

ENERGY SCIENCES COALITION

November 30, 2006

The Honorable Thad Cochran
United States Senate
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran:

On behalf of the members of the Energy Sciences Coalition, I write to urge full funding in FY 2007 for the Department of Energy Office of Science as envisioned in the President's Budget and in the House-passed Energy and Water appropriations measure.

In the FY 2007 American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI), the President called for a 14% increase in the budget of the Department of Energy's Office of Science. The Office of Science, the nation's largest supporter of basic physical science research and steward of our National Laboratory system, supports a wide range science disciplines and the development of innovative technologies. Its efforts are a crucial component in the national effort to reduce our reliance on foreign energy sources. The House of Representatives and the Senate Appropriations Committee have fully funded this important Administration request.

As the 109th Congress comes to a close, it is imperative the increase for the Office of Science and other parts of the ACI become law, either through the formal appropriations process or via any continuing resolution. The Office of Science is struggling to maintain operations under the current funding mechanism; an extension of FY 2006 funding levels could lead to decreased utilization of our nation's scientific facilities or even layoffs to uniquely trained and highly skilled staff.

Our national competitiveness and capacity to innovate remain a priority for many in Congress and across the nation. This opportunity to support the Office of Science through the ACI will provide a much needed boost to our nation's essential research and development programs, and should not be abandoned.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Bannan
ESC Chairman