

December 19, 2014

Senator Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Harold Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Senator Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski, Chairman Rogers, and Ranking Members Shelby and Lowey:

On behalf of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), I write to thank you for writing and passing an FY2015 spending package earlier this month, which in most cases, included increased funding for science and higher education programs important to our institutions.

APLU is a research, policy, and advocacy organization of 238 North American public research universities, land-grant institutions, and state university systems. Our U.S. member campuses are in all 50 states and annually enroll 3.9 million undergraduates and 1.2 million graduate students, award 1 million degrees, employ 1.3 million faculty and staff, and conduct \$38.8 billion in university-based research.

We appreciate your work to pass an FY2015 spending bill during the 113th Congress, since this will provide needed certainty to the students, faculty and researchers on our campuses who receive student financial aid and conduct federally sponsored research. Operating on further continuing resolutions would have been disruptive and counterproductive to the science and education missions of our universities.

While most higher education and research funding levels in the FY2015 spending bill move us in the right direction, further robust investments in these areas will be vital in FY2016 and beyond as we seek to close the innovation deficit – the widening gap between the actual and needed level of federal support for research in higher education if the U.S. is to remain the world's innovation leader. If we do not address this deficit, we risk harming our economy, national security, and overall quality of life. Increased investments in higher education and research will contribute to new scientific discoveries and technologies and a more highly educated and prepared workforce. For further information on the innovation deficit and how Congress can work to close it, please visit www.innovationdeficit.org.

Thank you again for your efforts to complete the vast majority of FY2015 appropriations. Please consider APLU a resource when the 114th Congress begins work on the FY2016 budget and appropriations process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter McPherson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Peter" being more prominent than the last name "McPherson".

M. Peter McPherson
President
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

cc: Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid
Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell
House Speaker John Boehner
Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi