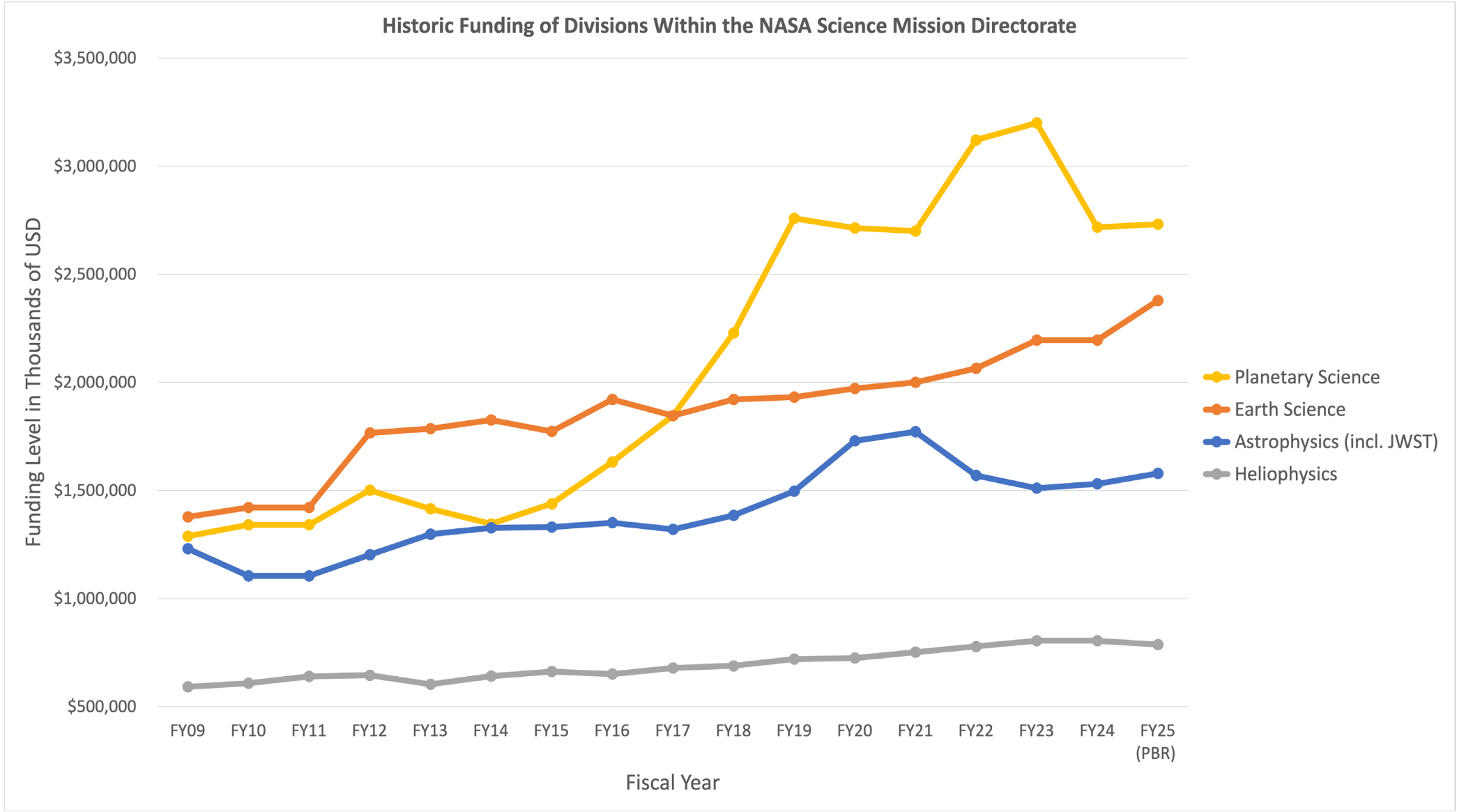
The Heliophysics Coalition

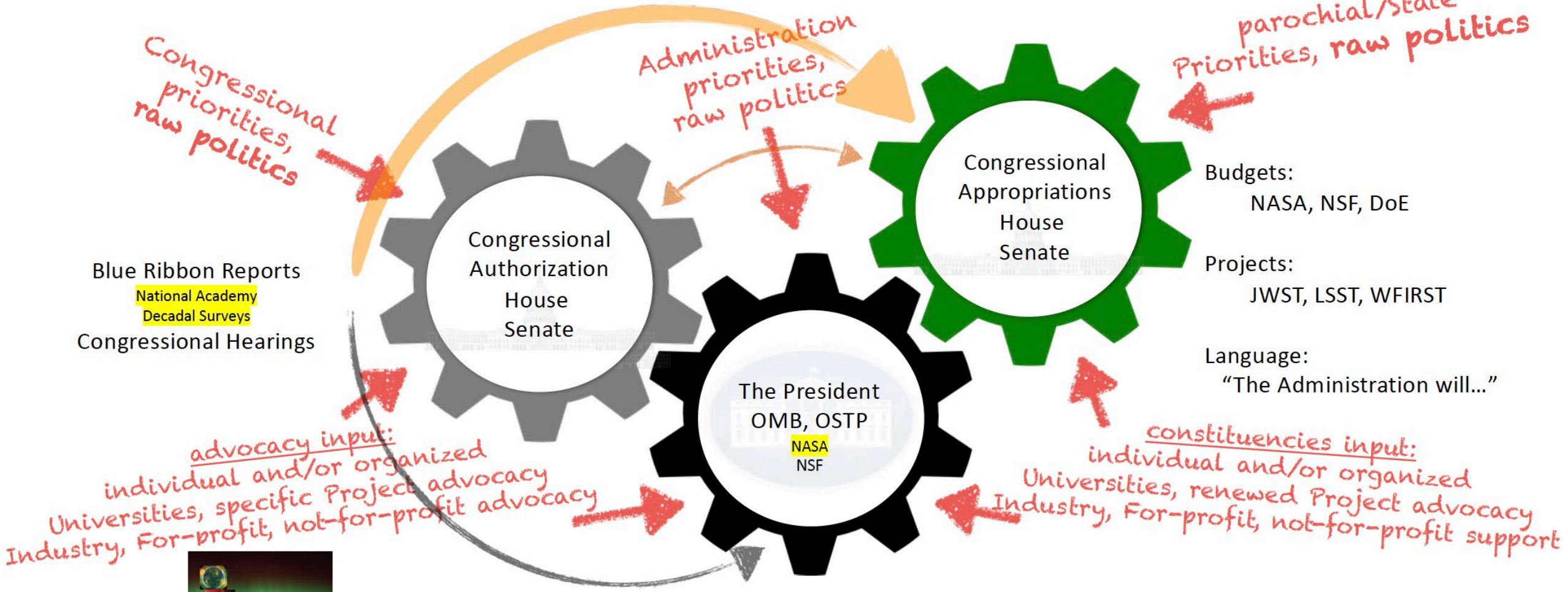
Advancing Heliophysics in the next decade together

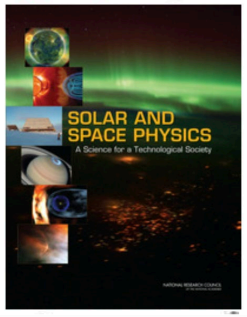
Heliophysics Coalition

The Problem


Historic Funding of Divisions Within the NASA Science Mission Directorate
$3,500,000
$3,000,000
$2,500,000
$2,000,000
$1,500,000
$1,000,000
$500,000
Funding Level in Thousands of USD
FY09
FY10
FY11
FY12
FY13
FY14
FY15
FY16
FY17
FY18
FY19
FY20
FY21
FY22
FY23
FY24
FY25 (PBR)
Fiscal Year
Planetary Science
Earth Science
Astrophysics (incl. JWST)
Heliophysics

The Federal Budget Process, simplified





Policy & funding framework → President proposes, Congress disposes

Advocacy Efforts Started in the Professional Societies

These groups focus on individuals who want to support advocacy efforts

AAS SPD Public Policy Committee

- Gordon Emslie (WKU, Chair)
- Ian Cohen (JHU/APL; AGU SPA Liaison)
- Ofer Cohen, U Mass Lowell
- Nicole Duncan, Ball Aerospace
- Graham Kerr, CUA
- Shea Hess Webber, Stanford
- Brian Welsch, UWGB, CAPP (ex officio)

Started >15 years ago

AGU SPA Advocacy Committee

- Ian Cohen (JHU/APL; Chair)
- Robert Albarran (UCLA)
- Dan Baker (U Colorado)
- Gordon Emslie (WKU; AAS SPD Liaison)
- Jerry Manweiler (Fundamental Technologies, LLC)
- Ryan McGranahan (JPL)
- Harlan Spence (UNH)
- Brian Walsh (BU)
- Phyllis Whittlesey (UC-Berkeley)

Chartered in 2017

Motivation

- Over the past ~5 years, the community has leveraged informal coordination between public policy-focused committees of the AAS and AGU with major Heliophysics institutions (e.g., APL, UNH, CU, etc.) to agree upon and amplify Heliophysics asks to Congress
  - This resulted in very strong Appropriation levels and language in FY20 and FY21
- Beginning in Fall 2022, an effort began to engage the community to formalize and expand this initiative
  - *Instead of just looking at the next FY budget, how do we promote an aggressive vision and bold outlook (both in programmatics and budget) for the next decade?*

The Heliophysics Coalition

- Grassroots effort under AAS and AGU
- Represents **INSTITUTIONAL** buy-in and support for Heliophysics advocacy
- Inspired by The Planetary Society
- Institutions from academia and industry
- Wide geographic diversity

Proposed Goals

Build a community coalition to advocate for significant growth in NASA's Heliophysics program

- **Grow awareness with new and consistent messaging** to engage stakeholders (public and Congress) in creative and new ways about excitement in the field
- **Promote priorities** of programs (e.g., LWS, STP, R&A), new mission lines (e.g., SpWx), cadence of opportunities (e.g., Explorers), and related efforts
- **Advocate for growth** in the federal budget to meet the needs of a ***bold*** future program
  - Coordinated engagement and asks with senior administration and Congressional members
  - convincing the community to push for a bold Decadal and reset the budget scale for Heliophysics
- **Develop engagement strategy with new products** (multimedia, strategic leave behind flyers, white papers) that maximizes impact in bringing more awareness to accomplishments and opportunities for the field
- **Organize and execute timely events** for decision makers (e.g., calls to action, day on the Hill)
- **Conduct regular coalition meeting** (in-person and hybrid) to report on existing actions, to define new actions, and to build strategies for upcoming events and opportunities
- **Coordinate all activities with professional societies** – i.e., AAS/SPD Public Policy Committee and AGU/SPA Advocacy Committee

Strategy

- Develop and agree upon top-level budget targets for each FY
  - *Increasing the overall investment in Heliophysics will allow the field to pursue all of our ambitious science investigations without the need to constantly prioritize and compromised between investments in strategic missions, LWS, STP, Explorers, R&A, etc.*
- Agree upon common high-level talking points for the field that leave room for tailored institutional touchpoints and priorities
- Coordinate common engagement and advocacy strategy that targets multiple stakeholders using common, yet customizable, resources

Advocacy

We need to do more – *actively, broadly*, and *publicly*

NASA

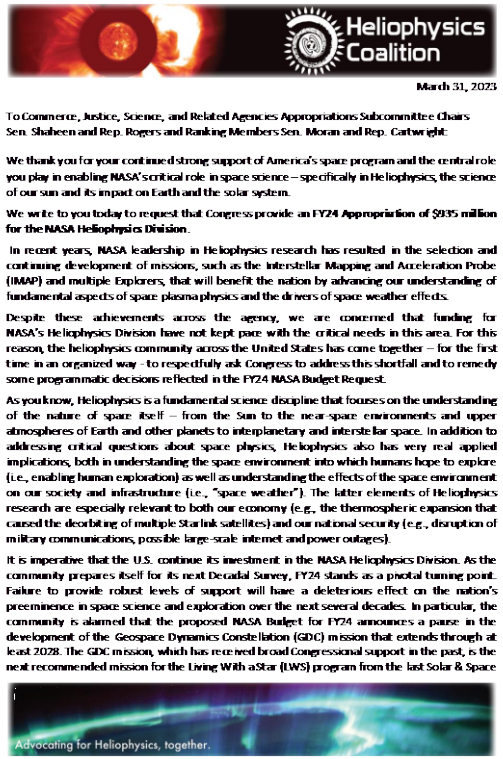
AGU

AAS American Astronomical Society aas.org

What do we *actually* do?

- Hold monthly telecons to share what we are hearing and coordinate engagement efforts
- As needed, draft letters to Congress, OMB, OSTP, etc. advocating for our science and needed funding
- Engage with NASA SMD/Helio leadership to apprise them of our actions
- 1-2x per year visit Congress to advocate for our science and funding

Leave behind for May 2024 Congressional visits



Spring 2024 letter to House CJS Subcommittee supporting GDC

The Federal Budget Cycle: NASA Heliophysics Division

2020 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4
2021 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4
2022 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4
2023 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4
2024 Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4

FY21
$633 M
$633 M
$776 M
$751 M

$780 M →

FY22
$797 M
$773 M
$826 M
$778 M

$872 M →

FY23
$760 M
$760 M
$828 M
$ 805 M

$935 M →

FY24
$751 M
$710 M
$805 M
$805 M

$935 M →

FY25
$787 M
$787 M
$812 M

$935 M →

NASA Request
OSTP/OMB
PBR
House
Senate
Enacted

→ AAS/AGU/ Coalition Ask

How others can get involved!

- Consider joining the AAS/SPD Public Policy Committee or AGU/SPA Advocacy Committee (talk to Ian or Gordon)
- Get to know your institutional Government Relations personnel, if you don't already
- Make yourself and your work known to your Representative/Senator

← Sign up for the Heliophysics Action Network!