March 27, 2017

The Honorable James Mattis
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary,

As you develop the FY 2018 U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) budget request that will include additional funding above the budget caps, the Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR), representing the undersigned research universities and institutes, scientific and professional associations, and businesses, respectfully requests that you seek to support robust and sustained growth in the DOD’s basic research and Science and Technology (S&T) program budgets. We also urge you to use the funding appropriated in H.R. 1301, the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2017 as the basis for developing the FY 2018 DOD budget request.

As you can appreciate from your time in uniform, the defense basic research programs enable discoveries that have led to paradigm shifts in the military’s technical capabilities. Our national security strategy calls for dominance over our adversaries. Basic research is many times the only way to solve complex problems that lead to transformational technologies and capabilities that have made the U.S. military the best fighting force on the planet. With countries like China more than tripling their spending on research and development over the past 17 years, now more than ever we need to support basic scientific research to enable discoveries and innovations that will provide the necessary military capabilities of tomorrow and help offset any technological innovations made by competitor nations. It is vital to our national security that the United States maintains its technical superiority; investing in defense basic research now will ensure our national security well into the future.

Making significant breakthroughs in fundamental research requires stable and long-term funding. While we agree that the U.S. must make investments to address near-term threats, we cannot underinvest in the basic research that enables discoveries that are the foundation of the innovation pipeline. To that end, we would like to draw your attention to the document: Innovation: An American Imperative (Innovation Imperative) - a statement signed by the CEOs of Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Microsoft, and endorsed by over 500 other leading organizations from industry, higher education, and science and engineering. The Innovation Imperative urges Congress to end sequestration and provide steady and sustained growth in funding of at least four percent for basic scientific research at numerous agencies, including DOD. As a cosigner of the Innovation Imperative, CNSR believes that if the U.S. is to maintain its technological superiority, we must prioritize federal scientific research investments and support policies that promote innovation. We urge you to include at least a four percent increase above levels in H.R. 1301 for the defense basic research programs in the FY 2018 DOD budget request.

In addition, we remain concerned about the overall DOD S&T program. The 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review Report, Council on Competitiveness and National Academy of Sciences all have called for DOD S&T program budget to comprise at least 3% of the total budget. While we understand the

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Department has faced severe cuts over the past few years, the FY 2017 DOD S&T program budget request is approximately 1% or roughly $5 billion below the recommended levels. The result is an S&T program that is not growing at levels necessary to advance military technologies our Warfighters need to continue to be the most effective fighting force in the world. With basic research serving as the first step in creating new military capabilities, the S&T program applies the knowledge gained from basic research to solve military problems and develop the systems and components to potential solutions are essential to fielding the military technologies of tomorrow. The private sector has no incentive to fund the majority of this type of research so federal funding is vital to advancing technologies beyond basic research. We urge you to include robust funding for the DOD S&T program in the FY 2018 DOD budget request.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. If we can be of any assistance as you develop the FY 2018 DOD budget request, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

**CNSR Members**

American Chemical Society  
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering  
American Mathematical Society  
American Psychological Association  
American Society for Engineering Education  
Arizona State University  
Association of American Universities  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Battelle  
Boston University  
Brown University  
California Institute of Technology  
Carnegie Mellon University  
Columbia University  
Computing Research Association  
Consortium for Ocean Leadership  
Cornell University  
Duke University  
Energetics, Inc.  
Federation of Materials Societies  
Florida International University  
Florida State University  
George Mason University  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Harvard University  
Indiana University  
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers - USA  
Lehigh University  
Louisiana State University  
Louisiana Tech University  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Materials Research Society  
Michigan State University  
Michigan Technological University  
New Mexico State University  
Northern Illinois University  
Northwestern University  
Oak Ridge Associated Universities  
Ohio State University  
Oregon Health and Sciences University  
Oregon State University  
Pace University  
Penn State University  
Princeton University  
Purdue University  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
Semiconductor Industry Association  
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics  
SRI International  
Texas A&M University  
The Johns Hopkins University  
The Optical Society  
The State University of New York  
University of Arizona  
University of California – Irvine  
University of California – Los Angeles  
University of California – San Diego  
University of California System  
University of Central Florida  
University of Cincinnati  
University of Colorado  
University of Houston  
University of Iowa  
University of Michigan  
University of Missouri System  
University of Nebraska  
University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill  
University of North Carolina System  
University of Pennsylvania  
University of Pittsburgh  
University of Rochester  
University of South Florida  
University of Southern California  
University of Tennessee  
University of Virginia  
University of Washington  
University of Wisconsin - Madison  
Vanderbilt University  
Washington State University  
West Virginia University  
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution  
Yale University

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