April 22, 2025

Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
 Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
 Energy and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Representative Kaptur and Senator Murray,

I am writing on behalf of the Association of American Universities to thank you for your letter to the Department of Energy (DOE), dated April 16, 2025, expressing concern over the department's troubling and ill-considered move to impose 15% caps on the facilities & administrative (F&A) rate. These funds are used to reimburse the costs of cutting-edge science performed for the American people on behalf of DOE at American colleges and universities. A sudden reduction in cost reimbursement in the manner of these caps would have immediate and detrimental impacts on universities' ability to continue this critical research.

Academic research supported by DOE is a cornerstone of U.S. science and innovation. Researchers on AAU university campuses are driving advances in an enormous array of fields critical to U.S leadership and national security, including computer science, modeling and simulation, fusion, nuclear physics, and AI. F&A costs are the real and necessary costs of conducting this work. An arbitrary cut, such as that proposed by DOE, would have the effect of shrinking the scale and scope of the U.S. basic science enterprise. Ultimately, it would constrain the supply of ideas and high-skilled individuals emerging from U.S. campuses: critical ingredients for energy security, nuclear security, scientific progress, and broad-based abundance and prosperity.

As we race to secure global advantage in advanced and emerging industries, such a move is a gift to our competitors. We should be expanding, not retrenching, these investments.

Thank you again for your efforts to support U.S. science and innovation and American universities.

With gratitude,

Barbara R. Snyder, President