



May 13, 2021

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
Chairwoman
House Science, Space, and Technology
Committee

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Ranking Member
House Science, Space, and Technology
Committee

Dear Chairwoman Johnson and Ranking Member Lucas,

The University of Virginia is pleased to endorse the *NSF for the Future Act*. As Virginia's flagship public research university, we are deeply committed to advancing US research, competitiveness, and education for national benefit. We appreciate the thoughtful bipartisan approach the Committee took to this bill and have been heartened to see a number of our suggestions included in the introduced version.

There are many important provisions in the bill. In particular, we strongly support the proposed authorization to double NSF's budget across both existing activities and the new Directorate for Science and Engineering Solutions. This increase will enable vital investments in the health, welfare, and security of the nation. There is an urgent need for this reinvestment in basic research at a time when the research competitiveness of the United States is under threat. Federal R&D spending as a share of GDP has declined in 22 of the past 28 years, sinking to just 0.61 percent of GDP in 2018.

We appreciate that the Committee incorporated language on scaling education technology, graduate education, broadening participation and other areas where NSF has an important role to play in our nation's STEM ecosystem. Our School of Education and Human Development is a national leader in education technology, and we are happy to be a resource to the committee and to NSF in this area.

The provision for a new Directorate for Science and Engineering Solutions is a key strategy for enhancing transdisciplinary approaches to our most important scientific and societal challenges. The University of Virginia applauds this mechanism for promoting innovation and cross-sector collaboration to address key national priorities. We're happy to see that the new directorate is structured like a regular NSF directorate and that it maintains similar authorities to the rest of NSF with regard to peer review. The culture of NSF has been extraordinarily successful in fostering innovation and we appreciate that the bill would not seek to change this culture.

Thank you again for your leadership on this bill, which would help NSF address our competitiveness and critical national challenges, strengthen STEM education at all levels, and reverse years of underinvestment in our science and engineering ecosystem.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JER", written in a cursive style.

James E. Ryan
President