



December 14, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable David Obey
Appropriations Committee Chair
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Appropriations Committee Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Representatives Pelosi, Obey, Boehner, and Lewis:

On behalf of the 216 largest public research universities, I am writing to urge that both Congress and the Administration work quickly to resolve budgetary differences and enact the proposed Fiscal Year 2008 appropriations bills involving key federal research and education agencies that support our Nation's competitiveness infrastructure. Specifically I am concerned about sustaining proposed increases for the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy Office of Science, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology. In addition, the National Institutes of Health remains a vital partner of the physical sciences and engineering disciplines in advancing research in medical technologies and treatments that save and improve lives.

If America is to maintain and expand its economic competitiveness and meet its national security needs, it is imperative to make these investments now. NASULGC's broad public research university membership is vigorously committing their research and education missions to the goal of improving America's competitiveness posture. Past investments in research have led to many benefits and products we now take for granted such as the Internet, lasers, MRI's, high-speed computers and advanced electronics. These have been the tools for incredible economic expansion. This momentum must be maintained if we are to generate new discoveries and attract the best talent to solve the next set of challenging problems facing our country.

Furthermore within the budgets proposed for these agencies are important direct investments in our human capital including vital increases for Pell Grants and support for medical and health professions training grants which support health care delivery. Modestly funding the initial costs of a national study abroad program named after the late Senator Paul Simon, would also be an important step to insuring that U.S. students have opportunities to understand how to operate in an increasingly globalized world.

NASULGC appreciates that there has been bipartisan support for the principles behind making many of these investments in our research and education infrastructure. Earlier this year, both Congress and the President demonstrated this common commitment by joining to enact the

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America COMPETES Act. However, by not resolving other budgetary issues during this final funding discussion, your dedication to innovation will not be realized.

In closing I trust that this bipartisan consensus about the importance of these investments will result in a quick resolution of current differences and passage of the Fiscal Year 2008 appropriations package. Furthermore, I pledge that America's public research universities will be robust partners in leveraging these federal investments to create the innovations and skilled talent needed to sustain American economic leadership in this century.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Peter McPherson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "P".

M. Peter McPherson
President