



# TASK FORCE ON AMERICAN INNOVATION

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Alliance for Science & Technology Research  
in America  
American Association for the Advancement  
of Science  
American Astronomical Society  
American Chemical Society  
American Institute for Medical and  
Biological Engineering  
American Institute of Physics  
American Mathematical Society  
American Physical Society  
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American Statistical Association  
Applied Materials, Inc.  
ASME  
Association for Computing Machinery  
Association of American Universities  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
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Autodesk  
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Business Roundtable  
Center for Policy on Emerging Technologies  
Computing Research Association  
Computing Technology Industry Association  
Council for Chemical Research  
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Experimental Biology  
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Information Technology  
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Qualcomm  
Semiconductor Industry Association  
Semiconductor Research Corporation  
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics  
Southeastern Universities Research Association  
TechAmerica  
TechNet  
Technology CEO Council  
Telecommunications Industry Association  
Texas Instruments Incorporated  
The Science Coalition

July 18, 2012

United States Senate

Dear Senator:

As representatives of many of the nation's leading companies, universities, and scientific societies, we are writing to urge your support for the National Science Foundation (NSF) in S. 2323, the Commerce-Justice-Science appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2013.

We ask that you support providing NSF at least the level of funding approved by the Senate Committee on Appropriations and oppose amendments that would reduce overall funding or bar funding for particular disciplines.

Technological innovation, medical advances, our national security, the training of young scientists, and our economic future all depend on the research funded by NSF and other federal science agencies. We should be steadily increasing this important investment, not reducing it.

Our nation's private sector conducts nearly \$300 billion in R&D annually. However, it focuses mainly on development; businesses today cannot risk the uncertainty of major investments in basic research. That is why there has been a bipartisan consensus since World War II that supporting basic research, which takes place mainly at universities and U.S. laboratories, is primarily the role of the federal government.

We are concerned about the possibility of amendments that would harm NSF being offered during Senate consideration of S. 2323 and urge you to oppose them. One such amendment, defeated during House consideration, was designed to take NSF resources back five years, to near FY2008 levels, and even further back if adjusted for inflation. A cut of this magnitude would mean the loss of 3,800 research grants affecting 44,000 researchers, students, technicians, and others involved in conducting this research. Additionally, such an amendment would seriously damage NSF's STEM education programs, which are crucial to the nation's efforts to produce more graduates in STEM fields, an important national goal that holds particular significance for our industry and academic members alike.

A second amendment, which did pass the House, would bar NSF from supporting research in the field of political science. We oppose any amendments that bar NSF research for entire disciplines or fields of research. We do not believe that Congress should try to pick winners and losers when it comes to NSF's basic research portfolio. NSF is the government agency with responsibility for supporting basic research across the range of scientific disciplines. Cutting off funds for a particular discipline would undermine NSF's cross-cutting research mission. We urge you to oppose this or other amendments to restrict NSF support for certain disciplines.

We appreciate your consideration of our views on these issues.

Sincerely,

Task Force on American Innovation