

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 3, 2009

The Honorable Peter Visclosky  
Chairman  
Energy and Water Development  
Appropriations Subcommittee  
House Appropriations Committee  
2362 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Ranking Member  
Energy and Water Development  
Appropriations Subcommittee  
House Appropriations Committee  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Visclosky and Ranking Member Frelinghuysen:

As you begin your work on the Fiscal Year 2010 Energy and Water Appropriations bill, we write to express our strong support for the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Science. In particular, we urge you to increase Fiscal Year 2010 funding for its research and facilities by 8 percent over Fiscal Year 2009 to \$5.2 billion, which is consistent with President Obama's plan to double the Federal investment in the basic sciences within the next decade.

In recent years, Congress has come to recognize that science will be the foundation for the innovation and solutions that will enable us to overcome many of our greatest challenges – from our economic crises and environmental concerns to our dependence on foreign energy and escalating health care costs – and to remain globally competitive as a nation. As evidenced by the overwhelming bipartisan vote for enactment of the America COMPETES Act in 2007 (P.L. 110-69), both Democrats and Republicans support efforts to double federal funding for basic research in the physical sciences within the next decade. Congress built on this commitment by funding the programs and activities authorized by the America COMPETES Act in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and in the Fiscal Year 2009 Omnibus Appropriations bill.

Congress must build on and provide the resources to sustain this investment in Fiscal Year 2010. Report after report – from the National Academy of Sciences and the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology to the Task Force on the Future of American Innovation and the Council on Competitiveness – has called on Congress and the President to invest in U.S. research capabilities. The benefits of such an investment to the U.S. economy and U.S. competitiveness are well known. Economic experts have concluded that science-driven technology has accounted for more than 50 percent of the growth of the U.S. economy during the last half-century.

This kind of technology-based economic growth cannot be sustained without additional investment in the kind of basic research supported by the DOE Office of Science. We face a world in which our economic competitors in Asia and Europe are making significant new investments in their own research capabilities. These investments are beginning to pay off, as Asian and European countries challenge U.S. leadership in the sciences no matter how it is measured – by number of patents won, articles submitted to scientific journals, degrees awarded, Nobel prizes won, or the percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) dedicated to research and development.

Even as we face greater international competition, these are exciting times for science in the United States. There are many great opportunities for scientific discovery, and with adequate funding, the DOE Office of Science will ensure the U.S. retains its dominance in such key scientific fields as nanotechnology, materials science, biotechnology, and supercomputing well into the next century. Through critical new investments in biofuels research and basic energy science, the DOE Office of Science will continue to play a vital role in developing the knowledge and the technologies essential to ensuring the nation's future energy security. Finally, increased funding for the DOE Office of Science will give the economy a boost in the near-term by creating good-paying, American jobs in construction, manufacturing, and research. And in the long-term, such an investment in the nation's scientific and research enterprise – both human and physical capital – will increase our capacity to innovate, reduce our dependence on foreign sources of energy, enhance our competitive edge in the global economy, and thus create the jobs of the future.

U.S. scientists are as bright as any in the world, but they traditionally have had better tools than everyone else. The DOE Office of Science has led the way in creating a unique system of large-scale, specialized user facilities for scientific discovery. This collection of cutting-edge – often one-of-a-kind – tools makes the DOE Office of Science an exceptional and critical component of the federal science portfolio. Other federal science agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), greatly depend upon these DOE Office of Science facilities in carrying out their own research activities. In Fiscal Year 2009 alone, over 21,500 researchers have access to these special DOE facilities. Nearly half of those users will be university faculty and students – many whose research is being supported by other federal agencies – and a significant number will be from U.S. industry.

For these many reasons, we urge you to increase funding for the DOE Office of Science in Fiscal Year 2010 by 8 percent over Fiscal Year 2009, consistent with President Obama's plan to double the Federal investment in the basic sciences within the next decade. Furthermore, we urge you to focus this funding on mission-related activities and facilities, and to avoid using core DOE research program budgets to fund extraneous projects. With this funding, the DOE Office of Science will attract the best minds, educate the next generation of scientists and engineers, support the construction and operation of modern facilities, and conduct even more of the quality scientific research that will create jobs and ensure the U.S. retains its competitive edge for many years to come.

Thanks for your consideration. We are cognizant of the difficult budget situation under which your subcommittee is working, and we urge you to contact us if we may be of assistance in any way.

Sincerely,

Judy Biggert

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