



External Affairs & Communications

Glenn S. Ruskin

Vice President

December 3, 2019

The Honorable Paul Tonko
2369 Rayburn House Office building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Tonko,

On behalf of the American Chemical Society (ACS), I am writing to endorse H.R. 1709, the Scientific Integrity Act, as amended on November 7, 2019. ACS represents over 150,000 chemists and chemical engineers and is among the nation's largest and oldest professional scientific societies.

ACS strongly supports the use of insightful, comprehensive scientific and engineering input to the development and evaluation of policy options. ACS also encourages the use of scientific integrity policies that help federal, state, and local governments obtain and integrate scientific assessments into policy development and implementation.

Scientific integrity—including the independence of the scientific process and the rigorous application of science-based knowledge—should be upheld throughout all levels of government. Scientists and engineers should provide comprehensive, transparent, unbiased, and understandable technical analyses. Policymakers should consider scientific analyses and relevant technical information in a comprehensive, transparent, and unbiased manner.

H.R. 1709 represents a thoughtful, bipartisan compromise to provide policymakers with access to best available science, while providing scientists the freedom to pursue research in an unbiased fashion. ACS believes the legislation would be further improved with the addition of language establishing uniform standards covering how government scientists and grantees interact with the media. Government scientists should be allowed to discuss their published, peer-reviewed research with the media and the public. When government agencies seek to prevent, or limit, their employees, grantees, and/or advisors from commenting publicly on scientific results or policies, such restrictions should have a sound basis with transparent and consistent enforcement. Appeal processes should be easily available and timely.

Ultimately, clear and forthright standards regarding interactions between scientists and media are mutually beneficial to policymakers and the research community. Administrations have a right and need to establish an agenda and work to enact policies in the interest of taxpayers. By clarifying the rules of engagement for scientists to address media inquiries, a media policy will avoid public confusion between broad policy initiatives and the associated research

results. As H.R. 1709 continues to advance through Congress, we strongly encourage the inclusion of a science-specific media policy.

Scientific integrity represents a core pillar of both the research enterprise and good governance. We appreciate your effort on this issue, and look forward to working with you to pass H.R. 1709 into law. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Will Hartwig (w_hartwig@acs.org) in our offices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn Ruskin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'G'.

Glenn S. Ruskin

CC:

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson

The Honorable Frank Lucas