

June 30th, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
U.S. Senate

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders Schumer, McCarthy, and McConnell:

Congress is poised to significantly strengthen our nation's competitive advantage in science and innovation to the benefit of American economic competitiveness, security, and prosperity. As leading science, engineering, and higher education organizations – representing hundreds of thousands of American researchers and educators – we urge your concerted attention to reach a final enactment by the end of July on H.R. 4521, the America Creating Opportunities for Manufacturing, Pre-Eminence in Technology, and Economic Strength (COMPETES) Act, and S. 1260, the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act (USICA).

Our global competitors are not sitting idle. The need for this legislation is broadly recognized, and delay or failure should not be an option. We believe sensible bipartisan compromises can be reached on many of the outstanding issues and that a final agreement coupled with supplemental funding would bolster U.S. competitiveness, address supply chain issues, and enhance U.S. security.

Key aspects of the House and Senate bills are quite consistent with each other. While it is routine in Washington to focus on differences, the most striking feature of the science and technology portions of the two bills is how similar they are in their goals and their policy approaches.

For instance, both bills would:

- Authorize the creation of a flexible new Directorate at the National Science Foundation empowered to creatively fund research aimed at meeting specific practical goals, including making the U.S. more competitive.
- Authorize significant and needed funding increases for all aspects of the National Science Foundation and for key innovation-oriented programs of the Department of Energy;
- Authorize the creation of a network of regional tech hubs to ensure that the benefits of research and innovation accrue to this nation's diverse communities and geographies;
- Authorize the creation of a National Engineering Biology Research and Development Initiative to build a diverse bio-workforce and advance innovation;

- Expand the number and kinds of students and institutions involved in STEM research and education through a variety of measures, including new fellowships and traineeships, and programs to strengthen the success rate of institutions competing for NSF funding;
- Require assessments of the U.S. position in science and technology globally to enable the development of a comprehensive national strategy for U.S. leadership in critical and emerging domains.

These and other similar measures would strengthen American science and innovation and make the U.S. more competitive and more secure for years to come. We recognize there are still important issues to be worked out, including the research security provisions, but we believe this can be achieved given the agreement on overall goals and approaches.

It is also vital to ensure that the programs that are strengthened and created by the final bill are not just aspirations. Neither bill would provide the actual funding needed to implement the shared vision articulated in the legislation. We urge Congress to make a down payment on American competitiveness by adding \$10 billion in supplemental appropriations for the National Science Foundation, Department of Energy, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology as part of a final agreement. Making this initial investment would jumpstart our nation's science and innovation enterprise as we seek to reclaim our competitive advantage.

Similarly, we support the bipartisan funding of \$52 billion in appropriations for the domestic semiconductor manufacturing industry to ensure U.S. excellence in this crucial sector that is driven by continued advancements in science and engineering. We urge that the CHIPS package remain in the overall legislation and that it not be separated. Intel's recent decision to delay breaking ground for the Ohio semiconductor manufacturing plant underscores the need to move quickly. Delay in passing a final conference agreement with CHIPS would waste valuable time that competitor nations will undoubtedly use to further challenge U.S. leadership in semiconductors and critical research areas such as quantum information science, artificial intelligence, robotics, cybersecurity, biotechnology, and advanced communications technologies.

After several years of work, Congress is now on the cusp of making major policy improvements and needed investments that will enable the U.S. to remain the leader in science and technology. The creative, focused approaches in the legislation need to become law, along with the funding to make them a reality. We urge swift action and are committed to working with you to this end.

Sincerely,

American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research
American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Astronomical Society
American Chemical Society
American Geophysical Union
American Geosciences Institute
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering
American Institute of Biological Sciences
American Mathematical Society
American Physical Society

American Psychiatric Association
American Psychological Association
American Society for Cell Biology
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Plant Biologists
Association for Psychological Science
Association for Women in Science
Association of American Universities
Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities
Association of Science and Technology Centers
Biophysical Society
Coalition for the Life Sciences
Crop Science Society of America
Ecological Society of America
Federation of American Scientists
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences
Geological Society of America
Natural Science Collections Alliance
Optica (formerly OSA) Advancing Optics and Photonics Worldwide
Population Association of America
Research!America
Science and Technology Action Committee
Soil Science Society of America
The Gerontological Society of America
The Oceanography Society

cc: All Members of the U.S. House of Representatives
All Members of the U.S. Senate