January 23, 2014

Senator Dianne Feinstein
Chair, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-184
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Lamar Alexander
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Dirksen Senate Office Building, SD-188
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Mike Simpson
Chair, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
Rayburn House Office Building, 2362-B
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development
2186 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Feinstein and Alexander and Representatives Simpson and Kaptur:

On behalf of the Association of American Universities (AAU), I write to commend you for the strong support your subcommittees provided for the U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE’s) Office of Science and Advanced Research Project Agency for Energy (ARPA-E) in the final FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations bill.

DOE-funded research, scientific user facilities and education programs play a key role in strengthening the nation’s scientific knowledge base and preparing the next generation of scientists and engineers. The DOE Office of Science supports almost half of all federally funded university physics research and is an important source of support for other university-based research in areas including the biological and environmental sciences, basic energy sciences, fusion, and high-speed computing. The Office of Science also manages scientific user facilities that are critical tools for research and are utilized by tens of thousands of university researchers each year. Similarly, the Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E), an important new DOE agency, has provided support for high-risk, high-reward research at U.S. universities that has the potential to dramatically change how we produce and utilize energy in the future.

The funding levels provided for the Office of Science and ARPA-E in the final FY 2014 omnibus appropriations bill will specifically allow DOE to:

- maintain its existing core research programs, including those at universities;
- support approximately 25,000 investigators, postdoctoral researchers, and graduate students;
- ensure continued operations and development of critical DOE user facilities at both universities and national laboratories; and
- support early stage energy research in high-risk, high-reward areas in which U.S. industry will not invest.
AAU and our member universities are extremely grateful for your and your Subcommittees’ support of critical DOE university-based research and scientific user facilities.

Sincerely,

Hunter R. Rawlings III
President
Association of American Universities

cc: Senator Barbara Mikulski, Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations
Senator Richard Shelby, Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Appropriations
Representative Hal Rogers, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
Representative Nita Lowey, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations
Members, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Appropriations Development
Members, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Appropriations Development