

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