

# Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

October 15, 2007

## Physical Sciences Research Critical to American Innovation and Competitiveness

### *Support Funding for the DOE Office of Science in Fiscal Year 2008*

Dear Colleague:

We invite you to join us in signing the attached letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee urging them to retain the House-approved funding level of \$4.5 billion for the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science in the final bill for fiscal year 2008 (FY08).

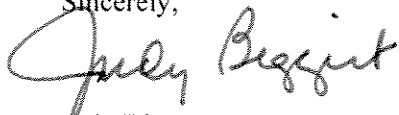
Economic experts have concluded that science-driven technology has accounted for more than 50 percent of the growth of the U.S. economy during the last half-century. However, our economic competitors in Asia and Europe are making significant new investments in their own research capabilities, challenging the scientific and economic leadership of the United States.

As part of their innovation and competitiveness initiatives, Congressional Democrats, Republicans, and President Bush have proposed doubling federal funding for basic research in the physical sciences over the next decade. Because the DOE Office of Science supports over 40 percent of total federal funding for basic physical sciences research – more than any other federal agency – increasing its funding is critical if we are to achieve our shared, bipartisan goal.

Report after report – including the National Academy of Sciences report *Rising Above The Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future* – calls on Congress and the President to invest in U.S. research capabilities. Last year, 139 Members of Congress joined us in supporting increased funding for the DOE Office of Science; their names are listed below. This year, the House appropriated \$4.5 billion for the DOE Office of Science, and we hope you will join us in urging the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee to retain this funding in the final bill for FY08.

If you would like to sign this letter or if you have any questions, please contact Paul Doucette in Rep. Biggert's office at 5-3515, Simon Limagin in Rep. Tauscher's office at 5-1880, or Chris Hartmann in Rep. Holt's office at 5-5801.

Sincerely,



Judy Biggert  
Member of Congress



Ellen Tauscher  
Member of Congress



Rush Holt  
Member of Congress

Signatories to last year's letter: Abercrombie, Ackerman, Andrews, Baldwin, Bean, Becerra, Biggert, Bishop, Bonner, Boswell, Boucher, Calvert, Capps, Capuano, Carnahan, Chandler, Cleaver, Conyers, Cooper, Costa, Cummings, Davis (IL), J. Davis (VA), Davis(TN), Davis (CA), T. Davis (VA), DeFazio, DeGette, DeLauro, Dicks, Dingell, Doyle, Edwards, Ehlers, Engel, English, Eshoo, Etheridge, Ferguson, Filner, Fortenberry, Frank (MA), Gilchrest, Gonzalez, G. Green, Grijalva, Gutierrez, Hastings, Herseth, Holt, Honda, Hooley, Inglis, Inslee, Israel, Jackson-Lee, Johnson (TX), Johnson (IL), Kildee, Kind, Lantos, Larson, Lee, Levin, Lewis(GA), Lipinski, Lofgren, Lynch, Maloney, Matsui, McCarthy (NY), McCaul, McCollum, McDermott, McGovern, McMorris, McNulty, Michaud, Millender-McDonald, Miller(NC), Miller(CA), Moore(KS), Moran(VA), Moran(KS), T. Murphy(PA), Nadler, Napolitano, Neal, Oberstar, Pallone, Pascrell, Paul, Payne, Pomeroy, Price(NC), Rangel, Reyes, Rogers(MI), Ross, Ruppersberger, Rush, Ryan(OH), Li. Sanchez, Saxton, Schakowsky, Schiff, Sessions, Shimkus, Slaughter, Smith(WA), Smith(TX), Snyder, Solis, Stupak, Tauscher, Terry, Thompson(CA), Tierney, Towns, M. Udall(CO), T. Udall(NM), Van Hollen, Velázquez, Wamp, Waxman, Weiner, Wilson(NM), Woolsey, Wu, Wynn

December X, 2007

The Honorable Peter Visclosky  
Chairman  
Energy and Water Appropriations  
Subcommittee  
House Appropriations Committee  
2362 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Hobson  
Ranking Member  
Energy and Water Appropriations  
Subcommittee  
House Appropriations Committee  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Visclosky and Ranking Member Hobson:

Thank you for making basic research funding and economic competitiveness a priority by including \$4.5 billion for the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science in the Fiscal Year 2008 (FY08) Energy and Water Appropriations bill approved by the House in July. We share your commitment to increase federal funding for basic research in the physical sciences, and therefore urge you to retain this funding in the final bill for FY08.

As part of their innovation and competitiveness initiatives, Congressional Democrats, Republicans, and President Bush have proposed doubling federal funding for basic research in the physical sciences over the next five to ten years. Because the DOE Office of Science supports over 40 percent of total federal funding for basic physical sciences research – more than any other federal agency – increasing its funding is critical if we are to achieve our shared, bipartisan goal.

We face a world in which our economic competitors in Asia and Europe are making significant new investments in their own research capabilities. These investments are beginning to pay off, as Asian and European countries challenge U.S. leadership in the sciences no matter how it is measured – by number of patents won, articles submitted to scientific journals, degrees awarded, Nobel prizes won, or the percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) dedicated to research and development.

Report after report – from the National Academy of Sciences and the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology to the Task Force on the Future of American Innovation and the Council on Competitiveness – has called on Congress and the President to invest in U.S. research capabilities. The benefits of such an investment to the U.S. economy and U.S. competitiveness are well known. Economic experts have concluded that science-driven technology has accounted for more than 50 percent of the growth of the U.S. economy during the last half-century.

Even as we face greater international competition, these are exciting times for science in the United States. There are many great opportunities for scientific discovery, and with adequate funding, the DOE Office of Science will ensure the U.S. retains its dominance in such key scientific fields as biotechnology, nanotechnology, materials science, and supercomputing well into the next century. Leadership in these areas will benefit our health, our environment, our economy, and our national security. And through critical new investments in biofuels research and basic energy science, the DOE Office of Science will continue to play a vital role in developing the knowledge and the technologies essential to ensuring the nation's future energy security.

U.S. scientists are as bright as any in the world, but they traditionally have had better tools than everyone else. The DOE Office of Science has led the way in creating a unique system of large-scale, specialized user facilities for scientific discovery. This collection of cutting-edge – often one-of-a-kind – tools makes the DOE Office of Science a unique and critical component of the federal science portfolio. Other federal science agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), greatly depend upon these DOE Office of Science facilities in carrying out their own research activities. Under the President's budget, 21,500 researchers would have access to these DOE facilities. Nearly half of those users will be university faculty and students – many whose research is being supported by other federal agencies – and a significant number will be from U.S. industry.

For these many reasons, we urge you to retain the House-approved funding level of \$4.5 billion for the DOE Office of Science in the final FY08 appropriations bill. Furthermore, we urge you to focus this funding on mission-related activities, facilities, and DOE requested activities, and to avoid using core DOE research program budgets to fund projects extraneous to the President's request. With this funding, the DOE Office of Science will attract the best minds, educate the next generation of scientists and engineers, support the construction and operation of modern facilities, and conduct even more of the quality scientific research that will ensure the U.S. retains its competitive edge for many years to come.

Thanks for your continued support for the DOE Office of Science. We are cognizant of the difficult budget situation under which your subcommittee is working, and we urge you to contact us if we may be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,