

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 4, 2019

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James Inhofe  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Thornberry, Chairman Inhofe, and Ranking Member Reed:

As you finalize the Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), we urge you to include a key provision from the House-passed version of the NDAA to protect our most valuable academic research and development taking place in our Higher Education Institutions from foreign espionage.

Section 1089 of the House-passed NDAA, known as the Securing American Science and Technology Act (SASTA), would improve coordination between the intelligence agencies, security and science agencies, and the university community to bolster protection of university research. Section 1089 establishes an interagency working group to identify security threats, coordinate federal responses, and develop policy guidance for grant-making agencies and universities. The section also creates a new National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine Roundtable to establish a forum where the federal government can engage with the academic community and industry partners to address the theft of research and innovation by foreign actors.

Earlier this year, Federal Bureau of Investigation director Christopher Wray called for the need for a “whole-of-society” response to economic espionage threats, in particular those emerging from China<sup>1</sup>. Director Wray went on to say, “more than ever, the adversaries’ targets are our nation’s assets, our information and ideas, our innovation, our research and development, our technology. And no country poses a broader, more severe intelligence collection threat than China.” We see Section 1089 as a call to action by enabling the whole-of-society to implement sophisticated procedures to protect our academic research, while safeguarding the open exchange of ideas and collaboration that is required for the advancement of science.<sup>2</sup>

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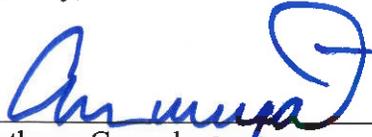
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/04/29/fbi-director-discusses-chinese-espionage-threat-us-academic-research> (April 2019)

<sup>2</sup> AAU-APLU FY20 NDAA Conference Priorities Letter: [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/9.19.19\\_AAU\\_APLU\\_NDAA\\_Conference\\_Letter.pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/9.19.19_AAU_APLU_NDAA_Conference_Letter.pdf) (September 2019)

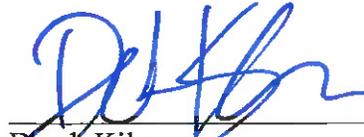
As you work to consider defense priorities for FY 2020, we urge you to include Section 1089 of the House-passed NDAA so we can protect our most valuable research assets from foreign theft and espionage.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Anthony Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress



Steve Stivers  
Member of Congress



Suzan DelBene  
Member of Congress



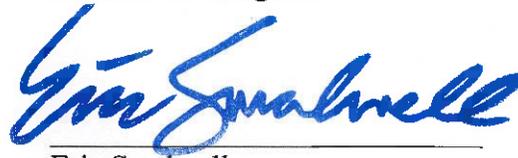
Troy Balderson  
Member of Congress



Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress



Jim Himes  
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



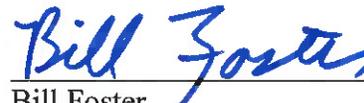
Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress



Roger W. Marshall, MD  
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress



Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



Denny Heck  
Member of Congress



Ross Spano  
Member of Congress



Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress



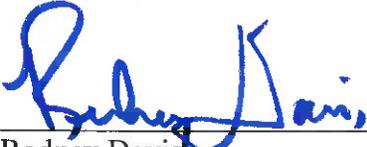
Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



Ted S. Yoho, DVM  
Member of Congress



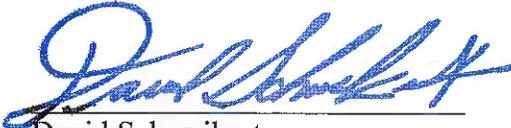
Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress



Rodney Davis  
Member of Congress



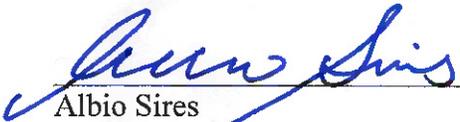
Lee Zeldin  
Member of Congress



David Schweikert  
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs  
Member of Congress



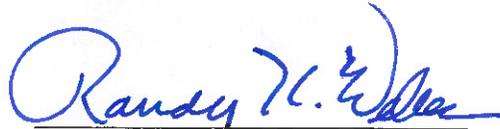
Albio Sires  
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Randy Weber  
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Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, MD  
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