November 2, 2015

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
2406 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
2365 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
503 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

On behalf of the undersigned coalitions, which represent over 500 combined member organizations—incorporating the voices of industry, scientists, and higher education in the United States—we applaud Congress for taking the first step toward averting the harmful impacts of sequester-level discretionary spending caps and a year-long continuing resolution on the American scientific enterprise. As you allocate the additional funding made available under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, we urge you to make strong investments in America’s innovation ecosystem one of your highest priorities by increasing federal research funding by at least 5.2 percent above FY 2015 levels—the same level of increase to discretionary spending.

We encourage you to build upon the bipartisan commitment already evident in FY 2016 appropriations bills, and enact legislation that provides real growth for federal investments in research and development across the board. Our recommendation echoes that of over 300 organizations from all fifty states representing American industry, higher education, science, and engineering, and a group of senior corporate leaders who recently endorsed the statement Innovation: An American Imperative (see attached). This statement urges Congress to enact policies and make investments that ensure the United States remains the global innovation leader.

Sequestration and the failure of federal research and development funding to keep pace with inflation in recent years are eroding our nation’s capacity to innovate. Federal agencies’ ability to fund cutting-edge research and recruit and retain scientific talent for intramural research has suffered and so has our nation’s ability to capitalize on discoveries that could benefit society in ways not yet realized. While the U.S. has been holding overall federal research funding flat, other nations such as China and South Korea and a number of European countries have been making long term commitments to robust investments in research. If we continue on our current path, we risk creating an innovation deficit, as other countries work to create an innovation dividend.

We urge you to take this opportunity to act decisively in favor of American innovation so that our nation’s economic, health, and national security will prosper for many years in the future.

Sincerely,

Dustin Todd  
Co-Chair, Task Force on American Innovation  
Semiconductor Industry Association

Michael Fox  
Co-Chair, Coalition for Aerospace and Science  
Aerospace Industries Association, Civil Space Committee

The Task Force on American Innovation (TFAI) is an alliance of America’s leading companies and business associations, research university associations, and scientific societies that advocates on behalf of federal funding of basic research in the physical sciences and engineering.

The Coalition for Aerospace and Science (CAS) is an alliance of over 50 industry, university and science organizations united in our support for robust and sustained federal funding for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
Jennifer Greenamoyer  
Co-chair, **Coalition for National Security Research**  
American Institute of Physics

*The Coalition for National Security Research* is a broad-based coalition of 74 members including industry, research universities and institutes, and scientific and professional associations committed to a strong Defense Science and Technology Program.

Paul Doucette  
Co-Chair, **Energy Sciences Coalition**  
Battelle

*The Energy Sciences Coalition (ESC)* is a broad-based coalition of organizations representing scientists, engineers and mathematicians in universities, industry and national laboratories who are committed to supporting and advancing the scientific research programs of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science.

Sam Rankin  
Chair, **Coalition for National Science Funding**  
American Mathematical Society

*The Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF)* is an alliance of over 140 professional organizations, universities and businesses united by a concern for the future vitality of the national science, mathematics, and engineering enterprise.

Jon Groteboer  
President, **The Science Coalition**  
Harvard University

*The Science Coalition* a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of more than 50 of the nation’s leading public and private research universities that is dedicated to sustaining the federal government’s investment in basic scientific research as a means to stimulate the economy, spur innovation and drive America’s global competitiveness.

Jennifer Poulakidas  
Co-President, **United for Medical Research**  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

*United for Medical Research (UMR)* is a coalition of leading research institutions, patient and health advocates, and private industry that have joined together to seek steady increases in funding for the National Institutes of Health.

Juliane Baron  
Chair, **Friends of the Institute for Education Sciences**  
American Educational Research Association

*The Friends of the Institute of Education Sciences* is support the critical research, data, statistics and evaluation programs at IES. Our mission is to advance the objectives of IES and encourage federal investment to conduct the highest quality education research, data collection, evaluations and dissemination at IES.
The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Coalition is a coalition of scientific societies and science advocacy organizations who support full appropriation of the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) competitive grants program over time.

R. Thomas Van Arsdall
Executive Director, National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research
President, Van Arsdall and Associates

The National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (NC-FAR) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, consensus-based and customer-led coalition that serves as a forum and a unified voice in support of sustaining and increasing public investment at the national level in food and agricultural research, extension and education.

Alison Mize
Co-Chair, Biological and Ecological Sciences Coalition
Ecological Society of America

Robert Gropp, Ph.D.
Co-Chair, Biological and Ecological Sciences Coalition
American Institute of Biological Sciences

The Biological and Ecological Sciences Coalition (BESC) is an alliance of scientific and professional societies, associations, and academic institutions are united by a goal to enhance awareness and appreciation for the biological and ecological sciences on Capitol Hill, at the White House, and in federal agencies.

The USGS Coalition The USGS Coalition is an alliance of over 70 organizations united by a commitment to the continued vitality of the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and its ability to provide critical data and services to the nation.

David Moore
Executive Director, Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research
Association of American Medical Colleges

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research is a coalition of patient and voluntary health groups, medical and scientific societies, academic and research organizations, and industry that support enhancing the federal investment in the biomedical, behavioral, and population-based research conducted and supported by the NIH.

CC: The Honorable Mitch McConnell
The Honorable Richard Shelby
The Honorable Lamar Alexander
The Honorable Susan Collins
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
The Honorable Lindsey Graham
The Honorable Mark Kirk
The Honorable Roy Blunt
The Honorable David E. Price
The Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard
The Honorable Sam Farr
The Honorable Chaka Fattah
The Honorable Sanford D. Bishop
The Honorable Barbara Lee
The Honorable Michael M. Honda
The Honorable Betty McCollum
The Honorable Steve Israel
The Honorable Tim Ryan
The Honorable C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz
The Honorable Henry Cuellar
The Honorable Chellie Pingree
The Honorable Mike Quigley
The Honorable Derek Kilmer
INNOVATION: AN AMERICAN IMPERATIVE

A call to action by American industry, higher education, science, and engineering leaders urging Congress to enact policies and make investments that ensure the United States remains the global innovation leader.

Our nation knows what it takes to innovate: a sustained commitment to scientific research, a world-class workforce, and an economic climate that rewards entrepreneurship and innovation. As the most dynamic and prosperous nation in the world, the United States has long benefited from policies and investments that have promoted innovation and in turn driven productivity and economic growth, bolstered American trade, ensured our health and national security, and safeguarded the American dream. Our leadership is now at risk because of years of under-prioritizing federal scientific research investments and policies that promote innovation.

Now is not the time to rest on past success. As noted by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in its 2014 Report Restoring the Foundation: The Vital Role of Research in Preserving the American Dream, “There is a deficit between what America is investing and what it should be investing to remain competitive, not only in research but in innovation and job creation.” Competitor nations are challenging our leadership by copying our playbook for success. At the same time our nation’s support for scientific research and innovation is stagnating. If these trends continue, other countries will soon surpass the United States as the global innovation leader.

We must heed the warnings in the Restoring the Foundation report and other salient reports of the past decade and act decisively. In particular, Congress must:

**Renew the federal commitment to scientific discovery**
by ending sequestration’s deep cuts to discretionary spending caps and providing steady and sustained real growth in funding of at least four percent for basic scientific research at: the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Energy’s Office of Science, the Department of Defense, NASA, the National Institute of Standards and Technology, USDA, and NOAA;

**Make permanent a strengthened federal R&D tax credit**
as a part of comprehensive tax reform to encourage more private-sector innovation investment here in America instead of in competitor countries;

**Improve student achievement in science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM)**
through increased funding of proven programs and incentives for science and math teacher recruitment and professional development;

**Reform U.S. visa policy**
to welcome and keep highly educated international professionals, particularly those holding STEM degrees from U.S. universities;

**Take steps to streamline or eliminate costly and inefficient regulations**
and practices governing federally funded research to help unburden researchers to focus more time on conducting research and training the next generation of scientists, engineers, health care professionals, and business leaders;

**Reaffirm merit-based peer review**
as the primary mechanism major federal agencies should employ in making competitive scientific research grants to ensure the most effective use of taxpayer dollars; and

**Stimulate further improvements in advanced manufacturing**
through support for programs aimed at accelerating manufacturing innovation and new federal-industry-academic partnerships.

We, the signatories, urge support for these actions to keep the United States the global innovation leader. We stand ready to do our part.