

September 5, 2017

The Honorable John McCain  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman McCain and Ranking Member Reed,

On behalf of the Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR), a broad-based coalition of the nation's top research universities and institutes, scientific and professional associations, and non-profits, I write to commend you for your leadership in crafting S. 1519, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year (FY) 2018. CNSR appreciates the support for the defense scientific research enterprise in the bill.

We appreciate the focus on basic research by the committee in S. 1519. Defense basic research provides the seed corn for enabling discoveries that have led to paradigm shifts in the military's technological capabilities. Our universities use this research to help train the next generation science and engineering workforce. We are pleased to see that the bill rejected most of the proposed reductions in basic research in the President's budget request. The additional resources authorized above the FY 2018 budget request for the Army Defense Research Sciences, Army University and Industry Research Centers, Army basic research support for the Third Offset strategy, and Navy University Research Initiatives provide a down payment on the investments needed to help develop the military technologies of tomorrow so we can maintain technical superiority over our adversaries. We look forward to working with you to achieve a four percent annual increase in basic research as is called for in [Innovation: An American Imperative](#), which is signed by the CEOs of Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Microsoft, and endorsed by over 500 other leading organizations from industry, higher education, and science and engineering.

CNSR strongly supports the provisions of the bill that authorize additional funds for the Manufacturing Engineering Education Program, enhance the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and sustain the investments in the Manufacturing USA institutes. Our national security is enhanced when we invest in education and training programs that produce the next generation science and engineering workforce, provide technical assistance to domestic manufacturers, and support innovative efforts to overcome challenges facing the manufacturing and industrial base.

The coalition would like to specifically commend the committee for including Sec. 211 in the underlying bill. This provision provides the Department with much needed flexibility to access expertise and innovation at the nation's universities. As the [National Research Council](#) states, the primary source of new knowledge and talented individuals driving American innovation are the nation's universities. Scientific breakthroughs such as radar, penicillin, the computer, jet

*The Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR) is a broad-based alliance of research universities and institutes, scientific and professional organizations, and non-profits committed to advocating for a strong Defense Science & Technology enterprise.*

propulsion, lasers, global-positioning system, bar codes, transistors and the atomic bomb all have origins in university scientific research.

Finally, it is important that we point out our opposition for sections 733, 891, 892, and 893 of S. 1519. These sections appear to undermine the Department's efforts to support innovations in medical technologies by adding unnecessary layers of bureaucratic red tape. According to the National Academies of Sciences, the defense medical research programs use an effective peer review process in awarding funding and are not in need of extensive revisions. In addition, these sections have the potential to jeopardize military readiness. A strong United States military must have healthy soldiers and families. In light of the fact that we have an all-volunteer force, it is both prudent and strategic for the Department to contribute to curing diseases that affect not only the men and women in uniform, but also the public more broadly.

Again, thank you for your leadership in crafting S. 1519 and support for the defense scientific research enterprise. We look forward to working with you throughout the legislative process. If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us at [cnsr.dodresearch@gmail.com](mailto:cnsr.dodresearch@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

John Latini  
Chairman, Coalition of National Security Research (CNSR)