

BUSINESS FOR FEDERAL RESEARCH FUNDING

February 13, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
U.S. Senate
Chair, Committee on Appropriations
Washington D.C., 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
U.S. Senate
Vice Chair, Committee on Appropriations
Washington D.C., 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
U.S. House of Representatives
Chair, Committee on Appropriations
Washington D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
U.S. House of Representatives
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
Washington D.C. 20515

RE: Fueling America's Competitive Edge through Investments in Innovation

Dear Chairwoman Collins, Chairman Cole, Vice Chair Murray, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the [Business for Federal Research Funding \(BFRF\) Coalition](#), we are writing to express our support for the sustained research and development (R&D) investments included in the Fiscal Year 2026 funding legislation recently passed by Congress and signed into law by the President. As the leaders of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, we sincerely appreciate your leadership in advocating for timely completion of the FY 2026 funding legislation, and continued engagement with affected stakeholders, including academic institutions, hospitals and health care centers, and the business and employer community. Your bipartisan, bicameral approach to the FY 2026 funding cycle sends a powerful message about the importance of thoughtful spending and programmatic decisions, legislative leadership, and federal spending for local jobs and economies in communities across the country.

As representatives of over 80 business organizations and chambers of commerce across 36 states, we know firsthand that federally funded research is a powerful engine for American innovation, ensuring that our nation experiences economic growth and our companies maintain their global competitiveness. As you know, federal R&D dollars flow to every state and congressional district in the country – supporting the development of life-saving technologies and innovations that transform lives and industries, and millions of jobs and billions in economic output annually.¹ It is also a smart investment with a rate of return to federally supported R&D of between 140 and 210 percent since World War II.²

¹ NIH funding alone supports over 407,000 jobs and more than \$94 billion in net economic activity.

[NIH's Role in Sustaining the U.S. Economy](#), *United for Medical Research*, 2025.

² [The Returns to Government R&D: Evidence from U.S. Appropriations Shocks](#), *Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas*, 2024.

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The research community ecosystem, including manufacturers of lab equipment, academic institutions that train the next generation of scientists, and the businesses, health care institutions, and scientific laboratories that conduct research and bring new ideas to market, require stable, sustained federal R&D investments to maintain their vital economic and social contributions. This is why we are pleased to see your continued support for the innovation ecosystem supported by federal programs, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Department of Defense (DOD), the Department of Energy (DOE), the Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA).

We are especially appreciative of strategic increases from FY 2025 to FY 2026 funding levels for basic research (4%), as well as overall funding levels for NIH (0.9%), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (26.5%), DOE's Office of Science (1.9%), and the Federal Aviation Administration's Research, Engineering, and Development programs (30%), among others.³ Congress's support for NIH and NSF in particular, is critical for maintaining and growing talent pipelines, including staving off efforts by our competitors to recruit, train, and fund early career researchers, and providing the stability needed for academic institutions to maintain robust graduate programs to train the next generation.⁴

In addition, we are pleased by the included legislative language freezing facilities and administrative (F&A) cost rates at FY 2024 levels for NSF, DOD, NASA, and DOE, and FY 2017 levels for NIH. As you know, F&A supports the maintenance of machinery and laboratories necessary for research as well as expert grant administrators who enhance transparency and accountability of the grant process. We also appreciate the included cap on multi-year (or forward funding) awards at NIH to FY24 levels to ensure that worthy projects and early career scientists are funded in the coming year.

Thank you again for your crucial support for the U.S. research and innovation ecosystem. We look forward to continuing to work with you to advance these shared priorities, especially as you begin work on FY 2027 funding legislation.

Sincerely,

The Business for Federal Research Funding Coalition

Cc: Senate Committee on Appropriations
House Committee on Appropriations

³ [FY 2026 R&D Appropriations: Final R&D Report](#), *American Association for the Advancement of Science*, February 3, 2026.

⁴ Canada's 2025 budget, for example, includes \$1.2 billion (CA\$1.7) in funding to lure early and senior career researchers to relocate to its universities. Similar initiatives have been launched by China and across Europe. [Canada's new budget aims to lure U.S. researchers to relocate](#), *Science*, 2025.

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