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Fifty Business, Higher Education, Scientific & Patient Organizations Urge Lawmakers to Close the Innovation Deficit With Strong Federal Investments in Research

*On Eve of Senate Appropriations Hearing on Driving Innovation Through Federal Investments,
Coalition Submits Testimony to Panel for April 29 Hearing with Leaders of Key Federal Research Agencies*

Washington, DC – On the eve of an unprecedented U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee hearing in which the heads of the nation’s major research agencies will jointly testify on the need for federal research investments to drive innovation and economic growth, a group of 50 leading business, higher education, scientific, and patient organizations urged members of that panel to make strong, sustained investments in research in order to [Close the Innovation Deficit](#).

In [written testimony submitted to the Committee](#), the coalition described the links between basic research and economic growth, improved medical treatments, and national security. They noted that lagging U.S. investment in research and higher education combined with the significant increase in such investment by other nations has created an innovation deficit, threatening the nation’s international competitiveness.

“As the global innovation leader, we produce more discoveries and patents, and more technological and health advances, than any other nation,” the organizations wrote. “Economists have made very clear that these science- and engineering-driven advances have fueled most of our nation’s economic growth in the decades since World War II. Yet today, our leadership faces a serious challenge from other nations that are *rapidly* increasing their investments in these critical areas while our own spending lags.”

They added, “While many actors play key roles in the nation’s innovation enterprise, only the federal government can close the innovation deficit by supporting research on the scale, scope, and time horizon necessary to maintain our edge...[T]he federal government must make sustained investments in scientific research that meet or exceed annual inflation in the cost of doing research. To help make this possible, Congress and the President must stop sequestration, reduce long-term budget deficits, and stabilize the long-term national debt, using a sensible approach that allows wise investments in research and education and creates economic and job growth. To do less is to fall behind.”

Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Barbara Mikulski said she called for tomorrow’s hearing entitled, “Driving Innovation through Federal Investments,” because she wants to make certain that in dealing with America’s budget deficit, we don’t create an American innovation deficit.

Tuesday's hearing is believed to be a unique gathering of research agency heads testifying in front of Congress. The witnesses at tomorrow's hearing will be: John P. Holdren, Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), Executive Office of the President of the United States; Ernest Moniz, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE); Francis S. Collins, Director, National Institutes of Health (NIH); France A. Córdoba, Director, National Science Foundation (NSF); and Arati Prabhakar, Director, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, Department of Defense (DARPA).

The innovation deficit is the widening gap between actual and needed federal investments in research and higher education at a time when other nations such as China, India, and Singapore are dramatically boosting research funding to develop the next great technological and medical breakthroughs to power their economies forward. In addition to submitting testimony, the groups behind the Close the Innovation Deficit effort have developed a variety of tools that explain the innovation deficit and its threat to the future competitiveness of the United States. These include a [new infographic](#), which illustrates the investments in research by other nations compared to the United States, and a [four-minute video](#), which uses rapidly hand-drawn images and text to explain the innovation deficit and the need for federal investments in research. The video was produced by Colorado State University and the infographic by the University of Arizona.

The Close the Innovation Deficit campaign was created out of concern about cuts to research and higher education funding caused by budget caps and sequestration. The organizations that support the campaign have said that the growth supported by innovation will help address the nation's long-term fiscal problems.

The 50 organizations that submitted the testimony to the committee are the: Aerospace Industries Association; American Anthropological Association; American Association for the Advancement of Science; American Astronomical Society; American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network; American Council on Education; American Heart Association; American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering; American Institute for Biological Sciences; American Mathematical Society; American Physical Society; American Physiological Society; American Society for Microbiology; American Society of Plant Biologists; American Statistical Association; Association of American Geographers; Association of American Medical Colleges; Association of American Universities; Association of Independent Research Institutes; Association of Public and Land-grant Universities; Association of Research Libraries; Business-Higher Education Forum; Coalition for National Science Funding; Coalition for National Security Research; Computing Research Association; Consortium for Ocean Leadership; Consortium of Social Science Associations; Council of Graduate Schools; Council on Competitiveness; Energy Science Coalition; Entomological Society of America; Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology; Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences; Human Factors and Ergonomics Society; Industrial Research Institute; Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers; Materials Research Society; Mathematical Association of America; Semiconductor Industry Association; Semiconductor Research Corporation; Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics; Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology; Stand With Science Task Force on American Innovation; The Ecological Society of America; The Optical Society; The Science Coalition; United for Medical Research; and Women in Mathematics.

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