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December 19, 2006

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Incoming Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221 Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Reid:

On behalf of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the nation's largest general scientific organization, I am writing to ask for your support of federal research and development (R&D) funding as you complete the fiscal year 2007 appropriations process next year.

Both Congress and the Administration support increasing funding for the physical sciences, as articulated in the American Competitiveness Initiative. Appropriators in both the House and Senate fully funded the request to increase funding at the National Science Foundation, Department of Energy Office of Science, and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) laboratories.

Furthermore, Congress united to pass legislation to reauthorize the National Institutes of Health, a bill that allows for a six percent increase in FY 2007. These initiatives reflect a balanced portfolio of R&D investments and recognition of the important interaction of the physical, biological, behavioral, and social sciences; each of which contributes to innovation and to the improvement of the economy, health, education and quality of life of all Americans.

We recognize that Congress faces many competing priorities as it formulates the budget and we request that you honor the commitment made to these agencies by the authorizers and appropriators, and provide them with the increased level of funding for fiscal year 2007.

Sincerely,

Alan I. Leshner

cc: Susan McCue