## **Coalition for National Science Funding**

June 13, 2012

## Dear Senator:

As representatives of U.S. science, engineering, and higher education organizations, we write to you in strong support for the federal research and development budget of the National Science Foundation (NSF), and its mission—created over 60 years ago—to advance research across a broad spectrum of disciplines, research that has fueled American economic growth for decades.

NSF is unique among federal agencies in that it supports all disciplines in a balanced portfolio that uses the scientific peer review system as the foundation for awarding research grants based on merit.

As you prepare to debate the Commerce, Justice and Science (CJS) appropriations bill for fiscal year 2013, the undersigned organizations urge you to reject attempts to reduce funding for NSF. We also stand in strong opposition to legislative attempts to micromanage NSF and undermine the merit review process by singling out specific programs for elimination as recently occurred in the House.

In 2006, Alan Leshner, CEO of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, testified before the Senate in support of NSF research: "Every major issue facing modern society and every major issue facing our economic competitiveness will ultimately be multidisciplinary in nature...[requiring] the integration of the physical sciences or biological sciences with the social and behavioral sciences."

We recognize the challenge that our nation faces in addressing the deficit and revitalizing our national economy. However, eliminating support for specific disciplines, such as the House did with respect to political science, sets a dangerous precedent that, in the end, will inhibit scientific progress and restrain our international competitiveness economically and with regard to national security. Congress should exercise its oversight responsibilities, but second-guessing the scientific process could have a chilling effect on scientists and young people considering a future in science. The country cannot afford to lose the incredible talent, experience, and energies of its scientists, regardless of their discipline.

Therefore, the undersigned organizations again urge you to protect the integrity of the scientific enterprise by ensuring that the NSF and its independent scientific panels determine where the best scientific opportunities are and how to absorb any potential reductions to its budget. Allocating federal investments competitively through scientific merit review is the very process that has led this country to be the world leader in science. We encourage you to provide Congressional oversight by protecting that process rather than allowing others to threaten critical contributions to our innovative spirit and knowledge base.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

American Association for the Advancement of Science American Association of Physics Teachers American Astronomical Society **American Chemical Society** American Economic Association American Educational Research Association American Geophysical Union American Geosciences Institute American Institute of Biological Sciences American Institute of Physics American Mathematical Society American Physiological Society American Political Science Association American Psychological Association American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology American Society for Engineering Education American Society for Microbiology American Society of Agronomy American Society of Civil Engineers American Sociological Association American Statistical Association **APS Physics** Association for Psychological Science Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography Association for Women in Mathematics Association for Women in Science Association of American Medical Colleges Association of American Universities Association of Environmental & **Engineering Geologists** Association of Independent **Research Institutes Association of Population Centers** Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Association of Research Libraries Association of Universities for Research in Astronomy Association of University Research **Parks Behavior Genetics Associations** 

**Binghamton University** 

**Biophysical Society** 

**Brown University** California Institute of Technology Case Western Reserve University Cognitive Science Society Columbia University Computing Research Association Consortium for Ocean Leadership Consortium of Social Science Associations Council of Energy Research and **Education Leaders** Council of Environmental Deans and Directors Council of Graduate Schools Crop Science Society of America **CUAHSI** DOSECC, Inc. **Duke University** Earthquake Engineering Research Institute **Ecological Society of America Emory University** Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences Genetics Society of America Geological Society of America Georgia Institute of Technology **Harvard University Human Factors and Ergonomics** Society IEEE - USA Indiana University Kent State University Law and Society Association Linguistic Society of America Massachusetts Institute of Technology Mathematical Association of America Michigan State University Midwest Political Science Association Museum of Science, Boston National Academy of Neuropsychology National Association of Marine Laboratories **National Communication** Association National Council for Science and the Environment National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON)

National Postdoctoral Association

**New York University** Northwestern University Optical Society of America **Oregon State University** Penn State University Population Association of America **Psychonomic Society Purdue University** Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Research!America Rutgers, The State University of **New Jersey** Social Psychology Network Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology Society for Computers in Psychology Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology Society for Mathematical Psychology Society for Research in Child Development Society of Experimental Social **Psychology** Soil Science Society of America SPIE, International Society for Optics and Photonics Stanford University State University of New York The Johns Hopkins University The Ohio State University University at Albany University of Arizona University of California System University of Chicago University of Colorado Boulder University of Delaware University of Illinois University of Kentucky University of Maryland University of Michigan University of Oregon University of Pennsylvania University of Washington University of Wisconsin - Madison Vanderbilt University Washington University in St. Louis West Virginia University Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution