

The Ecological Society of America

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*Also sent to
Bob Walker
Chair, House Science Comm.*

30 March 1995

Honorable Jerry Lewis
Chair
House Subcommittee on VA-HUD Independent Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lewis:

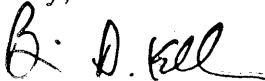
The Ecological Society of America is a non-profit, scientific organization with over 7,000 professional members. As its Executive Director, I would like to take this opportunity to comment on the efforts of the Environmental Protection Agency to improve the scientific basis for its decision-making.

The Agency's expansion of its program of competitive, peer-reviewed extramural research grants will help provide the scientific findings required to guide informed decisions. The new graduate fellowships program to support students on environmentally-related research will help provide well-trained scientists who understand the difficult choices we face. These are highly effective ways for EPA to improve its ability to respond to the nation's growing list of environmental issues and concerns.

Federal partnerships with universities contribute to more efficient and productive government programs to address society's most urgent needs by providing decision-makers with high quality research at a relatively low cost. Investigator-initiated research grants would greatly expand the number of scientists conducting EPA-related research and improve the Agency's science capabilities.

Criticisms of the Agency have pointed to the need for EPA to enhance the links between research and policy and to equip policymakers with relevant information in a timely manner. The Agency's efforts towards improving its capability to do so are to be commended and should be supported.

Sincerely,



Brian D. Keller, Ph.D.
Executive Director