

March XXX, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

The undersigned organizations sincerely appreciate the bipartisan leadership and commitment you demonstrated by achieving -- despite formidable challenges -- final FY20 appropriations legislation that was signed into law in December 2019.

As the new decade begins and the FY21 appropriations process launches, we believe it is imperative that you again accomplish appropriations objectives that bear directly on the wellbeing of Americans today and tomorrow. Specifically, we urge you to:

- Prioritize timely completion of the FY21 appropriations process, establishing FY21 funding levels with time to spare before FY20 funding ends on 9/30/20.
- Boost science agency investment significantly, affirming and advancing our nation's global leadership in the R&D arena.

As you know, completing the annual appropriations process is particularly challenging in an election year. The uphill climb to final legislation becomes steeper with every day that passes, and the process could easily grind to a halt as post-primary races kick into high gear over the summer. Our nation cannot wait for ideal circumstances before taking action to stop the vicious cycle of protracted appropriations processes that place increasing distance between timely and actual funding.

Finishing the FY21 appropriations process in ample time to create a smooth transition between FY20 and FY21 funding will prevent the costly inefficiency and wasted time that stop-gap funding under a continuing resolution (CR) engenders. CRs freeze federal agencies in time, turning a blind eye to evolving needs and priorities and locking in spending regardless of current utility.

The American people deserve better.

Americans also deserve a federal budget that confronts both current and future threats to the economic, health, and national security interests of our nation. The U.S. has historically invested in science and technology (S&T) in service to both the short- and long-term interests of the American people. Today, however, competitor nations are investing in S&T with a vigor that far surpasses our own. If the U.S. takes our scientific capabilities, output, and leadership for granted, we are gambling with the future of our nation and the wellbeing of our children.

For these reasons, we urge you to treat timely FY21 funding and boosted funding for federal science agencies as a dual imperative. Our nation has witnessed your ability to overcome daunting challenges as you steward the federal appropriations process. We are grateful to you and your respective staff members for your commitment and diligence, and thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Organizational Signatories

CC The Honorable Richard Shelby

The Honorable Nita Lowey

The Honorable Patrick Leahy

The Honorable Kay Granger