

August 10, 2015

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman, Senate Appropriations  
Committee  
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC, 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Vice Chairwoman, Senate Appropriations  
Committee  
503 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairwoman Mikulski,

The undersigned organizations write to express our sincere thanks for highlighting the importance of ensuring that federally employed and contracted scientists and engineers are able to attend mission-relevant scientific and technical conferences during your recent markup of the FY 2016 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act on July 23, 2015.

We greatly appreciate the recognition that existing policies are reducing government scientists' and engineers' participation in scientific and technical conferences to the detriment of society as a whole, which benefits from innovations resulting from interactions at these conferences. As highlighted, scientists and engineers at federal agencies, labs, and research institutions currently face significant barriers to attend conferences, which have in turn driven significant increases in the administrative costs of overseeing these activities. Since the implementation of OMB Memo M-12-12, it has become clear through GAO and National Science and Technology Council reporting that existing regulations need to be revisited.

We look forward to working with you further to find a solution that provides OMB the ability to update its guidance and ensures sustained transparency and accountability in federal spending without impacting scientific progress and innovation.

Sincerely,

Academy of General Dentistry  
Aerospace Industries Association  
Alliance for Aging Research  
American Anthropological Association  
American Association for the Advancement of Science  
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy  
American Association of Immunologists  
American Association of Neurological Surgeons  
American Association of Petroleum Geologists  
American Association of Physics Teachers  
American Astronomical Society

American Chemical Society  
American Educational Research Association  
American Geophysical Union  
American Heart Association  
American Helicopter Society  
American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics  
American Institute of Physics  
American Mathematical Society  
American Neurological Association  
American Physical Society  
American Physiological Society  
American Phytopathological Society  
American Psychological Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society for Investigative Pathology  
American Society for Microbiology  
American Society for Nutrition  
American Society of Agronomy  
American Society of Animal Science  
American Society of Civil Engineers  
American Society of Mechanical Engineers  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Society of Plant Biologists  
American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene  
American Statistical Association  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
Aquatic Plant Management Society  
Association for Psychological Science  
Association of American Universities  
Association of Independent Research Institutes  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Congress of Neurological Surgeons  
Consortium for Ocean Leadership  
Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Council of Scientific Society Presidents  
Crop Science Society of America  
Ecological Society of America  
Endocrine Society  
Entomological Society of America  
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology  
Genetics Society of America  
Geological Society of America  
Global Health Council  
Health Physics Society  
HIV Medicine Association  
Human Factors and Ergonomics Society  
IEEE-USA  
Infectious Diseases Society of America

Materials Research Society  
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research  
National Council for Science and the Environment  
National Ground Water Association  
Ornithological Council  
Poultry Science Association  
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics  
Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology  
Society for Research in Child Development  
Soil Science Society of America  
SPIE  
The Optical Society  
The Psychonomic Society  
University of California System  
Weed Science Society of America

CC: The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
The Honorable Richard Shelby  
The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
The Honorable Susan Collins  
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
The Honorable Mark Kirk  
The Honorable Roy Blunt  
The Honorable Jerry Moran  
The Honorable John Hoeven  
The Honorable John Boozman  
The Honorable Shelley Capito  
The Honorable Bill Cassidy  
The Honorable James Lankford  
The Honorable Steve Daines  
The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
The Honorable Patty Murray  
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
The Honorable Dick Durbin  
The Honorable Jack Reed  
The Honorable Jon Tester  
The Honorable Tom Udall  
The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
The Honorable Christopher Coons  
The Honorable Brian Schatz  
The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
The Honorable Chris Murphy