



Ecological Society of America
1990 M Street, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036

September 2, 2014

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the Ecological Society of America (ESA), the world's largest professional society of ecologists, I write to convey the importance of continued federal and contractor participation in scientific conferences. Please oppose taking any further action on S. 1347, the Conference Accountability Act, which was reported out of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on July 30, 2014.

Maintaining venues for informational exchange are critical for America to lead in scientific discovery and innovation. Additional federal and contractor travel restrictions will stifle the science enterprise and undermine America's economic competitiveness.

Each year ESA holds an annual meeting at the convention center of a major city attracting thousands of registrants from the region, across the country and around the world representing all major fields of ecology. The study of ecology alone includes research into agriculture, bioenergy, environmental sustainability, invasive species, fish and wildlife, land management and water resources. These are areas of interest to virtually every cross section of human society. Meetings such as ESA's allows scientists from federal and state governments, academia, nonprofit organizations and industry to present their research in a manner that fosters collaboration and advances knowledge for everyone involved.

Maintaining the freedom of federal employees to collaborate in a public forum with researchers representing academia, nonprofit organizations and industry is critical to keeping America at the forefront in scientific discovery and innovation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Inouye". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David W. Inouye
President