

February 16, 2022

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1511 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grijalva,

The University of Colorado Boulder expresses support for H.R. 6654, the *Climate Adaptation Science Centers Act (CASC Act)* to reauthorize CASCs at the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and increase the budgetary authority for the program year-over-year through fiscal year (FY) 2027. The CASCs support crucial community-engaged climate science research and programs, which provide data and workforce training to protect natural resources and work towards a more resilient, sustainable future. Each of these activities are increasingly essential given the increasing severity of climate-induced impacts due to wildland fires, drought, and extreme heat in Colorado and in the Western United States.

National and Regional CASCs have collaborated with thousands of cultural and natural resource professionals to create and disseminate information to advance various ecosystems' ability to adapt to climate change. Alongside adaptation and natural resource conservation activities, CASCs work to build the capacity of cultural and natural resource managers to understand, develop, and utilize climate science, and are also responsible for environmental workforce development, education, and training through undergraduate, graduate, and early career programs nationwide. Regional and National CASCs are working to make lasting impacts in climate change adaptation across multiple sectors through community engagement activities and partnerships to address local and national climate challenges.

The North Central (NC) CASC, hosted by the University of Colorado Boulder within the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES), fosters innovative and actionable research in support of Tribal, federal, state, and local resource management and decision-making across a 7-state region. The climate science and community engagement initiatives of this Center are especially significant in the context of increased frequency and severity of climate impacts in Colorado and more broadly in the Western United States. The NC CASC leads numerous climate science partnerships with university, Tribal, and NGO partners specializing in research on the future of fire, grasslands management, and drought. This CASC offers climate science support to federal and state wildlife agencies, and leads capacity-building practices to develop the next generation of environmental scientists by administering projects such as the Tribal Climate Leaders Program and offering graduate research assistantships. The NC CASC and other Regional CASCs work with Indigenous peoples to build community resilience to climate change impacts to assist in managing cultural resources and providing tools and information to support their planning.

We are encouraged by the proposed funding increases for the National and Regional CASCs in the bill and welcome opportunities to advance essential climate science research and education initiatives in which the CASCs can contribute.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip P. DiStefano". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Philip P. DiStefano  
Chancellor