The nation is facing new challenges on many fronts, several of which will affect the scientific community. There is progress to be made through acting creatively and with renewed energy on the UCAR Government Affairs (OGA) long term vision of improving our nation’s resiliency to climate change and weather impacts and by achieving our mission to:

Ensure that the UCAR community has a strong and effective voice in all weather and climate related federal legislation, policy and programs by keeping the community informed and involved, building strategic partnerships, advocating for programs of the atmospheric and related sciences and the federal agencies that support them, and educating policy makers about research results and societal applications.

This mission transcends political changes while the strategies and tactics are keenly aligned with political reality. There are three primary goals to carrying out this mission this year:

1. Protect federal funding for the atmospheric and related sciences.
2. Reframe the climate message.
3. Seek opportunities to advocate for community priorities in relevant legislation.

This document outlines strategies and tactics for implementing these goals for the UCAR community.

**Goal 1. Protect federal funding for the atmospheric and related sciences.**

The 111th Congress adjourned without resolution to the FY11 appropriations process. In an effort to rein in spending, Republican leaders in the 112th Congress are threatening to return discretionary funding to FY08 levels, signaling concern for many of the programs of importance to the UCAR community. Within this current environment, it is likely that the best outcome for the atmospheric community in FY11 is a yearlong Continuing Resolution (CR) that would hold science budgets level or slightly better. For the remainder of FY11, protecting federal science agencies from severe cuts will be priority number one.

When the President releases his FY12 budget request in February, it is expected to continue to illustrate the Obama Administration’s strong support for science, while making efforts to show Republicans and conservative Democrats that he is committed to deficit reduction. This may translate into smaller than usual—yet still positive—budget requests for federal agencies of importance to the UCAR community. We will fight hard for any proposed increases included in the President’s request.

**Priorities for FY11-12:**

- NSF – Our highest advocacy priority will continue to be to support the best possible budget for NSF and to support its programs and scientific review processes. While the agency has received strong support from Congress in recent years, new pressures will be applied. The social sciences, critical to research regarding the impacts of weather and climate change and to climate change adaptation planning, as well as the peer review process, may need support under Congressional scrutiny this year. In our corner is the recent bipartisan passage of the reauthorization of the America COMPETES Act, which continues to support a doubling of the NSF budget over a 12 year period.

- NASA – We will continue to support NASA Earth Science funding and the programs outlined in the Decadal Survey. We will voice the strongest justification possible for Earth Science increases and the
relevance of Earth observations to practical matters such as water resource management, agricultural mapping, flooding, atmospheric chemistry, etc.

- **NOAA** – The new political environment will require a new advocacy approach on behalf of NOAA, an agency that focused a lion’s share of its efforts in recent years on the establishment of a Climate Service. This year, the UCAR community will continue to support NOAA’s efforts around climate services as well as efforts to redefine NOAA’s research enterprise (i.e. identifying a new purpose for OAR). Specific advocacy priorities will include the Joint Polar Satellite System, the National Critical Space Weather System, ocean acidification research, and COSMIC II.

- **DOE Office of Science** – We will continue to support the climate program that contributes to NCAR’s community modeling program, including the new Community Earth System Model, funded by DOE and NSF. As DOE seeks initiatives in new areas, such as enhanced wind energy projects, economic and social science research, and research at the nexus of energy and water, we will advocate for related funding for the UCAR community.

- **Other Federal Agencies** – Several agencies in addition to NOAA are working in the area of climate services, including the Department of the Interior (DOI), Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). These agencies recognize the value of linking science to decision making and are enhancing their extramural research activities, which could prove beneficial to the UCAR community. We will alert the community when new research opportunities emerge, as well as maintain our relationships with these agencies to promote the application of atmospheric sciences research to climate adaptation planning.

**Goal 2. Reframe the climate message.**
Congressional discussion of climate change has become highly polarized and politicized. It is contingent upon our community to reduce the rhetoric and allow for greater understanding of the science in a way that is productive to all. We do not expect cap and trade legislation to be considered with any seriousness this year; however, we can assume that new committee leaders will seek to reexamine climate policies established by the Obama Administration. Focus on regulatory actions by Congress is not our fight, but the underlying attack on the research data merits our attention and response.

**Priorities for FY11-12:**
- Preserve scientific integrity while staying above the political fray – We will prepare the UCAR community (see next section for tactics) for opportunities to promote the validity of climate science with Congress and work with federal agencies to apply our research findings to services that help states and localities in terms of adaptation planning and natural resource management.

**Goal 3. Seek opportunities to advocate for community priorities in relevant legislation.**
For the next few years at least, the days of pushing an all-encompassing climate and energy package are past. Instead, we will work to ensure that our interests are represented in all relevant legislation considered by the 112th Congress, paying special attention to bills that may not seem like traditional vehicles for community priorities, but that hold great potential for advancing new frontiers of research.

**Legislation to Watch (this is not an exclusive list):**
- Energy bill – Energy legislation is expected to emerge during the 112th Congress, and it will be framed in terms of national security, energy independence, and economic security. We will
advocate for the application of atmospheric sciences research to renewable energy and to the nexus of water/energy interests with a focus on water sustainability.

- **Transportation bill** – The transportation bill is due for reauthorization in 2011. It is very possible that passage will be delayed until 2012, but we have already begun to be involved and will continue advocacy for aviation weather safety and surface transportation sections of the bill, and will explore additional ways to enhance the bill.

- **Farm Bill** – The next Farm Bill is not scheduled to move through Congress for reauthorization until 2012, but the House Agriculture Committee is already gathering input. We will engage with House and Senate Committees as well as USDA about expanding the research activities at USDA and how our science can be of practical use regarding food and water sustainability.

- **Network of Networks** – A UCAR community priority is to implement recommendations offered in the National Research Council report, “Observing Weather and Climate from the Ground Up: A Nationwide Network of Networks.” In August, OGA will help to support the AMS-sponsored summit bringing the community together to discuss implementation. Leading up to the summit, we will engage with members of Congress with the goal of finding a congressional champion to sponsor a bill implementing the report’s recommendations.

**Tactics for Implementing UCAR's FY11-12 Goals**

Much of our advocacy work involves the education of Congress and Administration officials about how our community’s research contributes to the nations’ resilience, innovation, and sustainability. This year, through our outreach efforts we will promote the many ways our research is having an impact on the range of sectors, regions, populations, industries, etc. through a variety of new and ongoing tactics:

- **“Policy maker Outreach Program” (POP)** – UCAR provides a network of representatives from over 100 universities and almost all 50 states. The potential is great in terms of making good use of this network to educate policy makers about our science. Through this new program we will recruit UCAR community representatives to reach out to their members of Congress, mayors, governors, local representatives, water resource managers, etc. to spread the word about how our research is of use at the local, regional and national levels.

- **Materials for Policy Makers** – In order to assist with UCAR community outreach efforts and for use during Hill visits, we will create congressional committee contact lists, and one-pagers on community priorities for relevant agencies and major community programs/needs such as computing; modeling; and research, field, and education programs. The overall focus will be consistent with our themes of resilience, innovation, and sustainability. Climate change related one-pagers will focus on the practical applications of research such as for firefighters, agriculture water resource managers, industry, etc.

- **Congressional Weather Caucus** – Even given the enormous impact that weather has on the nation’s GDP and citizen safety, congressional attention to weather is sparked only when a major weather event wreaks havoc on a segment of the country, be it a hurricane, drought, tornado, heat wave, or blizzard. Through the Weather Coalition (which is managed by OGA) and the UCAR community, we will examine potential interest in the creation of a Congressional Weather Caucus in order to
maintain much needed attention and focus on weather issues, including research. If successful, this could provide new avenues to garnering support for community priorities.

- Prepare our Community – Team with UCAR Communications to train community scientists and leadership to communicate effectively and calmly when called upon to testify at potentially contentious hearings or when educating policy makers about climate science.

- Congressional Briefings – We will continue to collaborate with other institutions and national organizations on Hill briefings, audiences for which are growing every year. Potential relevant topics for this year are abundant, including: the expected increase in the sunspot cycle and the potential impact on technology; meteorology and renewable energy; how Earth’s past informs the future regarding the effect of levels of CO2; how limited nuclear war would affect UV levels with a negative impact on agriculture, human health and ecosystems; the nation’s severe winter weather and its causes; and a continuation of our series on climate services.

- Maintain Strong Existing Relationships and Foster New Partnerships – Reach out to institutions such as the Pew Center on Global Climate Change, the Georgetown Climate Center, Western Water Assessment, and the Western States Water Council in efforts to engage the Western Governors Association, the National Governors Association, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the Pew Business Environment Leadership Council with a message about the practical applications of our research results and the need to reframe the climate change-related approach to Congress. In addition, we will continue collaborations with scientific associations to bring community spokespeople to Washington for meetings and briefings that will reach out to new members of Congress and new committee leadership in particular, emphasizing climate research relevance to national security, water resources, agriculture, the economy and jobs, and renewable energy resources.

- Action alerts – We will continue to engage the community in responding to timely action alerts regarding congressional legislation. It is hoped that the initiation of the “Policy maker Outreach Program” program will promote greater responsiveness to our requests for participation.

- UCAR Member Tools – We will continue to issue Washington Updates to bring attention to relevant news/developments, especially those that might not be covered broadly in the mainstream media, including analysis of legislation. Additionally, the OGA website will be expanded to include budget and legislation analysis for agencies and programs outside what is typically thought of as of interest to the UCAR community, including new areas of interest like DOI and USDA.

**UCAR Advocacy Team.**

OGA could do only a fraction of the above work without the daily assistance, advice and on-the-ground-in-DC work of our Washington firm, Lewis-Burke Associates LLC. We have the focused assistance of Wendy Naus and Frank Steinberg along with immediate access to any other staff person we need to call upon. LBA staff provide expertise on every agency we work with and entrée to any office with which we need to meet. They collaborate with us on strategic planning and the implementation of almost every aspect of our annual plan. They provide logistical support in Washington for our Hill events and meetings. When called upon, they help to research and draft testimony and critical correspondence. The LBA/UCAR continuing partnership adds extraordinary value to UCAR community advocacy and related education efforts.