



January 26, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer:

As Congress seeks to finalize FY18 budget and appropriations decisions, I write on behalf of the Association of American Universities, an association of 60 leading public and private research universities in the United States, to urge that you reach a bipartisan budget agreement. A budget agreement is much needed to raise the defense and non-defense discretionary spending caps and reinvest in national priorities, including research and higher education programs that sustain our long-standing government-university partnership.

The government-university partnership has long bolstered American innovation, public health, and national security and enabled our country to rise to global economic and technological preeminence. Reaching a budget agreement and completing FY18 appropriations is vital to America's research enterprise, which has provided countless advances in science and technology used to address national challenges and societal ills. At a time when our global economic competitors are rapidly gaining ground, reliable federal research and higher education investments are more important than ever.

Congress took steps in FY16 and FY17 to reinvest in research and higher education programs after several years of sequestration cuts and declining investment. We strongly urge you to continue this momentum and forge an agreement that allows for robust investments in research and higher education programs critical to our nation's security and prosperity, including: the National Institutes of Health; the National Science Foundation; the Department of Energy's Office of Science and Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy; Department of Defense 6.1 basic research; NASA; the USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative; the National Endowment for the Humanities; and the Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences, Title VI International Education programs, Pell Grants, and other federal student aid programs.

Now is the time to take a significant bipartisan step forward on the federal budget and reinvest in what has made our nation the greatest and most advanced economy in the world. We stand ready to work with you in support of a budget agreement that supports national priorities and strengthens the extraordinary government-university partnership and the health and security of our country.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Mary Sue Coleman
President

CC: Members of the House and Senate Budget Committees
Members of the House and Senate Appropriations Committee