



January 5, 2017

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Office of the President-elect
1800 F St NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Congressman Mulvaney,

I write today on behalf of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest general scientific society, to offer you any and all assistance in accessing the scientific resources and technological know-how that you may need as Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to address the country's most pressing challenges.

As Director, you will lead an agency that will play a central role in influencing the health of American science, technology, and innovation through investments in research and development (R&D) and policies that govern the conduct of research. We encourage you to appoint individuals with science or engineering expertise, along with strong management and policy experience, to key posts on your team to ensure you have timely scientific and technical input on the important policy and budgetary decisions you will face.

The AAAS counts more than 100,000 members across every science and engineering discipline. We publish high-quality research in our *Science* family of journals, and we have a suite of programs focused on areas where science intersects society. In particular, since 1976, the AAAS R&D Budget and Policy Program has worked to produce timely, comprehensive, and independent analyses of federal R&D funding trends, including annual reports on the President's budget request and final congressional appropriations.

Federal investments in R&D play a vital role in supporting the inherently long-term enterprise of laying down the foundational knowledge and skill bases upon which our 21st century economy is built. The R&D activities funded by the federal government also serve to advance federal agency missions, from ensuring national and energy security, to protecting the public health and natural resources, and fostering a vibrant and innovative economy. However, AAAS R&D budget analyses have shown that federal investment in R&D is at a historic low relative to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), steadily declining from nearly 2 percent at the height of the Space Race to 0.79 percent in FY 2016. The U.S. is now tenth among developed nations in terms of prioritization of R&D investments relative to GDP.

The U.S. scientific community and the AAAS, in particular, are American assets at your disposal. We look forward to working with you and your team at OMB to ensure that you are able to draw on high quality scientific evidence to craft policies that best serve the American people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rush Holt". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rush D. Holt
AAAS Chief Executive Officer
Executive Publisher, *Science* Family of Journals