



Task Force on American Innovation

Securing the future through research in the physical sciences and engineering

July 23 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shelby, Vice Chairman Leahy, Chairman Frelinghuysen and Ranking Member Lowey:

The Task Force on American Innovation (TFAI)—an alliance of industry, scientific societies, and university organizations—commends you and your colleagues for your work thus far in the fiscal year 2019 (FY19) appropriations process. TFAI appreciates the bicameral, bipartisan backing of strong investments at the Department of Energy Office of Science, is encouraged by the Committees' marks for the National Science Foundation, and supports robust funding levels for these agencies throughout the appropriations process. We strongly encourage the Conference Committee to provide robust funding for the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Department of Defense's research programs as well. Regarding NASA, we urge conferees to accede to the House level for the Science Mission account and the Senate levels for the Aeronautics Research, Space Technology and Space Grant accounts. Given recent attention to federal infrastructure support and TFAI's advocacy for science and research infrastructure, we appreciate the increases in funding for DOE and NSF infrastructure projects in the appropriations bills.

In support of our requests, we bring to your attention a recently updated report from more than 500 organizations from all 50 states representing American industry, education, science, and engineering titled, "Innovation: An American Imperative." This updated report once again strongly urges Congress to enact policies and make investments to ensure the United States remains a global innovation leader. With the international science and technology landscape changing rapidly – for example, the Global Innovation Index 2017 ranks the United States fourth among world innovators and 10th in national research investment as a percentage of GDP – we must bolster our investments or risk falling further behind.

Looking forward, we urge you to remain committed to sustained, robust funding to these vital science agencies in FY19 and beyond. Stability and continuity in federal funding are essential to the United States maintaining a world-class scientific research agenda. Federally funded research programs strengthen the U.S. economy, improve America's global competitiveness, and enhance our national security.

Thank you for your leadership and continued support of federally funded research in the physical sciences and engineering. We look forward to working with you to ensure strong funding for these vital agencies.

Sincerely,

Task Force on American Innovation



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