April 4, 2017

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
H-310, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable José Serrano
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Serrano:

We write to respectfully request that the National Science Foundation (NSF) receive at least $8 billion in funding in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

The NSF is an independent federal agency created by Congress in 1950 to promote the progress of science, secure the national defense; and to advance the nation's health, prosperity, and welfare. Ensuring the NSF has robust resources to carry out its mission has never been more important. More than 20 percent of jobs in our country require training in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields which are projected to experience the highest growth in coming years. At the same time the United States lags behind other nations in STEM training; our nation ranks 38th in mathematics and 24th in science performance. Nearly one-third of our country's adults have less than basic mathematics skills. To remain competitive globally we must invest in the NSF as it is the only federal agency specifically responsible for supporting essential education and research across all science and engineering fields.

According to the Center on Education and the Workforce, there will be a shortage of five million STEM professionals by 2020. To meet our nation's workforce needs, support research and development, and compete in the world economy, Congress must fully fund the NSF. One out of every four basic research projects at higher learning institutions across the U.S. is supported by the NSF. All NSF grant proposals are critically reviewed to ensure they meet the intellectual merit and broader impacts criteria. The NSF's expert merit review process is the international gold-standard for the review and evaluation of grant proposals. The NSF's merit review process relies upon the expertise and knowledge of leading scientists and engineers to ensure that the best research is being funded across the scientific disciplines. Full funding of the NSF will enable 377,170 researchers, including teachers and students across the country, to address some of our society's most pressing concerns through 10,100 individual NSF awards.

NSF research has led to scientific and technological breakthroughs that have generated positive change in society and long-term economic benefits. Many of those discoveries have been expanded upon and applied commercially by domestic companies, benefiting the private sector and spurring our nation's economy. Advanced rechargeable batteries, facial recognition software that can read emotions, and more protective sunscreens are examples of commercial products that have roots with the NSF, have created jobs, and have helped businesses grow.

Each day NSF-supported inventions like those that detect chemical and biological weapons and models and management strategies for storms and disaster situations make our lives better and safer. Other breakthroughs have assisted our military through stealth camouflage and helped veterans transition home through advanced trauma research. Scientists supported by the NSF are currently developing breakthroughs including treatments for resistant prostate cancer, sensors to detect lung cancer, new lightweight body armors, and zero resistance energy flows to improve energy efficiency.

The NSF helps support our nation's brightest minds in their endeavors to address our most challenging problems. Funding for the NSF makes investments at all education levels to develop a modern and resourceful workforce that will enable our country to remain competitive in emerging industries.
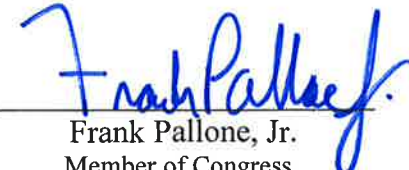
For these reasons, we respectfully request your support to ensure that the National Science Foundation receive at least $8 billion for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018. This amount is the minimum level of funding needed to ensure future generations of Americans are prepared to help our nation remain a world economic leader.

Thank you very much.
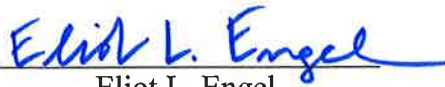
Very truly yours,

G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

Glenn 'GT' Thompson
Member of Congress

Eliot L. Engel
Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress
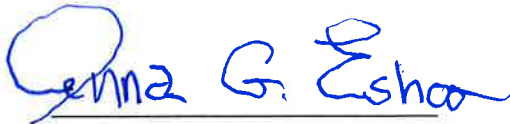
Frank A. LoBiondo
Frank A. LoBiondo
Member of Congress

Raúl M. Grijalva
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

Lee Zeldin
Lee Zeldin
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo
Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress
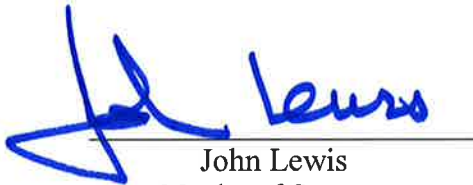
Ryan A. Costello
Ryan A. Costello
Member of Congress

Mike Doyle
Mike Doyle
Member of Congress

Peter King
Peter King
Member of Congress

John Lewis
John Lewis
Member of Congress

Barbara Comstock
Barbara Comstock
Member of Congress

Denny Heck
Denny Heck
Member of Congress

Brian Fitzpatrick
Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

Tom MacArthur
Tom MacArthur
Member of Congress

Rod Blum
Rod Blum
Member of Congress

Gene Green
Member of Congress

Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress
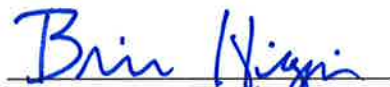
Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Dina Titus
Member of Congress

Paul Tonko
Member of Congress

Brian Higgins
Member of Congress
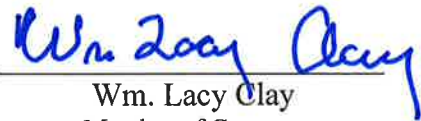
Ted Deutch
Member of Congress
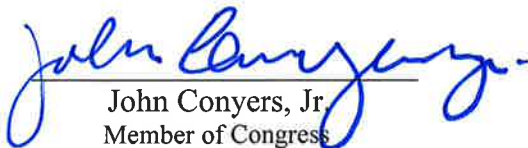
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress
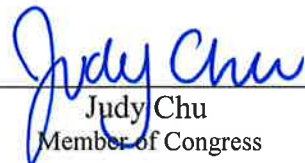
John Garamendi
Member of Congress

Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress
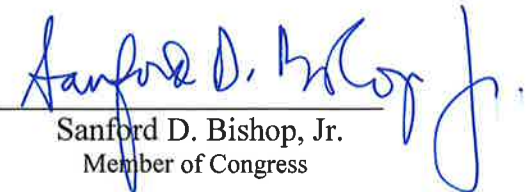
John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress

Judy Chu
Member of Congress
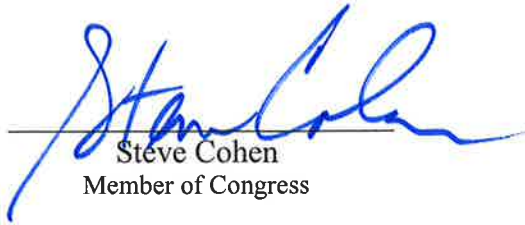
Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

William R. Keating
Member of Congress

Joe Courtney
Member of Congress

Al Green
Member of Congress

Daniel W. Lipinski
Member of Congress
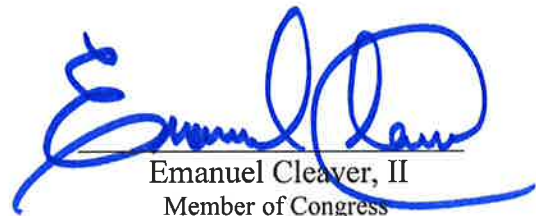
Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress
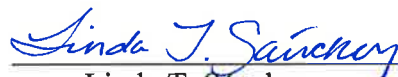
Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

Linda T. Sanchez
Member of Congress
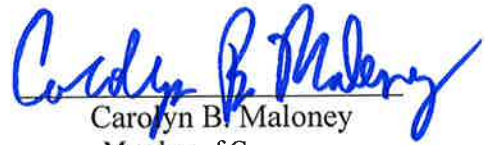
Tim Walz
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui
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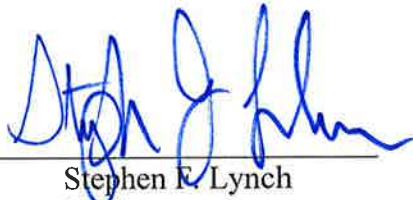
Carolyn B. Maloney
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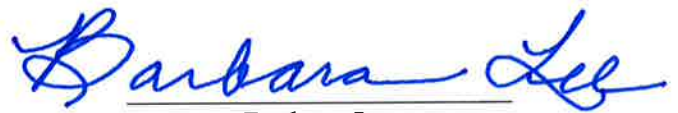
Peter Welch
Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velázquez
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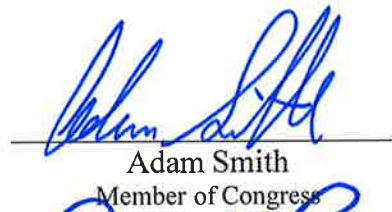
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress
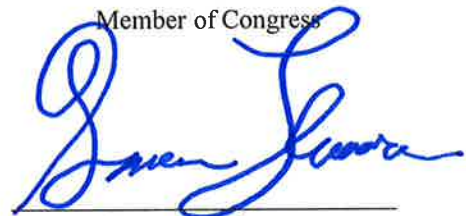
Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Adam Smith
Member of Congress

Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

Gwen S. Moore
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress
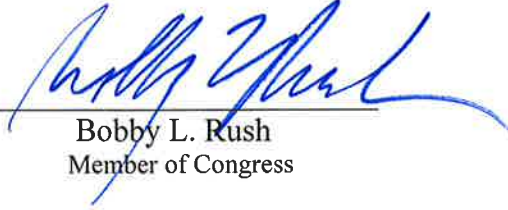
Gregory W. Meeks
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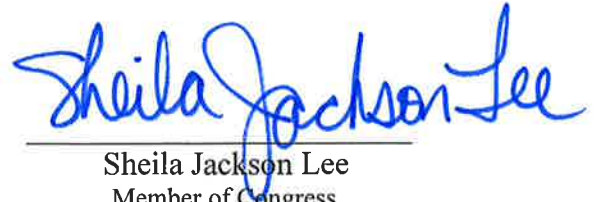
Ben Ray Lujan
Member of Congress

Collin C. Peterson
Member of Congress

Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

André Carson
Member of Congress
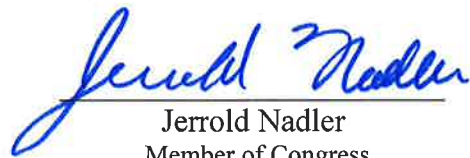
Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

David Price
Member of Congress

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Jim Langevin
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

Jared Polis
Member of Congress

Kyrsten Sinema
Member of Congress

Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress

Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

John K. Delaney
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

John J. Faso
Member of Congress

Hakeem Jeffries
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas
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Jim Cooper
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Bonnie Watson Coleman
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Donald Norcross
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Carol Shea-Porter
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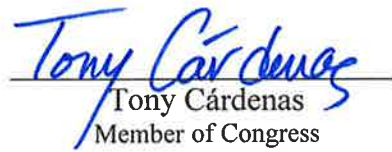
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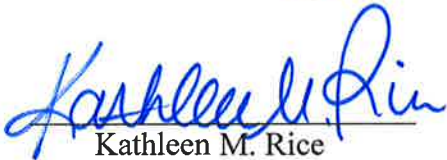
Dave Loebsack
Member of Congress

Marc Veasey
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress

Kathleen M. Rice
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Mark Takano
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Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress

Ron Kind
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Tulsi Gabbard
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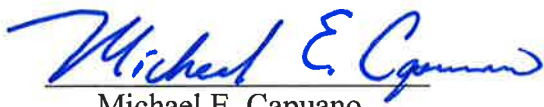
Bradley S. Schneider
Member of Congress

Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress

Mark Pocan
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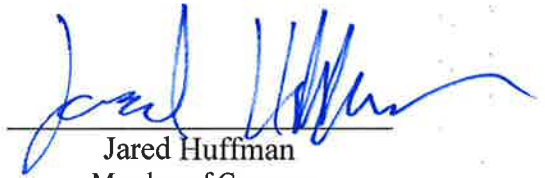
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Ed Perlmutter
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Seth Moulton
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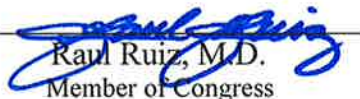
Jared Huffman
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Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen
M.C.

Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen
Member of Congress
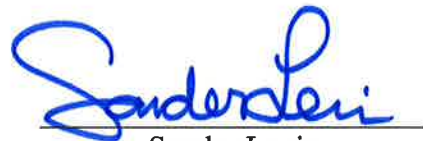
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Member of Congress

Robin L. Kelly
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Stephanie Murphy
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Sander Levin
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Bill Foster
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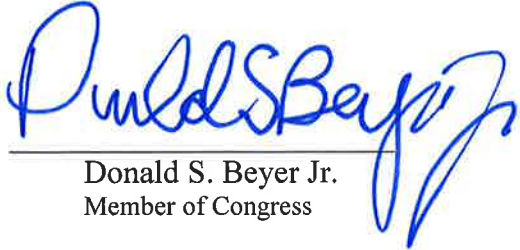
Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress

Susan A. Davis
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Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
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Brendan F. Boyle
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Scott Peters
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Donald S. Beyer Jr.
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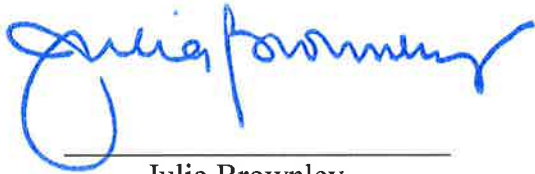
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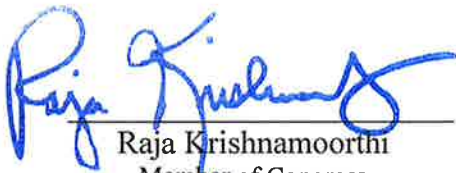Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Dwight Evans
Member of Congress

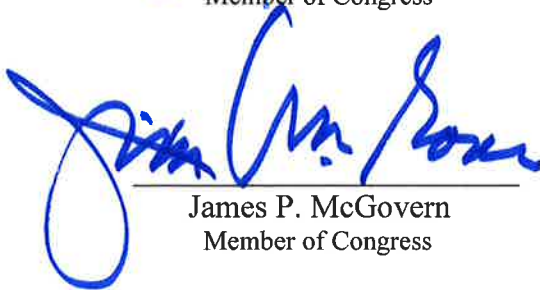Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Cheri Bustos
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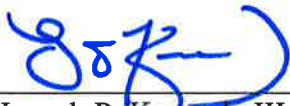
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress
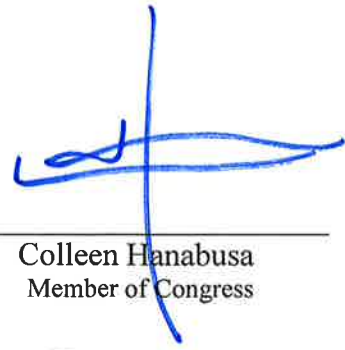
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Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy III
Member of Congress

Jamie Raskin
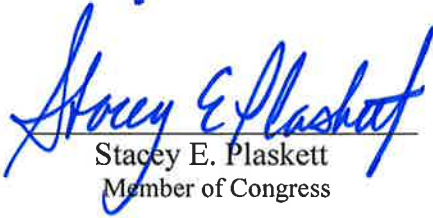Member of Congress

Charlie Crist
Member of Congress

Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress

Jacky Rosen
Member of Congress

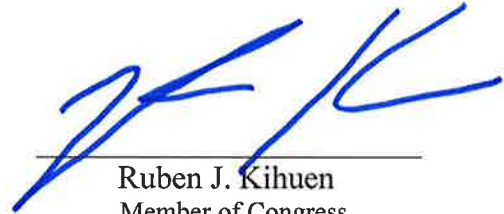Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress

Stacey E. Plaskett
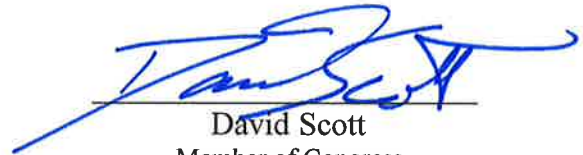Member of Congress

Pramila Jayapal
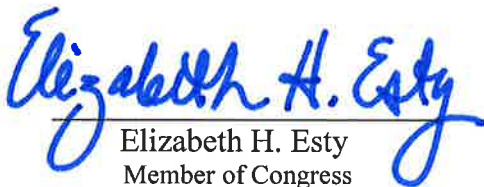Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

Ruben J. Kihuen
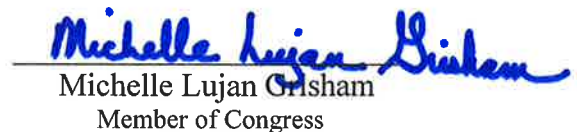Member of Congress

Daniel T. Kildee
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David Scott
Member of Congress

Elizabeth H. Esty
Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress

Josh Gottheimer
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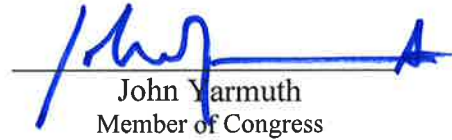
Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress

John Yarmuth
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress

Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

John Sarbanes
Member of Congress

Suzan DelBene
Member of Congress

Brenda L. Lawrence
Member of Congress

Don Young
Member of Congress

Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress

Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Patrick Meehan
Member of Congress

Ted Lieu
Member of Congress