



December 17, 2012

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Chief Executive Officer and
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The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Speaker Boehner:

On behalf of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) we respectfully call to your attention the voices of individual scientists and engineers from academia, laboratories, and businesses who are all urging you and the U.S. Congress to work together to achieve a bipartisan compromise that avoids the fiscal cliff and moves the country on to sound fiscal footing without sacrificing our nation's crucial investments in science and technology.

Below is just one of the hundreds of voices we've heard from scientists across our nation, including from your state of Ohio (<http://membercentral.aaas.org/sequestration/voices/videos>):

"My research focuses on how we can take ideas from biological organisms and turn them into flexible, adaptive robots. These robots are likely to have applications in medicine, in defense, and in industry. If we lose our funding, the six graduate students and three undergraduate students in my lab, who receive federal funding, may not be able to continue their work. Science, research and engineering are the reason America has been so successful; we must not allow ourselves to fall behind other countries (such as China) that are investing more heavily than we are currently in basic science." Scientist, Case Western Reserve University

It is important to recognize that federal research and development (R&D) investments are *not* driving our national deficits. Placing a significant burden on these crucial areas, as sequestration would do, is nothing less than a threat to national competitiveness. The looming sequestration would slash federal investment in research and development by an estimated \$57 billion between now and 2017. The state of Ohio alone would stand to lose \$1.43 billion in federal R&D investments over the next five years. That is not good for science, but it is also bad for an economy whose growth is driven by advances in science and technology.

Federal nondefense R&D funding has already declined by 5% in the past two years, after remaining flat for the past decade, and continued cuts significantly threaten U.S. leadership in these areas. Our message is that a balanced plan must be one of shared contributions to a sound fiscal future, including strong support for our nation's science and technology enterprise.

We collectively and individually stand ready to help in any way we can as you tackle these vital issues.

Sincerely,

Alan I. Leshner