

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 26, 2008

## *Ensure Economic Vitality & National Competitiveness: Invest in the National Science Foundation*

Dear Colleague:


We invite you to join us in signing the attached letter requesting that the Commerce, Justice and Science (CJS) Appropriations subcommittee make the National Science Foundation (NSF) a priority as it deliberates the FY 2009 budget.

Advances in science and technology underpin our ability to meet many of the challenges that America faces today, including securing the homeland, preventing terrorism, fostering innovation and economic development, and educating our children to be able to compete in the knowledge-based, global economy. As a nation, we must continue to invest in our scientific enterprise.

Supporting the NSF is key to maintaining our pre-eminence in science and technology. NSF investments are aimed at the frontiers of science and engineering, where advances in fundamental knowledge drive innovation, progress, and productivity. **We believe that NSF should be funded at the COMPETES Act authorized level of \$7.326 billion in the FY 2009 budget.** We hope that you will join us in asking for support by signing the attached letter and include NSF in the programmatic requests you submit to the CJS Subcommittee (no financial disclosure is necessary). For your reference, the FY08 estimate appropriated \$6.065 billion for NSF, and the FY09 request is \$6.854 billion.

To sign the letter, or for answers to any questions, please contact Julia Jester in Rep. Ehlers' office (x53831) or Chris Hartmann in Rep. Holt's office (x55801). [Deadline to sign is March 12.](#)

Sincerely,



Vernon J. Ehlers  
Member of Congress



Rush Holt  
Member of Congress



Bob Inglis  
Member of Congress



Brian Baird  
Member of Congress

*Please turn over*

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice & Science  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-310 Capitol  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice & Science  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-310 Capitol  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Frelinghuysen,

We are writing to thank you for your past support for the National Science Foundation (NSF) and to ask you to continue that support in the FY 2009 appropriations bill. Our request is to uphold the fiscal year 2009 funding level of the American COMPETES Act of \$7.326 billion for the National Science Foundation.

In 2007, a pathway was established to double the budget of the NSF over the course of 10 years. The priority recommendation of an esteemed panel of the National Academies, the *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* report, served as the catalyst for Congress and the Administration to find consensus on the doubling path for the physical sciences. The National Academies' convincing report warned that the U.S. must invest in fundamental research or our innovation pipeline will deteriorate.

Despite the evidence and overwhelming support for the COMPETES Act, which was signed into law in August 2007, funding for NSF fell short of the ten-year doubling path in both the FY07 and FY08 appropriations cycles. Cumulatively, NSF was funded \$500 million below the request in the past two years. Our request – as authorized by the COMPETES Act – adds this amount to the funding requested for NSF by the Administration in FY09 (\$6.854 billion) in order to restore these deficits. This will put the NSF back on its doubling path.

A renewed commitment to core basic research and educational programs at NSF is essential to meet the enormous promise of scientific innovation, to better train future scientists, engineers, and technicians, and to promote the success of multidisciplinary initiatives, including biotechnology and nanotechnology. We now need to make substantial investments in the physical sciences and engineering. NSF is the core agency for these endeavors.

Past investments in NSF have contributed greatly to major technological advances in areas and industries that are critical for U.S. economic growth and defense. We respectfully request that you continue the flow of such advances in the FY09 budget by funding NSF at \$7.326 billion.

Sincerely,