







March 29, 2011

The Honorable John Kerry United States Senate Washington, DC 20510 The Honorable Scott Brown United States Senate Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Kerry and Brown,

We greatly appreciate your thoughtful, bipartisan leadership in support of innovation and education, particularly evident in the recent passage of the America COMPETES reauthorization, as well as in your continuing efforts on behalf of our students and universities. In this regard, we write to share with you our grave concern over the substantial cuts to research and development, innovation, and student financial aid that have been included in proposals to finalize funding decisions for fiscal year (FY) 2011.

We understand the bipartisan commitment to fiscal restraint, and that in an era of budget constraints you must balance many worthy competing interests for funding. In so doing, we hope you will consider the favorable long-range economic impact that investments in research and innovation will have on the sustained health of our economy. Not only is the United States the international leader in innovation, but as you have seen first hand in Massachusetts, innovation fueled by research and development and world-class universities plays a critical role in ensuring economic prosperity.

As the Senate and House continue deliberations to establish funding levels for the remainder of FY 2011, we ask you and your colleagues to weigh the long-term risks associated with the cuts that target funding for key research agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Department of Energy (DOE). For instance, H.R.1, the full-year continuing resolution passed by the House and recently voted on in the Senate, calls for a reduction in over \$5 billion in research funding across the government, 8.9 percent of the total \$61 billion in proposed cuts.

The consequences of these cuts, when applied during the remaining 6 months of the fiscal year, would have a severe impact on the cutting-edge research and talent pipeline that are so critical to our future. For example, H.R.1 calls for an \$886 million, or 18 percent, reduction in funding for the DOE Office of Science, which would result in a calamitous 36 percent reduction over the remaining fiscal year. This reduction would force DOE to cease operations at their user facilities, affecting 26,000 university, industry, and government researchers, including many in Massachusetts. At NSF, the \$405 million proposed cut, which is an effective 8.9 percent reduction over the last 6 months, would result in 10,000 fewer university researchers receiving support for critical research and education.

Devastating cuts to the Pell program were also included in H.R.1. As you know, Pell provides grant funding to assist the most disadvantaged students in pursuing higher education. The proposed cuts would reduce the maximum Pell Grant by \$845, making the maximum grant \$4,705 as of July 1, 2011, and reduce spending on the program by \$64 billion over the next decade. The grant reduction would result in 1.7 million students being ejected from the Pell program, and would drastically reduce aid for the remaining 7.5 million students currently in the program nationwide. During the 2009-2010 academic year, over 117,000 undergraduate students in Massachusetts received over \$412 million in funding through the Pell program.

As you consider crafting a funding bill for the remainder of the fiscal year and beyond, we hope you both will be voices within your caucus for sustaining a consistent level of funding for research and education. The economic engine in Massachusetts is propelled through research and development and our higher education institutions. Your support is vital to our collective success.

Thank you for your continued support. We stand ready to assist you in any way possible.

Sincerely,

Susan Hockfield

President

MIT

Joseph E. Aoun

President

Auson Hochfiel Beng A-

Northeastern University

Lawrence S. Bacow

· Laurence S. Bacom

President

Tufts University

Jack M. Wilson President UMass Keith Motley Chancellor UMass Boston

Cc:

Representative Olver

Representative Neal

Representative McGovern

Representative Frank

Representative Tsongas

Representative Tierney

Representative Markey

Representative Capuano

Representative Lynch

Representative Keating