

August 27, 2018

The Honorable John Thune
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Thune:

As the leaders of The Minerals, Metals, & Materials Society (TMS), an international nonprofit professional society of materials scientists and engineers, we write to express our organization's strong support for the nomination of Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier to be Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) within the White House. We would also like to take this opportunity to urge the Committee to work with the president and his administration to fully staff OSTP and other crucial science and technology policy positions across the government. TMS proudly believes that materials science and technology development will play a central role in both the challenges and opportunities that America faces in the 21st Century, however an unorganized and understaffed federal government will impede progress toward those breakthroughs.

Founded in 1871, TMS now counts among its membership over 14,000 scientists and engineers from around the world; the majority of which work and study in the United States. Our members support the American economy in fields such as national defense, consumer products, energy, science, and education. They make industry more efficient and profitable, add innovation and direction to our marketplace economy, and educate the next generation of scientists and engineers.

As you know, OSTP plays a vital role in shaping our nation's policy, fostering innovation, and supports the largest research community in the world. Of concern, OSTP is critically understaffed. TMS understands Dr. Droegemeier to be a well-qualified, highly-respected scientist capable of leading the government's science and technology policy coordination efforts, but he will be prevented from unleashing the full capabilities of the office without Senate-confirmed staff in other high-level positions including, the Associate Director Science, the Associate Director Technology and Innovation, the U.S. Chief Technology Officer, the Associate Director National Security and International Affairs, and the Associate Director Environment and Energy. Additionally, nominees to lead the Office of Science and the Advanced Research Projects Agency – Energy at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) remain stalled in the Senate, limiting policy development and preventing the federal government from fully engaging its stakeholders.

Once filled, these crucial policy positions will assist in facilitating the rapid deployment of new materials and technology, especially through utilization of the Materials Genome Initiative (MGI) which was created by OSTP in 2011. The MGI is a multi-agency initiative which was designed to create a new era of policy, resources, and infrastructure that support U.S. institutions in the effort to discover, manufacture, and deploy advanced materials twice as fast, at a fraction of the cost. Breakthroughs as a result of MGI resources and policy will significantly improve our economic global competitiveness and safeguard the country's position at the forefront of the advanced materials marketplace.

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Collectively, the materials science and engineering programs that have been developed in America by our federal government, universities, national labs, and commercial economy hold a preeminent position in the world. In order to remain world leaders in materials science, however, we believe the federal government must play an active role in science and technology policy, and to do so, it must be fully staffed. Therefore, TMS urges you to support our programs by working with the Administration to fully staff those federal positions with direct responsibility over the future development of materials science and technology.

Most respectfully,



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