September 5, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  The Honorable Paul Ryan
Senate Majority Leader  Speaker of the House
United States Senate  United States House of Representatives
317 Russell Senate Office Building  H-232, US Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510  Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Senate Minority Leader  Democratic Leader
United States Senate  United States House of Representatives
322 Hart Senate Office Building  H-204, US Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510  Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Speaker Ryan, Minority Leader Schumer, and Democratic Leader Pelosi:

As members of the Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) - a broad-based group of professional organizations, universities, businesses, and scientific societies that advocate for sustained, robust federal support for science – we are writing to stress our support for the passage of a bipartisan budget agreement that increases the spending caps for discretionary programs. Our country needs a bipartisan budget agreement to maintain robust federal investments in America’s science and innovation enterprise.

For the 140 member groups of CNSF, robust and sustainable funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF) is a high priority, especially if the United States is to remain globally competitive in science, technology, and innovation. NSF funds research in important fields – including the physical sciences, biology, mathematics, computer science, geoscience, social and behavioral science, engineering, and education. NSF is also instrumental in preparing the next generation’s STEM workforce through the funding of traineeships and research fellowships, as well as investments in K-12 STEM education both in and out of school.

We recognize and appreciate the House and Senate Appropriations Committees for funding NSF at a higher level than the Administration’s FY 2018 budget request; however, the mark of $7.3 billion is significantly lower than the appropriation the agency received in FY 2017. At this level, fewer research grants will be awarded, fewer students will receive traineeships and fellowships, critical infrastructure construction will be delayed, and there will be less investment in STEM education. To enable the nation’s primary fundamental research agency to receive necessary funding, we strongly encourage the 115th Congress to craft and pass a bipartisan budget agreement that would raise the spending caps. If there is a bipartisan budget agreement, CNSF encourages Congress to appropriate at least $7.8 billion for NSF, which is a five percent increase over the FY 2017 enacted level, as considered by the Senate Appropriations Committee. This level of funding is commensurate with Innovation: An American Imperative. This call-to-action—supported by over 500 organizations from American industry, higher education, and scientific societies—urges Congress to enact policies and investments to ensure that the United States remains a global innovation leader.
The re-emergence of spending caps in FY 2018 would have a detrimental impact on federally-funded scientific research. We believe that a balanced bipartisan budget agreement that raises the 2018 spending caps and makes prudent, adequate investments in scientific research and innovation would prevent budget gridlock and help grow the economy. In the last few weeks, several Members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees have called for an agreement to raise the caps for FY 2018. Their call for bipartisan action was recently echoed in a letter from CNSF and 15 other coalitions to the House and Senate leadership, in which we underscored the importance of robust investment in federally-funded research at NSF and other federal research agencies. Federally funded research has proven to be vital to our economy, national security, and global competitiveness in science, technology, and innovation. Now is not the time to back away from or decrease our investment in important scientific research, technology development and innovation through the National Science Foundation.

Again, we strongly encourage Members of the 115th Congress to enact a bipartisan budget agreement that would increase spending caps for discretionary programs in FY 2018, and to ensure funding of at least $7.8 billion for NSF in FY 2018.

Sincerely,

The Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF)

Afterschool Alliance
American Agricultural Economics Association
American Anthropological Association
American Association for Dental Research
American Association of Geographers
American Association of Physics Teachers
American Astronomical Society
American Chemical Society
American Educational Research Association
American Geophysical Union
American Geosciences Institute
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering
American Institute of Biological Sciences
American Institute of Physics
American Mathematical Society
American Physical Society
American Physiological Society
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association
American Society for Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
American Society for Engineering Education
American Society for Microbiology
American Society of Agronomy
American Society of Civil Engineers
American Society of Mechanical Engineers
American Society of Plant Biologists
American Sociological Association

American Statistical Association
Arafune Government Relations, LLC
Archaeological Institute of America
Association for Psychological Science
Association for Women in Mathematics
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Association of Science-Technology Centers
Battelle
Biophysical Society
Boise State University
Boston University
Brandeis University
Brown University
California Institute of Technology
Cavarocchi Ruscio Dennis Associates, LLC
Coalition for Academic Scientific Computation
Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation
Computing Research Association
Consortium for Ocean Leadership
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Cornell University
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Scientific Society Presidents
Council on Undergraduate Research
Crop Science Society of America
Duke University
Eastman
Ecological Society of America
Entomological Society of America
Eversole Associates
Federal Science Partners
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences
Florida State University
Geological Society of America
George Mason University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Harvard University
Human Factors and Ergonomics Society
Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology
Indiana University
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers-USA
Lehigh University
Linguistic Society of America
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Mathematical Association of America
Michigan State University
Michigan Technological University
Museum of Science, Boston
National Communication Association
National Ground Water Association
National Postdoctoral Association
National Science Teachers Association
North Carolina State University
Northern Illinois University
Northwestern University
Ornithological Council
Pennsylvania State University
Population Association of America/
Association of Population Centers
Princeton University
Psychonomic Society
PsySiP Project, The
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Research! America
Rutgers University- New Brunswick
SAGE Publishing

Seismological Society of America
Society for American Archaeology
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics
Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology
Society for Neuroscience
Society for Research in Child Development
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues
Soil Science Society of America
Stony Brook, The State University of New York
Texas Tech University
The Bagley Group, LLC
The International Society for optics and photonics
The Ohio State University
The Optical Society
The State University of New York System
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
The University of Wisconsin-Madison
Tufts University
UNAVCO
University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
University of California System
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado Boulder
University of Florida
University of Illinois system
University of Iowa
University of Maryland, College Park
University of Michigan
University of Missouri System
University of New Mexico, The
University of Pennsylvania
University of South Carolina
Vanderbilt University
Washington Partners, LLC
Washington State University
West Virginia University
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

Cc: Senate Committee on Appropriations
    House Committee on Appropriations