IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PRIVATE SECTOR GROUPS AND INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS, SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIC COALITIONS UNITE TO URGE CONGRESS TO RECOMMIT TO FUNDING AND SUSTAINING THE U.S. SCIENTIFIC ENTERPRISE

Organizations say that investing in America's R&D ecosystem must be a high priority in "future coronavirus response or economic stimulus supplementals"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE May 4, 2020

CONTACT: Kasey S. Pipes

817-542-3870

Washington, DC—Today, the Task Force on American Innovation—a coalition of companies, business and university associations, and professional societies that support sustained and robust federal investment in basic science research – joined 17 other business, science, technology, and academic organizations in urging Congress to include the investments necessary to ensure the future health of the U.S. research enterprise in any additional coronavirus response legislation that is considered.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a dramatic reduction in research activity across the country, has stymied the ability of U.S. companies and universities to retain and train our STEM workforce, and has slowed down or stopped research projects of national importance. As the letter states, "...at a time when Congress, the Administration, and state and local leaders are relying on this national asset to find solutions to end this crisis, our nation's research enterprise is in peril."

"The letter we are sending to Congress today clearly shows a broad consensus that comprehensive research funding must be included in future stimulus packages. Science and engineering research are key to rebuilding an innovative and globally competitive U.S. economy," said Scott Corley, Executive Director of The Task Force on American Innovation.

Corley added, "It is essential that our country's R&D capabilities be fully restored. Now more than ever, we need our labs and research facilities to be fully functioning during this time of unprecedented health and economic challenges."

The signatories of the letter outline three specific ways Congress can address the COVID-19 challenge:

- Significantly increasing scientific research funding across federal science agencies;
- Maintaining and growing America's STEM workforce;
- Investing in essential research infrastructure.

The letter is co-signed by:

The Task Force on American Innovation;

The Science Coalition;

Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research;

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Coalition;

The Coalition for Aerospace and Science (CAS);

The Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF);

The Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR);

The Energy Sciences Coalition (ESC);

The Friends of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES);

Friends of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS);

The Information Technology Industry Council (ITI);

National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (NCFAR);

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Constituency Group;

The National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) Coalition;

The National Photonics Initiative;

Research!America;

TechNet;

United for Medical Research (UMR).

The attached letter is also on the TFAI website, www.innovationtaskforce.org

May 4, 2020

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
Office of the Senate Majority Leader
US Capitol S-230
Washington, DC 20510

Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Office of the Speaker of the House
US Capitol H-232
Washington, DC 20515

Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer
Office of the Senate Democratic Leader
US Capitol S-221
Washington, DC 20510

Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy
Office of the House Republican Leader
US Capitol H-204
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Democratic Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Republican Leader McCarthy:

America's scientific research enterprise – both public and private – is the most robust in the world and a national asset for economic growth and national security. However, at a time when Congress, the Administration, and state and local leaders are relying on this national asset to find solutions to end this crisis, our nation's research enterprise is in peril.

The COVID-19 crisis has severely impacted nearly every part of America's scientific enterprise, from the private sector to our colleges, universities and medical schools to our federally supported research facilities and national laboratories. While it is impossible to determine the full ramifications of the pandemic at this time, it has already resulted in a dramatic reduction of non-COVID-19 related research activity across the country, stymied our ability to retain and train our STEM workforce, and slowed down or stopped research projects of national importance. Many of these concerns are also captured in an April 7 research relief letter to Congress from several higher education associations.

Congress must take decisive actions to address the short- and long-term impacts of this nationwide ramp-down and shuttering of labs. As the leaders of 18 broad-based coalitions and groups – representing hundreds of companies, business and university associations, professional societies and academic institutions committed to ensuring the vitality of the U.S. innovation ecosystem – we want to offer to work together to develop the legislative packages necessary to safely restart and strengthen America's R&D engine.

With this in mind, we offer a set of recommendations concerning our research enterprise broadly for any future legislative packages aimed at addressing, mitigating and recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. Specifically, we believe the following three areas should be addressed by Congress in future coronavirus response or economic stimulus supplementals:

Significantly Increase Scientific Research Funding Across Federal Science Agencies: An essential part of any economic stimulus must be to strengthen the nation's commitment to the broad, critical scientific research that will enable our effective responses to COVID-19, prevent future health pandemics, and restore our vibrant economy. The scientific research enterprise's response to the COVID-19 pandemic is this era's Manhattan project and requires collaboration across all scientific disciplines—from using supercomputing to identify novel treatments, to utilizing advanced photonics to characterize the virus—all scientific disciplines are needed, and both the public and private sectors must continue to collaborate on research.

Congress should provide federal science agencies increased support for direct research programs broadly, in addition to the funding already provided by the CARES Act to specific programs dedicated to fighting and ultimately curing COVID-19. This increase would enable federal agencies to award the supplemental funding necessary to restart labs and experiments and also award current grantees full or partial cost extensions, as necessary. Many researchers will need ramp-up funding to restart their research once their labs reopen and additional funding to complete their grants' original scopes of work due to time lost and resources spent during the crisis.

Maintain and Grow our STEM Workforce: Our coalitions are particularly concerned about the acute economic impacts of the pandemic on students, scholars and early career researchers, as well as the pipeline of this STEM talent to the US private sector. As scientists enter an increasingly hamstrung economy and uncertain job market, the expansion of traineeship, fellowship and internship opportunities will be integral to support the human capital at the core of the American research enterprise. By investing in and extending the length of eligibility for key programs – as well as backfilling and bridging existing support – Congress can help patch leaks in the STEM talent pipeline.

Invest in Essential Infrastructure: Congress should invest in our nation's aging research infrastructure—the large-scale research facilities, dedicated laboratory buildings and advanced scientific equipment that enable scientific breakthroughs and discoveries central to our global competitiveness and national security. Investing in our research infrastructure would immediately spur our economy, creating jobs across the construction and manufacturing sectors. Such investments would also enable new discoveries and innovations with associated economic benefits, paying dividends for decades to come.

Thank you for your leadership at this time of great national crisis. Your bipartisan efforts to swiftly pass three major bills in response to the health and economic challenges facing our country clearly demonstrate that we all stand united in the fight against COVID-19. This fight will be an ongoing challenge, and the federal government will need to continue making the investments necessary to jumpstart and strengthen our economy and prevent future pandemics.

We stand ready to work with you and your colleagues to increase our national commitment to the U.S. research enterprise and ensure the U.S. remains a global leader in science, technology and innovation.

Sincerely,

Maryam Cope
Co-Chair
Task Force on American Innovation (TFAI)
Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA)

Kathleen N. Kingscott
Co-Chair
Task Force on American Innovation (TFAI)
IBM Research

The Task Force on American Innovation (TFAI) *is an alliance of America's leading companies and business associations, research university associations, and scientific societies that advocates on behalf of federal funding of basic research in the physical sciences engineering.*

Lauren Brookmeyer
President
The Science Coalition
Stony Brook University

The Science Coalition *is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of more than 50 of the nation's leading public and private research universities. It is dedicated to sustaining the federal government's investment in basic scientific research as a means to stimulate the economy, spur innovation and drive America's economic competitiveness.*

Tannaz Rasouli
Executive Director
Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research
Association of American Medical Colleges

The Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research *is a coalition of patient and voluntary health groups, medical and scientific societies, academic and research organizations, and industry that support enhancing the federal investment in the biomedical, behavioral and population-based research conducted and supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).*

Katie Steen
Co-Chair
Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Coalition
Association of American Universities (AAU)

Nichelle Harriott
Co-Chair
Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Coalition
National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC)

The Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) *Coalition is a coalition of scientific societies and science advocacy organizations who support full appropriations of the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) competitive grants program over time.*

Julia Smith
Co-Chair
Coalition for Aerospace and Science
University of Arizona

Ann Zulkosky
Co-Chair
Coalition for Aerospace and Science
Lockheed Martin Corporation

The Coalition for Aerospace and Science (CAS) *is an alliance of industry, university, and science organizations united in our support for robust and sustainable federal funding for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).*

Erin Heath
Co-Chair
Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF)
American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)

Miriam Quintal
Co-Chair
Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF)
Lewis-Burke Associates, LLC

Juliane Baron
Co-Chair
Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF)
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences (FABBS)

The Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF) *is an alliance of professional organizations, universities, and businesses united in our support for sustained and robust funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF).*

John Latini
Chair
Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR)
Penn State University

The Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR) *is a broad-based alliance of more than 100 members from industry, academia, scientific and professional organizations, and non-profits committed to advocating for a strong Defense Science and Technology enterprise.*

Chris Carter
Co-Chair
Energy Sciences Coalition (ESC)
Lehigh University

Leland Cogliani
Co-Chair
Energy Sciences Coalition (ESC)
Lewis-Burke Associates, LLC

The Energy Sciences Coalition (ESC) *is a broad-based coalition of organizations representing scientists, engineers, and mathematicians in universities, industry, and national laboratories who are committed to supporting and advancing the scientific research programs of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science.*

Felice J. Levine
Chair
The Friends of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES)
American Educational Research Association

The Friends of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) *supports the critical research, data, statistics and evaluation programs at IES. Our mission is to advance the objectives of IES and encourage federal investment to conduct the highest quality education research, data collection, evaluations and dissemination at IES.*

Nuala Moore
Co-Chair
Friends of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)
American Thoracic Society

Joe Laakso
Co-Chair
Friends of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)
Endocrine Society

The Friends of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) *is a broad coalition of public and environmental health and research-focused organizations who support, follow and call attention to the vital work being done by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).*

Jason Oxman
President and CEO
The Information Technology Industry Council (ITI)

The Information Technology Industry Council (ITI) *is a premier advocacy and policy organization for the world's leading innovation companies and a trusted leader of innovation policy that drives sustainable, ethical, and equitable growth and opportunity for all.*

R. Thomas (Tom) Van Arsdall
Executive Director
National Coalition of Food and Agriculture
Van Arsdall & Associates, Inc.

The National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research *is a nonprofit, customer-led coalition seeking to sustain and enhance federal funding for food and agricultural research, extension and education to help bring about research outcomes that provide a range of major public benefits.*

John Laughner
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Constituency Group
Director of the National Coalition for Heart and Stroke Research
American Heart Association

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Constituency Group *is a coalition of medical professionals and societies focused on supporting NHLBI's world leading research in the fields of heart, lung, blood, and blood vessel diseases as well as sleep disorders.*

Edward White
Steering Committee, Chair
National Photonics Initiative
AIM Photonics

The National Photonics Initiative (NPI) *is a collaborative alliance among industry, academia and government seeking to raise awareness of photonics - the application of light - and drive US funding and investment in five key photonics-driven fields critical to US competitiveness and national security: advanced manufacturing, communications and information technology, defense and national security, energy, and health and medicine.*

Jennifer O'Bryan
Co-Chair
The NIST Coalition
SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics

Brandy Dillingham
Co-Chair
The NIST Coalition
The Optical Society

The NIST Coalition *advocates for the laboratory programs within the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) that provide foundational research and material development for companies, academic institutions and other federal agencies. The coalition works to raise awareness among congressional leaders of the vital role fulfilled by NIST to drive American economic growth and job creation.*

Mary Woolley
President and CEO
Research!America

The Research!America *alliance advocates for science, discovery, and innovation to achieve better health for all.*

Linda Moore
President and CEO
TechNet

TechNet *is a national, bipartisan network of technology CEOs and senior executives that promotes the growth of the innovation economy. TechNet's diverse membership includes dynamic American businesses ranging from startups to the most iconic companies on the planet.*

Chol Pak
President
United for Medical Research (UMR)
Thermo Fisher Scientific

United for Medical Research (UMR) *is a coalition of leading research institutions, patient health advocates, and private industry that have joined together to seek steady increases in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH).*

cc:

The White House
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
U.S. House Science Committee