



September 28, 2021

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary,

As you develop the fiscal year (FY) 2023 U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) budget request, the Coalition for National Security Research ([CNSR](https://cnsr4research.org)), representing the undersigned members of industry, academia, scientific and professional organizations, and non-profits, urges you to reverse recent trends of requesting cuts for defense basic research. Instead, we respectfully request funding for the defense science and technology (S&T) program equal to 3% of the overall DoD budget and funding for defense basic research at 20% of the defense S&T budget, per expert recommendations from public and private sector organizations as outlined in this letter.

The Biden-Harris Interim National Security Strategic Guidance states that the United States will double down on S&T investments and support cutting-edge technologies and capabilities that will advance our military and national security in the future<sup>1</sup>. Additionally, the *National Defense Strategy (NDS)* calls for establishing an unmatched twenty-first century national security innovation base and sustaining Joint Force military advantages<sup>2</sup>. In order to achieve these objectives, it is imperative that DoD make robust investments in defense S&T. As noted by the Defense Science Board (DSB), lower funding levels for defense S&T could threaten the dominance of the U.S. military<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, defense basic research attracts some of the most creative minds and supports training the next generation science and engineering workforce<sup>4</sup>, both important focus areas in the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance and the *NDS*.

Unfortunately, the FY 2021 and FY 2022 DoD budget requests called for cutting key areas of defense research and development essential to the United States military maintaining its global technological superiority. The FY 2021 budget called for cutting defense basic research and defense S&T below levels requested in the FY 2020 budget<sup>5</sup>, and the share of defense S&T and basic research funding continues to decline. In FY 2022, defense S&T funding accounts for just 2.1% of the DoD budget, and defense basic research funding is slashed to 15.5%.

The Biden-Harris Administration has committed to doubling down on the investments that will support cutting-edge technologies and capabilities. We urge you to include significant increases

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/03/interim-national-security-strategic-guidance/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://dsb.cto.mil/reports/1990s/DefenseScienceandTechnologyBaseforthe21stCentury.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://dsb.cto.mil/reports/2010s/BasicResearch.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/>

for defense S&T and defense basic research consistent with the Administration's commitment. Increasing investments in defense S&T is essential to making revolutionary technological breakthroughs that will help safeguard our military and bolster national security into the future while also strengthening the defense industrial base workforce.

Going forward, we request that you, to the maximum extent possible, craft a FY 2023 budget that provides necessary funding for the defense S&T program to equal 3% of the DoD budget and defense basic research to comprise 20% of the S&T budget. The DSB<sup>6</sup>, National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NSCAI)<sup>7</sup>, National Academies<sup>8</sup>, Center for New American Security (CNAS)<sup>9</sup>, bipartisan House Armed Services Committee's Future of Defense Task Force report<sup>10</sup>, and Council on Competitiveness<sup>11</sup> all recommend that the defense S&T program equal 3% of the DoD budget in order to ensure U.S. military technological dominance. Additionally, the DSB<sup>12</sup>, National Academies<sup>13</sup> and Council on Competitiveness<sup>14</sup> recommend defense basic research comprise 20% of the defense S&T budget to support the high-payoff research needed to sustain long-term U.S. military supremacy. It is our hope that you keep these recommendations in mind as you make difficult decisions developing the FY 2023 DoD budget.

Thank you for consideration of our views. If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Aerospace Industries Association (AIA)  
American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)  
American Chemical Society (ACS)  
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering  
American Mathematical Society (AMS)  
American Political Science Association  
American Psychological Association (APA)  
American Society for Engineering Education  
Arizona State University  
ASME  
Association of American Universities (AAU)  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)  
Battelle  
Boston University  
Brown University  
California Institute of Technology  
Carnegie Mellon University

Columbia University  
Computing Research Association  
Consortium for Ocean Leadership  
Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA)  
Cornell University  
Duke University  
Dupont  
Energetics, Inc.  
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences (FABBS)  
Federation of Materials Societies  
Florida International University  
Florida State University  
George Mason University  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Harvard University  
IEEE-USA  
Indiana University  
Lehigh University  
Louisiana State University

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a403874.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nscai.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Full-Report-Digital-1.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/11463/rising-above-the-gathering-storm-energizing-and-employing-america-for>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cnas.org/publications/commentary/sharpening-the-u-s-militarys-edge-critical-steps-for-the-next-administration>

<sup>10</sup> <https://armedservices.house.gov/cache/files/2/6/26129500-d208-47ba-a9f7-25a8f82828b0/6D5C75605DE8DDF0013712923B4388D7.future-of-defense-task-force-report.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.compete.org/reports/all/202>

<sup>12</sup> <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a387244.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/11463/rising-above-the-gathering-storm-energizing-and-employing-america-for>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.compete.org/reports/all/202>

Louisiana Tech University	University of California, Irvine
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	University of California, Los Angeles
Materials Research Society	University of California, Riverside
Miami University of Ohio	University of California, San Diego
Michigan State University	University of Central Florida
Michigan Technological University	University of Chicago
Montana State University	University of Cincinnati
New Mexico State University	University of Colorado Boulder
New York University	University of Delaware
Northeastern University	University of Florida
Northern Illinois University	University of Houston
Northwestern University	University of Illinois System
Oak Ridge Associated Universities	University of Iowa
Ohio State University	University of Kansas
Oregon Health and Sciences University	University of Maryland at College Park
Oregon State University	University of Michigan
OSA-The Optical Society	University of Missouri System
Pace University	University of Nebraska
Penn State University	University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill
Princeton University	University of North Carolina System
Purdue University	University of Oklahoma
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of Pennsylvania
Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Pittsburgh
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey	University of Rhode Island
Scripps Institution of Oceanography	University of Rochester
Semiconductor Industry Association	University of South Florida
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics	University of Southern California
SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics	University of Tennessee
SRI International	University of Texas at San Antonio
Stony Brook University	University of Texas System
Temple University	University of Vermont
Texas A&M University	University of Virginia
The Catholic University of America	University of Washington
The George Washington University	University of Wisconsin - Madison
The Johns Hopkins University	Vanderbilt University
The State University of New York	Washington State University
University of Alaska	West Virginia University
University of Arizona	William & Mary
University of California System	Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
University of California, Davis	Yale University

Cc: The Honorable Kathleen H. Hick, Deputy Secretary of Defense  
The Honorable Heidi Shyu, Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering  
The Honorable Shalanda Young, Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget  
The Honorable Eric Lander, Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy