

19 June 2014

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski  
Chairwoman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
503 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
304 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Barbara Mikulski and Vice Chairman Richard Shelby:

As the Senate begins its consideration of the Fiscal Year 2015 Defense Appropriations Bill, we are writing to express our strong support of the Department of Defense (DoD) Science and Technology (S&T) programs, which include Basic Research (6.1), Applied Research (6.2), and Advanced Technology Development (6.3).

The DoD's S&T programs are critically important in sustaining U.S. military superiority through basic sciences and advanced technologies. The S&T programs fund research and development in federal, academic and industrial laboratories that focuses on technologies to promote defense innovations. Basic research, with its long-term emphasis, leads to revolutionary advances in military capability and has dual-use civilian applications with major benefit to the general public. Furthermore, the S&T programs develop scientists and engineers in critical disciplines, such as electrical engineering, computer science and mathematics, and provide the S&T workforce of U.S. citizens working in DoD laboratories and defense and national security industries.

While we understand the tough fiscal choices that have to be made in the coming year, the Defense S&T programs are too important for our national security to be cut so severely. We are disappointed to see the reductions in the proposed FY15 budget request below the FY14 appropriated levels. For example, the 6.1 basic research program is down \$150 million or -7%, 6.2 down from \$4.6 to \$4.5 billion, and 6.3 down from \$5.2 to \$5.0 billion, for an overall reduction of -5.5% in S&T. We urge Congress to oppose any reductions to the Defense S&T programs. In particular, we urge Congress to provide \$12.389 billion for the overall defense S&T accounts, and \$2.23 billion for the 6.1 basic research accounts. This funding level would reverse the downward trajectory, and provide for increased investment in all DoD 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 programs. We also urge Congress to support budget request of \$2.91 billion for Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

The Defense S&T programs are important in cultivating the next generation of scientists and engineers to meet national security needs. We urge Congress to support the STEM programs and to provide sufficient funding for the best and brightest U.S. STEM students interested in defense sciences and technologies, through such competitive scholarship programs as the Science, Mathematics and Research for Transformation (SMART) Program, and the National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship (NDSEG) Program.

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Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary L. Blank". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed on a light-colored rectangular background.

Gary L. Blank  
2014 IEEE-USA President