In the wee hours of Saturday morning, the House passed H.R. 1, a bill to keep the government funded through the remainder of the current fiscal year, on a largely party line vote of 235-189. Three Republicans joined Democrats in opposing the bill.

The current continuing resolution (CR) expires Friday, March 4th. H.R. 1 would cut $59 billion from current (FY 2010) spending levels, although it would eliminate almost $100 billion from the President's FY 2011 request. Specific cuts from current spending levels in H.R. 1 would include:

- NSF down 5.2 percent;
- NASA down 1.3 percent;
- NOAA down 8.0 percent; and
- DOE Office of Science down 18.1 percent.

As we reported to you last week, 583 amendments were introduced, which were subsequently culled to 129. Of those that passed, the following three are of most relevance to the UCAR community:

An amendment from Rep. Hall (R-TX) prohibiting funds to implement a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Service, part of the President's Fiscal Year 2012 budget request.

In his remarks on the passage of H.R. 1, Chairman of the House, Space and Technology Committee, Ralph Hall said, "The release of the President's FY2012 budget request this week included a significant reorganization of NOAA, the largest since it became an agency in 1970," Chairman Hall said. "This new line office would take vital resources from the Oceanic and Atmospheric Research Office, essentially gutting fundamental research at NOAA and shifting the main focus of the agency to climate...This shift threatens to harm important NOAA activities, such as helping with the restoration of the Gulf of Mexico to pre-spill conditions, ensuring weather and climate data from polar-orbiting satellites."

An amendment from Rep. Luetkemeyer (R-MO) that prohibits the use of funds for the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Earlier in the month, Congressman Luetkemeyer introduced HR 680, a bill to prohibit U.S. contributions to the IPCC. "The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is an entity that is fraught with waste and fraud, and engaged in dubious science, which is the last thing hard-working American taxpayers should be paying for at a time of out-of-control spending and historic debt, which is why I am extremely pleased that my amendment passed," Luetkemeyer said. "It is time for Washington to combat this year's record budget deficit and fast-growing national debt. This amendment is part of that effort."
An amendment from Reps. Poe (R-TX), Barton (R-TX) and Carter (R-TX) that defines specifically what greenhouse gases are and prohibits the EPA from imposing regulations on those gasses emitted by a stationary source.

“I am pleased that my colleagues in the House have chosen to put a stop to the back-door attempts by the administration to bypass Congress and circumvent the will of the American people. The EPA's unnecessary plan to regulate greenhouse gases would have cost taxpayers millions of dollars and destroyed countless jobs in our energy sector," said Rep. Poe. "The era of the EPA overstepping its authority by imposing over-burdensome and unnecessary regulations at the expense of American businesses is over. I thank my colleagues from Texas, Rep. Joe Barton and Rep. John Carter, for their continued support and co-sponsorship of this legislation."

If signed into law, these amendments would stay in effect only until the beginning of the next fiscal year, on October 1, 2011.

What's Next?

The Senate will take up its own CR when it returns to Washington next week. (Please watch for an Action Alert from us -- coming soon!) Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid yesterday said he will attempt to pass a one-month stop gap funding measure at current (FY 2010) spending levels, however House Speaker John Boehner has said he will not accept a measure that simply extends the current CR and does not have deep budget cuts included. Should the leadership fail to come to an agreement on funding the government by March 4, the federal government will shut down. We will continue to keep you informed and will continue to reach out to congressional appropriators on the importance of R&D to the nation's economy and security.