April 22, 2010

The Honorable Bart Gordon                      The Honorable Ralph Hall
Chairman                                          Ranking Member
House Science and Technology Committee
2321 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Gordon and Ranking Member Hall:

On behalf of our associations, which together represent virtually all major academic research institutions and the broader higher education community, we write to encourage favorable consideration and swift passage of legislation to reauthorize the America COMPETES Act. More specifically, we encourage bipartisan support for a five-year reauthorization bill that builds upon the doubling path set forward by the original 2007 COMPETES Act to ensure sustained, long-term funding for the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy Office of Science, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

In 2007, the United States Congress demonstrated its unwavering and bipartisan support for America’s research and scientific enterprise through the passage and enactment of the America COMPETES Act. The Act was a timely and important response to the National Academies report, “Rising Above the Gathering Storm.” The COMPETES Act has served as a valuable blueprint for the nation by enhancing federal support for basic scientific research, STEM education, and research collaborations between academia and industry.

Likewise, the reauthorization legislation now under consideration by the Committee demonstrates your continued commitment to our nation’s research enterprise. Investments in the physical sciences and engineering, STEM education, and technology development will yield innovative ideas and collaborations, economic dividends, and solutions to other major challenges facing our nation. There is no doubt that reauthorizing the America COMPETES Act is imperative to our nation’s continued leadership in cutting-edge basic research.

We strongly encourage the committee to move forward with the passage of COMPETES Act reauthorization legislation and for this bill to quickly move forward for consideration by the full U.S. House of Representatives. We welcome the opportunity to work with you and your staff to move this important measure forward.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Berdahl
President
Association of American Universities

Molly Corbett Broad
President
American Council on Education

Peter McPherson
President
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker, House of Representatives
    The Honorable Steny Hoyer, Majority Leader, House of Representatives
    The Honorable James Clyburn, Majority Whip, House of Representatives
    The Honorable John A. Boehner, Minority Leader, House of Representatives
    The Honorable Eric I. Cantor, Minority Whip, House of Representatives