

March 4, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Protecting U.S. Scientific Research and Integrity

Dear Majority Leader Thune, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson, and Minority Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the undersigned scientific societies and organizations, we strongly urge you to oppose the current Administration's policies that are harming the U.S. scientific enterprise. Recent actions have disrupted vital scientific research, impeded scientific meetings and review panels, delayed salary payments for students and postdocs, dismantled key workforce development programs, and caused the unnecessary loss of vital experts from federal research agencies. We call on Congress to assert its constitutional authority and take immediate actions to reverse these policies, which threaten the integrity, progress, and global leadership of American science and technology.

The Administration's pause on federal grants created unnecessary instability, disproportionately affecting early-career scientists and long-term research initiatives. Although the temporary freeze has been lifted, federal agencies continue to review previously approved grants on the basis of new political criteria, raising serious legal and ethical concerns. Importantly, the merit-based peer review system is foundational to the integrity of scientific funding. Politicizing this process by subjecting previously awarded grants to additional scrutiny under subsequently issued Executive Orders undermines the credibility of research funding mechanisms. We urge Congress to uphold the integrity of peer review by preventing undue political influence in grant allocations.

Independent, unbiased science is essential for informed decision-making that affects public health, the economy, the environment, and national security. Any efforts to censor scientific information, restrict research topics, or limit academic freedom must be opposed firmly. Selective removal of taxpayer-funded scientific data from federal websites violates federal laws governing transparency and accessibility and threatens informed policy decisions. Congress must ensure continued public access to taxpayer-funded information and that public communications from federal research agencies remain transparent, uninterrupted, and free from political interference.

The United States has long been a leader in scientific innovation, but recent developments threaten this standing. Reckless and indiscriminate staff reductions at key science agencies, including the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), along with drastic cuts to NIH's indirect cost rates, jeopardize the nation's ability to maintain a strong research infrastructure and remain globally competitive. Further, these cuts threaten the stability and economic viability of U.S. institutions of learning more broadly, placing the nation's global leadership in higher education at risk. The United States must prioritize robust federal investments in science and technology to prevent economic stagnation and the loss of its competitive edge to other nations.

The U.S. Constitution grants Congress authority over federal spending and agency structures. Recent executive actions to defund and dismantle science programs without congressional approval raise serious legal concerns. We call on Congress to reassert its authority and ensure adherence to constitutional principles and the rule of law.

Robust federal investment in the biological sciences is critical for driving medical breakthroughs, boosting bioeconomic growth, responding to pandemics and other emerging health threats, reducing the burdens of chronic disease, tackling climate change, strengthening national security, supporting agricultural innovation, ensuring food security, and protecting biodiversity and ecosystems. Federal support also provides training opportunities for the next generation of scientists and K-12 educators, ensuring continued innovation and competitiveness. Stable and predictable funding is essential for maintaining U.S. scientific leadership. Budgetary uncertainties and political disruptions weaken our research institutions and send a damaging message to future innovators and global competitors. While change is necessary, it must strengthen—not dismantle—the foundations that keep us competitive on the world stage. We urge Congress to increase and sustain investments in biological research to ensure continued innovation, economic growth, and global leadership.

We appreciate your attention to these urgent concerns and stand ready to work with you to protect and advance the U.S. scientific enterprise.

Sincerely,

American Anthropological Association
American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research
American Association of Physicists in Medicine
American Association of Physics Teachers
American Geophysical Union
American Industrial Hygiene Association
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering (AIMBE)
American Institute of Biological Sciences
American Ornithological Society
American Pediatric Society (APS)
American Physiological Society
American Society for Microbiology
American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET)

American Society of Mammalogists
American Society of Naturalists
American Society of Primatologists
Americans for Medical Progress
Animal Behavior Society
Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography
Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences
Botanical Society of America
California Botanical Society
Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation
Delaware Museum of Nature and Science
Ecological Society of America
Entomological Society of America
Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS)
Gerontological Society of America
Helminthological Society of Washington
Herpetologists' League
National Postdoctoral Association
Natural Science Collections Alliance
Paleontological Society
Poultry Science Association
Society for Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC)
Society for Freshwater Science
Society for Industrial Microbiology and Biotechnology
Society for Mathematical Biology
Society for Neuroscience
Society for Pediatric Research (SPR)
Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles
Society for the Study of Evolution
Society of Behavioral Medicine
Society of Herbarium Curators
Society of Systematic Biologists
Society of Vertebrate Paleontology
The American Society of Parasitologists
The Organization of Biological Field Stations
The Society for Integrative & Comparative Biology
Thomas More University Biology Field Station
University of Minnesota, Department of Plant and Microbial Biology
University of North Texas

cc:

The Honorable Ted Cruz, Chair, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation
The Honorable Brian Babin, Chair, House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren, Ranking Member, House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

The Honorable William Cassidy, Chair, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

The Honorable Bernard Sanders, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

The Honorable Brett Guthrie, Chair, House Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Ranking Member, House Committee on Energy and Commerce

The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Jerry Moran, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Harold Rogers, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Grace Meng, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Robert Aderholt, Chair, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies