September 28, 2021

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301

Dear Mr. Secretary,

As you develop the fiscal year (FY) 2023 U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) budget request, the Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR), representing the undersigned members of industry, academia, scientific and professional organizations, and non-profits, urges you to reverse recent trends of requesting cuts for defense basic research. Instead, we respectfully request funding for the defense science and technology (S&T) program equal to 3% of the overall DoD budget and funding for defense basic research at 20% of the defense S&T budget, per expert recommendations from public and private sector organizations as outlined in this letter.

The Biden-Harris Interim National Security Strategic Guidance states that the United States will double down on S&T investments and support cutting-edge technologies and capabilities that will advance our military and national security in the future[1]. Additionally, the *National Defense Strategy (NDS)* calls for establishing an unmatched twenty-first century national security innovation base and sustaining Joint Force military advantages[2]. In order to achieve these objectives, it is imperative that DoD make robust investments in defense S&T. As noted by the Defense Science Board (DSB), lower funding levels for defense S&T could threaten the dominance of the U.S. military[3]. Moreover, defense basic research attracts some of the most creative minds and supports training the next generation science and engineering workforce[4], both important focus areas in the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance and the *NDS*.

Unfortunately, the FY 2021 and FY 2022 DoD budget requests called for cutting key areas of defense research and development essential to the United States military maintaining its global technological superiority. The FY 2021 budget called for cutting defense basic research and defense S&T below levels requested in the FY 2020 budget[5], and the share of defense S&T and basic research funding continues to decline. In FY 2022, defense S&T funding accounts for just 2.1% of the DoD budget, and defense basic research funding is slashed to 15.5%.

The Biden-Harris Administration has committed to doubling down on the investments that will support cutting-edge technologies and capabilities. We urge you to include significant increases

[1] https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/03/interim-national-security-strategic-guidance/
[2] https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf
[3] https://dsb.cto.mil/reports/1990s/DefenseScienceandTechnologyBaseforthe21stCentury.pdf
[4] https://dsb.cto.mil/reports/2010s/BasicResearch.pdf
[5] https://comptroller.defense.gov/Budget-Materials/

for defense S&T and defense basic research consistent with the Administration's commitment. Increasing investments in defense S&T is essential to making revolutionary technological breakthroughs that will help safeguard our military and bolster national security into the future while also strengthening the defense industrial base workforce.

Going forward, we request that you, to the maximum extent possible, craft a FY 2023 budget that provides necessary funding for the defense S&T program to equal 3% of the DoD budget and defense basic research to comprise 20% of the S&T budget. The DSB[6], National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence (NSCAI)[7], National Academies[8], Center for New American Security (CNAS)[9], bipartisan House Armed Services Committee's Future of Defense Task Force report[10], and Council on Competitiveness[11] all recommend that the defense S&T program equal 3% of the DoD budget in order to ensure U.S. military technological dominance. Additionally, the DSB[12], National Academies[13] and Council on Competitiveness[14] recommend defense basic research comprise 20% of the defense S&T budget to support the high-payoff research needed to sustain long-term U.S. military supremacy. It is our hope that you keep these recommendations in mind as you make difficult decisions developing the FY 2023 DoD budget.

Thank you for consideration of our views. If we can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Aerospace Industries Association (AIA)
American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)
American Chemical Society (ACS)
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering
American Mathematical Society (AMS)
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association (APA)
American Society for Engineering Education
Arizona State University
ASME
Association of American Universities (AAU)
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)
Battelle
Boston University
Brown University
California Institute of Technology
Carnegie Mellon University
Columbia University
Computing Research Association
Consortium for Ocean Leadership
Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA)
Cornell University
Duke University
Dupont
Energetics, Inc.
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences (FABBS)
Federation of Materials Societies
Florida International University
Florida State University
George Mason University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Harvard University
IEEE-USA
Indiana University
Lehigh University
Louisiana State University

[6] http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a403874.pdf
[7] https://www.nscai.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Full-Report-Digital-1.pdf
[8] https://www.nap.edu/catalog/11463/rising-above-the-gathering-storm-energizing-and-employing-america-for
[9] https://www.cnas.org/publications/commentary/sharpening-the-u-s-militarys-edge-critical-steps-for-the-next-administration
[10] https://armedservices.house.gov/_cache/files/2/6/26129500-d208-47ba-a9f7-25a8f82828b0/6D5C75605DE8DDF0013712923B4388D7.future-of-defense-task-force-report.pdf
[11] https://www.compete.org/reports/all/202
[12] https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a387244.pdf
[13] https://www.nap.edu/catalog/11463/rising-above-the-gathering-storm-energizing-and-employing-america-for
[14] https://www.compete.org/reports/all/202

Louisiana Tech University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Materials Research Society
Miami University of Ohio
Michigan State University
Michigan Technological University
Montana State University
New Mexico State University
New York University
Northeastern University
Northern Illinois University
Northwestern University
Oak Ridge Associated Universities
Ohio State University
Oregon Health and Sciences University
Oregon State University
OSA-The Optical Society
Pace University
Penn State University
Princeton University
Purdue University
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Scripps Institution of Oceanography
Semiconductor Industry Association
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics
SPIE, the international society for optics and photonics
SRI International
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Temple University
Texas A&M University
The Catholic University of America
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University of Nebraska
University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill
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University of Texas System
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin - Madison
Vanderbilt University
Washington State University
West Virginia University
William & Mary
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
Yale University

Cc: The Honorable Kathleen H. Hick, Deputy Secretary of Defense
The Honorable Heidi Shyu, Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering
The Honorable Shalanda Young, Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget
The Honorable Eric Lander, Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy