

June 5, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations
US Capitol, Room S-128
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran:

As the leaders of The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society (TMS), a nonprofit association that represents more than 13,000 materials scientists from the United States, and around the world, we are writing to express our deep concerns about proposed cuts to science funding in President Trump's Fiscal Year 2018 budget and to ask that you reinstate this critical funding when your committee reviews and votes on funding priorities.

TMS membership comprises of mostly Ph.D.s, who work to support the national defense of our country, to make industry more efficient and profitable, to add innovation to the consumer and business products that drive our marketplace and economy, and to educate young people in the pursuit of vital careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. We hold several major technical conferences annually nationwide, and the lessons learned and applied from these conferences translate into great gains in GDP for the nation.

Science and technology are central to both the challenges and opportunities that America faces in the 21st Century. Science and technology are changing our economy, and many of the fastest growing jobs in the country require training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Despite these opportunities, the United States is not producing enough qualified STEM graduates to meet our workforce needs. Furthermore, US technological leadership faces significant pressure as other nations are increasing their research investments. Simply put, the US private sector's difficulty in sustaining long-term research investments combined with decreasing federal support for R&D risks the nation's technological advantage.

We are deeply troubled by the significant cuts proposed for the Department of Energy's (DoE) Office of Science as well as in other agencies and programs across the federal government. At a time when America faces more scientific and technological challenges than ever before, the President has proposed cutting the DoE's Office of Science by \$900 million, taking that agency to its lowest funding level since 2008. As the single largest funder of the physical sciences in the United States, these cuts will have impacts that resonate across the science community and will lead to slowdowns in research and development, bringing us one step closer to surrendering America's position as the lead technological innovator in the world.

In addition, the President's budget proposes cutting the National Science Foundation (NSF) by \$600 million, an 11% cut. As with the DoE Office of Science, these cuts will have a deeply negative effect across the science community. The NSF funds almost a quarter of all federally supported basic research conducted by colleges and universities in our nation. These cuts will not only stall critical research that is ongoing but it will also discourage our nation's young people from working in vital STEM areas of our economy. With the many technological and science-related challenges that American faces across the world, these cuts will slow American innovation at a time when it is needed more than ever.

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In conclusion, we ask that you work with your colleagues to protect America's position as the world's leading nation for technology and scientific advancement by restoring the proposed cuts to the DoE's Office of Science and the National Science Foundation, as well as federal research support generally across the sciences. America has never faced a technological challenge that we cannot solve, and the solutions developed in the past have made America the world leader it is today. Please do all you can to ensure that our nation's scientists have the tools they need to answer America's challenges of tomorrow.

Most respectfully,



David H. DeYoung
2017 TMS President
president@tms.org



James J. Robinson
Executive Director
robinson@tms.org
direct: 724-814-3138