

## *CSSP POSITION STATEMENT*

### **Maintaining the Benefits of Involvement by Federal Scientists in Scientific Society Leadership**

The Council of Scientific Society Presidents strongly urges the Federal Government to allow employees to be fully participatory in their respective scientific societies, including but not limited to, service in positions of leadership.

Federal scientists have a long and distinguished history of leadership within professional scientific societies. These societies are engaged in education, scientific discourse, and networking among professionals. Benefits of leadership in scientific professional societies include (1) increased professional engagement, (2) enhanced awareness of issues and opportunities, and (3) opportunities to hear diverse perspectives that often transcend those of the general membership of the respective societies. Bringing these perspectives back to the agencies increases agency credibility. Restricting leadership by agency employees denies the government and taxpayers opportunity for voice within scientific arenas. Federal employees can recuse themselves in situations where there may be conflict of interest, in accordance with agency and professional scientific society guidelines, and federal law.

Decision making in the government benefits from the two-way street maintained by federal scientists and professional scientific societies. Moreover, scientific societies depend on diverse, active memberships that encompass the full range of thoughts and perspectives from all professional sectors. Therefore, full participation by federal scientists, including leadership, is critical to maintaining these benefits.

When action by federal agencies restricts employees within those agencies from being fully participatory as leaders in scientific societies, agency perspective can be diminished or lost within the ranks of the societies. This hurts not only agency professionals and the societies, but also seriously impacts the quality of scientific input to decision making in federal agencies. It also may impair the agencies' ability to recruit top talent. This is a serious restraint that could jeopardize the full range of benefits to agencies, their scientists, the American people, and the national interest.