

March xx, 2014

The Honorable John Culberson  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
H-309, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chaka Fattah  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
2301 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Fattah:

We write to respectfully request that the National Science Foundation (NSF) receives at least \$7.724 billion in funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Commerce, Justice, and Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

Investing in the National Science Foundation is in our country's best interest. Career opportunities in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields are increasing but our nation is not producing the workforce needed to meet those demands. *U.S. News and World Report* and Georgetown University researchers estimate there will be a shortage of five million STEM professionals by 2020 unless we begin training the workforce of the future. Our nation ranked 27<sup>th</sup> in math and 20<sup>th</sup> in science performance when compared to our peer nations. We cannot afford to continue to fall further behind in STEM education.

The NSF is crucial to developing our workforce and remaining economically strong. One out of every four basic research projects at colleges and universities across the U.S. is supported by the NSF. The NSF is the only federal agency specifically responsible for supporting essential education and research across all science and engineering fields. This requested level of funding will enable 356,000 researchers, including teachers and students across the country, to address some of our society's most pressing concerns through 12,000 individual NSF awards. NSF funding has provided the training for millions of researchers to enter the skilled workforce and help the U.S. compete in an increasingly competitive global economy.

The innovation inspired by the NSF has significant and long-term economic benefits for our country. Research supported by the NSF has been expanded upon and applied commercially by domestic companies, benefiting the private sector and our nation's economy. Breakthroughs attributed to NSF-funded research have spurred products such as advanced radar systems, high-definition video conferencing, and solar energy components, which have created jobs and helped companies grow. NSF research has also made us safer through innovation in explosive material detection and improved storm and disaster planning.

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As our competitors across the globe invest in developing modern and inventive labor forces, our country will fall short if we fail to invest in research now. We must commit to strengthening our research capacities and prepare future generations to help our nation remain a world economic leader. We respectfully request your support to ensure that the NSF receives at least \$7.724 billion for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. We feel this amount is the minimum level of funding needed to ensure we have the resources to remain globally competitive.

Thank you very much.

Very truly yours,

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G. K. Butterfield  
Member of Congress

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David B. McKinley, P.E.  
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress