

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2016

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Commerce, Justice, Science
and Related Agencies
H-310 Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Honda
Acting Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on Commerce, Justice, Science
and Related Agencies
1016 LHOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Honda,

We are writing to request that the fiscal year 2017 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Act reaffirm the National Science Foundation's current practice of setting national scientific research priorities, investing across all disciplines of science, and using the merit review systems for determining which grant proposals to fund.

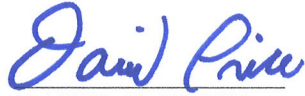
The Research and Related Activities account at the National Science Foundation (NSF) funds scientific discovery, workforce training, and state-of-the-art facilities that keep the U.S. ahead of our global scientific competitors. These investments expand our knowledge base; train the next-generation scientific workforce; help bring new products to market; help us understand the world in which we live; and explore questions about how we as humans navigate our world.

In order to foster potentially transformative research that will benefit our economy, health, and national security, NSF should continue to support research and education across all science and engineering disciplines. For this reason, we believe it is important that the House Committee on Appropriations preserve NSF's ability to respond to unanticipated discoveries and insights, following the science wherever it may lead. This flexibility requires that NSF's appropriations not include arbitrary funding levels for its research directorates. Instead, we urge that the NSF appropriation follow current practice—by appropriating funds only to the Research & Related Activities account—thereby leaving directorate funding decisions to experts at NSF with technical input from the scientific community, the National Academies, National Science Board, and other bodies.

We are hopeful that, to further ensure U.S. scientific pre-eminence and global competitiveness, the Committee will express support for NSF's merit review process for selecting the most promising research within and across scientific fields of study, including the biological, computer, geo, mathematical, physical, social and behavioral sciences, and engineering. The merit review system remains the best means for meeting national scientific priorities, fostering innovation, and determining which grant proposals to fund.

The NSF practices described above are the international gold standard and emulated by nations around the world because they are the best means to foster, evaluate, and invest in scientific research. We hope the Committee will reaffirm these practices by refraining from including specific funding levels—either within the bill text or accompanying report—for individual NSF research directorates in the fiscal year 2017 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Act.

Sincerely,



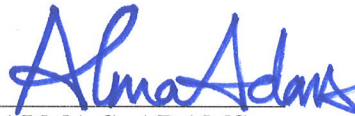
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Member of Congress



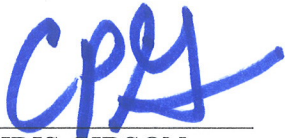
ADAM SCHIFF
Member of Congress



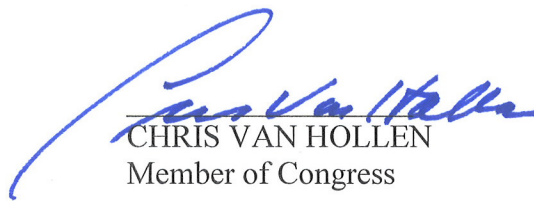
ALMA S. ADAMS
Member of Congress



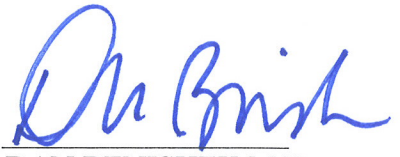
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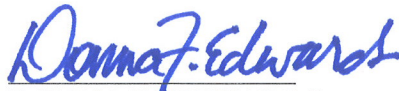
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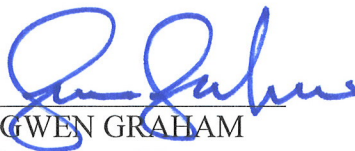
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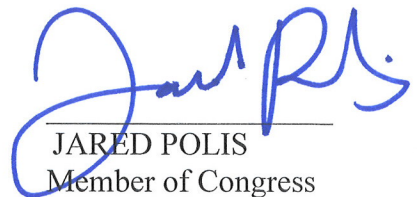
ED PERLMUTTER
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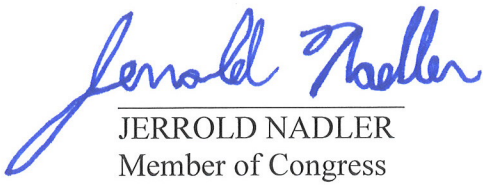
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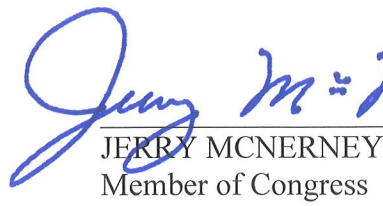


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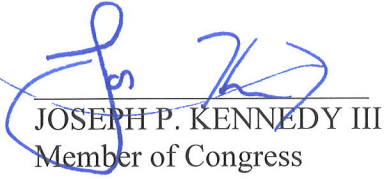


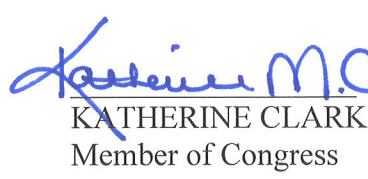
JARED POLIS
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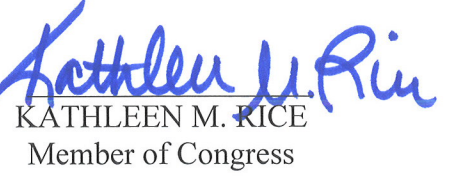

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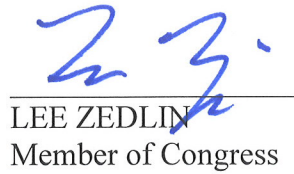

JERRY MCNERNEY
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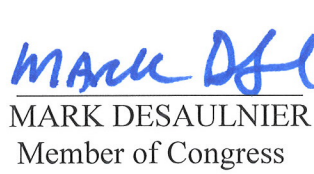

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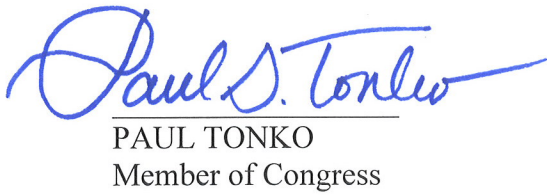

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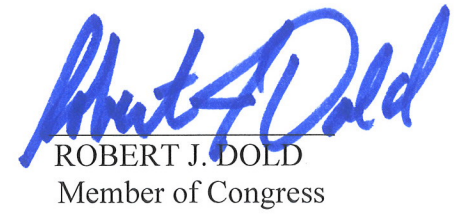

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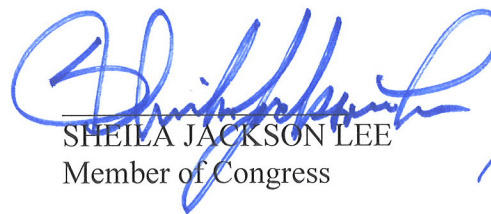

MICHAEL E. CAPUANO
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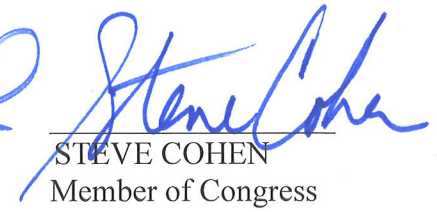

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Member of Congress

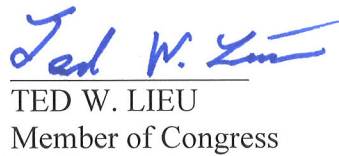

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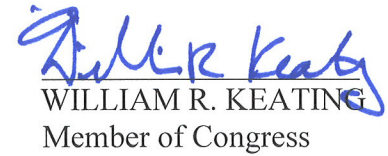

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Member of Congress

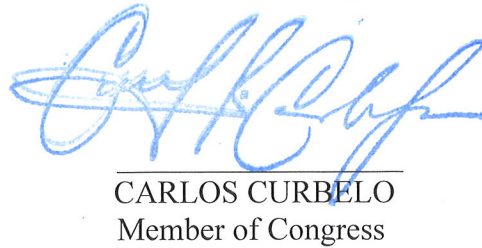

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