



ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

President

January 14, 2013

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
2108 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-2105

Dear Representative Markey:

I write in support of your legislation to remove restrictions on federal funding for firearms research, on behalf of the Association of American Universities (AAU), an association of 60 leading public and private U.S. research institutions. AAU strongly believes that our nation's system of peer review – in which proposals compete for resources based on informed judgments of peers on their scientific merits – underpins the extraordinary success of the U.S. national research system. Politically motivated restrictions on singular areas of research, such as the appropriations restrictions related to firearms, not only undermine our peer review system, but also, to the detriment of our nation, inhibit academic inquiry and the knowledge it yields.

The AAU Executive Committee recently issued a statement calling on our nation's leaders to address gun violence, not only by considering issues of gun control, but also care of the mentally ill and the culture of our contemporary media, and noted that, as a country, we needed to draw on the nation's leading experts to craft effective responses. We applaud your leadership to ensure that policy formation and evaluation will be informed by the best empirical evidence that peer reviewed research can provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hunter R. Rawlings III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Hunter R. Rawlings III
President
Association of American Universities