

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

January 11, 2007

Physical Sciences Research – Critical to America’s Competitiveness

***Support Increased Funding for the DOE Office of Science
in the Fiscal Year 2007 Continuing Resolution***

Dear Colleague:

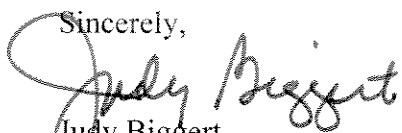
We invite you to join us in signing the attached letter to House appropriators requesting that they provide \$4.1 billion for the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science in the Continuing Resolution for the remainder of fiscal year 2007. **This is the level requested by the President, supported by 138 Members of House in a letter to appropriators in April of 2006, and approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate Appropriations Committee. In addition, no new funding is required to accommodate this increase because of planned-for reductions in other DOE accounts.**


Supporting over 40 percent of basic research in the physical sciences – more than any other federal agency – the DOE Office of Science is the nation’s primary supporter of research in the physical sciences. It has led the way in creating a unique system of large-scale, specialized user facilities for scientific discovery. These facilities are utilized by more than 19,000 researchers each year. Nearly half of those users are university faculty and students, many are from other federal agencies, and a significant number are now from U.S. industry. This collection of cutting-edge – often one-of-a-kind – tools makes the DOE Office of Science a unique 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.

The research and facilities supported by the DOE Office of Science will be adversely impacted if Congress freezes the DOE Office of Science budget at the fiscal year 2006 level, since it represents a reduction below the fiscal year 2005 level when accounting for inflation. **Funding a widely-supported increase for the DOE Office of Science would send a strong signal to the American public and to American industry that Congress has made innovation and economic growth a priority.**

If you would like to sign this letter, please contact Paul Doucette with Rep. Biggert at 5-3515, Simon Limage with Rep. Tauscher at 5-1880, or Don Engel with Rep. Holt at 5-5801. **Deadline for signatures is close of business Friday, January 12th.**

Sincerely,


Judy Biggert
Member of Congress


Ellen Tauscher
Member of Congress


Rush Holt
Member of Congress

Letter from Members to Appropriators

Dear Chairman Obey, Ranking Member Lewis, Chairman Visclosky, and Ranking Member Hobson:

Thank you for making basic research funding and economic competitiveness a priority by approving the requested increase for the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science in the Fiscal Year 2007 Energy and Water Appropriations bill. We share your commitment to increase federal funding for basic research in the physical sciences.

As you complete your work on a Continuing Resolution for the remainder of fiscal year 2007, we urge you to increase funding for the DOE Office of Science to \$4.1 billion, the level requested by the President and approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate Appropriations Committee. No new funding is required to accommodate this increase because of planned-for reductions in other DOE accounts.

Without this level of investment in research and scientific infrastructure, our nation risks falling behind our global economic competitors. The National Academies of Science report, "Rising above the Gathering Storm," stated it starkly: "The scientific and technical building blocks of our economic leadership are eroding at a time when many other nations are gathering strength." As one of its principal recommendations, this report called on the federal government to increase its investment in basic research in the physical sciences.

Supporting over 40 percent of basic research in the physical sciences – more than any other federal agency – the DOE Office of Science is the nation's primary supporter of research in the physical sciences. That is why President Bush proposed to increase funding for the DOE Office of Science to \$4.1 billion in fiscal year 2007 as part of his American Competitiveness Initiative. This proposed increase received strong, bipartisan support in Congress. In April of 2006, 138 Democrats and Republicans communicated their support in a letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee, who subsequently provided the funding requested.

Freezing the DOE Office of Science budget at the fiscal year 2006 level would have a significant adverse impact, since it represents a reduction below the fiscal year 2005 level when accounting for inflation. Maintaining this level of funding in fiscal year 2007 could result in the closure of one or two national user facilities, produce sharp cutbacks in the operation and usage of other facilities, delay and thereby increase construction costs of approved new facilities, require layoffs of hundreds of scientists, necessitate sharp reductions in university programs, and jeopardize U.S. commitments to international projects.

We recognize that you face some significant challenges and difficult choices as you complete your work on a Continuing Resolution for the remainder of fiscal year 2007. However, funding a widely-supported increase for the DOE Office of Science would send a strong signal to the American public and to American industry that Congress has made innovation and economic growth a priority. That is why we urge you to provide the \$4.1 billion requested by the Administration and approved by the House of Representatives and Senate Appropriations Committee for the DOE Office of Science. Please let us know if there is any way we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,