



OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT - RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
1111 Franklin Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Oakland, California 94607-5200

June 14, 2021

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Chairwoman  
United States Senate United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation  
511 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker  
Ranking Member  
United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation  
355 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Todd Young  
United States Senate  
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senate Majority Leader Schumer, Chairwoman Cantwell, Senator Wicker and Senator Young:

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is vital to sustaining America's global leadership in science and technology. As the largest recipient of NSF funding, the University of California (UC) plays a key role in addressing scientific, technological and societal challenges while ensuring America's national security, global competitiveness and economic leadership.

UC supports the primary goal of S. 1260, the United States Innovation and Competition Act (USICA), to fund the nation's research enterprise, and in doing so bolster our economy and our national security.

UC supports specific provisions in the bill that will help create the innovative workforce of the future by funding undergraduate and graduate fellowships, traineeships and postdoctoral awards in key technology focus areas in the new NSF technology directorate. The University also strongly supports the bill's aim to increase the diversity of researchers at all levels by encouraging strong partnerships between leading research universities and minority-serving institutions (MSIs). As home to five leading research universities that are MSIs, UC believes better opportunities for diversity are imperative. Promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in the federally funded research pipeline is essential to ensuring a diverse workforce that is responsive to the scientific, technological, healthcare and societal needs of our global community. As this legislation moves forward, UC urges Congress to

provide increased funding, above what is authorized in the legislation, for the NSF that will ensure significant investments for all the directorates that are critically important to the foundation's mission.

As a university involved in the management of three Department of Energy (DOE) laboratories, UC greatly appreciates the additional support the bill offers to the DOE Office of Science. With this funding, these world-class facilities will continue to play a critical role in U.S. national security while advancing the U.S. innovation ecosystem by performing leading-edge research in the public interest and our nation's international competitiveness.

While it is clear there is much in the USICA that UC supports, the University is deeply concerned with provisions of the bill that create overly restrictive research security policies that threaten international collaboration and weaken the principles of academic freedom. Specifically, UC urges House and Senate negotiators to eliminate:

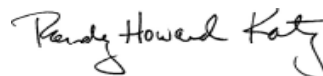
- Section 2526, which directs academic researchers to provide NSF copies of contracts with China. With NSF's newly implemented guidelines that its grantees disclose any conflicts of interest or conflicts of commitment, this provision is unnecessary.
- Section 3138, which directs the Committee on Foreign Investments in the United States (CFIUS) to review university contracts and gifts with international partners. CFIUS does not have expertise working with universities or fundamental research, and this directive would result in significant compliance costs for institutions and delay valuable research partnerships.
- Section 6124, which directs institutions of higher education to establish a database for every dollar received by individual researchers and staff. While the University supports disclosure of possible conflicts of interest, the provision would result in the collection of unnecessary and unrelated data that would create a significant administrative burden on the academic community.

It is our hope that the Senate and the House of Representatives can negotiate a final bill that provides a significant boost to the nation's research enterprise, while striking a security balance that will allow our best and brightest researchers to continue to innovate and collaborate with their peers around the globe.

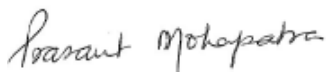
Sincerely,



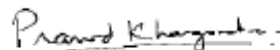
Theresa A. Maldonado, Ph.D., P.E.  
Vice President for Research & Innovation



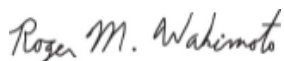
Randy Katz  
Vice Chancellor for Research, UC Berkeley



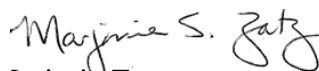
Prasant Mohapatra  
Vice Chancellor for Research, UC Davis




Pramod Khargonekar  
Vice Chancellor for Research, UC Irvine



Roger Wakimoto  
Vice Chancellor for Research, UC Los Angeles



Marjorie Zatz  
Interim Vice Chancellor for Research and  
Economic Development, UC Merced



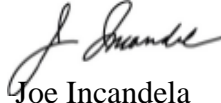
Rodolfo Torres  
Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic  
Development, UC Riverside



Sandra Brown  
Vice Chancellor for Research, UC San Diego



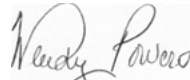
Daniel H. Lowenstein  
Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, UC  
San Francisco



Joe Incandela  
Vice Chancellor for Research, UC Santa Barbara



Scott Brandt  
Vice Chancellor for Research, UC Santa Cruz



Wendy Powers  
Associate Vice President, UC Agricultural and  
Natural Resources

cc: Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Senator Alex Padilla