November 18, 2021

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leaders Schumer, McCarthy, and McConnell:

I write on behalf of America’s leading research universities to urge you to reach a bipartisan agreement to complete the FY22 appropriations process before the end of the year.

Recent suggestions that final FY22 appropriations could be delayed until March 2022 are distressing. Higher education, research, and innovation play integral roles in our nation’s competitiveness, security, health, and ability to combat and overcome the pandemic. Our nation cannot afford continued inaction on FY22 appropriations. In the absence of final appropriations, federal agencies postpone research award decisions and prepare for potential lapses in funding. Continuing resolutions (CRs) slow the pace of scientific innovation and create funding uncertainty for researchers and students. It is vital that Congress complete appropriations this year and avoid serial stop-gap measures and a year-long CR.

Congress has made good progress in determining FY22 funding levels, and now it is time to finish the job. Both the House and Senate bills include important increases to federal investments in student aid and research that would help bolster our nation’s economic competitiveness and standing as the global innovation leader. For example, the bills propose a $400 increase to the Pell Grant maximum award and increased funding for other student aid programs, the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy’s Office of Science, and other critical research agencies. AAU supports the proposed increases, and we stand ready to reinforce efforts to ensure final passage.

We urge you to complete FY22 appropriations before the end of the year and to approve the highest levels of funding proposed for student aid and research programs in the House and Senate bills. Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Barbara R. Snyder, President

cc: Members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees