sciences. We expressed excitement about the President's proposed fiscal year (FY) 2018 budget of \$1.93 billion for NASA's Planetary Science division, while also communicating concern about maintaining a balance across all disciplines at NASA — to be specific, across the Planetary Science, Earth Science, Heliophysics, and Astrophysics divisions — in order to achieve the goals prioritized in the Decadal Surveys.

Many staffers were interested to learn about the total solar eclipse on August 21. We pointed them to the [AAS Eclipse website](#) [2] and encouraged them to participate in local events in their home districts. Find [more information about FRS activities](#) [3].

Kurt Retherford, AAS/DPS Federal Relations Subcommittee Chair
Heather Bloemhard, AAS Bahcall Fellow

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Links:

- [1] <https://aas.org/policy-resources/information-about-relevant-policies-115th-congress>
[2] <https://eclipse.aas.org>
[3] https://dps.aas.org/public_policy