May 26, 2009

The Honorable Byron Dorgan  The Honorable Robert Bennett
Chairman  Ranking Member
Energy and Water Development  Energy and Water Development
   Subcommittee on Appropriations  Subcommittee on Appropriations
United States Senate  United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510  Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Dorgan and Ranking Member Bennett

We are writing to express our support for President Obama’s Fiscal Year 2010 request of at least $4.9 billion for the Department of Energy’s Office of Science.

The America COMPETES Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-69) authorized the Office of Science to receive $5.8 billion in Fiscal Year 2010, with the goal of doubling the Office of Science’s budget over a seven-year period.

The Office of Science is the main federal sponsor of basic research aimed at achieving the scientific breakthroughs necessary to meet our nation’s growing needs for clean, abundant energy. In addition, the Office of Science is our nation’s largest supporter of basic physical sciences research.

The Office of Science supports research in new fields – biotechnology, nanotechnology, and supercomputing – that will revolutionize the 21st Century economy. Investment in basic scientific research is critical to preserving America’s brainpower advantage so that we can compete in the global economy and prevent our good jobs from going overseas. Especially now in the midst of this severe economic downturn, a strong investment in science is prudent and necessary to regain and sustain economic growth through the development of new industries.

Through its many world-class user facilities and programs, the Office of Science plays an indispensable role in attracting, educating, training, and sustaining the nation’s scientific workforce. Thousands of university researchers – professors, young post-doctoral scientists, and undergraduate students – rely on support from the Office of Science. Roughly half of the researchers at facilities run by the Office of Science come from universities, and about a third of Office of Science research funds go to institutions of higher learning.
Historically, there is strong bipartisan support for increasing funding for the Office of Science. We are acutely aware of the tight constraints on available budgetary resources, and we commend you and the subcommittee for making the Office of Science a funding priority in recent years. We urge your continued support for the Office of Science so that we can maintain this critical investment in our nation’s future.

Sincerely,

[Signatures]

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