

September 15, 2020

The Honorable Edward Markey
United States Senate
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thom Tillis
United States Senate
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Gary Peters
United States Senate
724 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cory Gardner
United States Senate
354 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Markey, Tillis, Peters, and Gardner,

On behalf of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), I write in support of S.4286, the Research Investment to Spark the Economy (RISE) Act. We commend your bipartisan work to support investments in our country's research and development (R&D) enterprise during this time of unprecedented uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For nearly six decades, CGS has served as the national organization dedicated to advancing graduate education and research. Our membership includes nearly 500 institutions of higher education in the United States, Canada, and abroad. Collectively, our members grant 87 percent of all U.S. doctorates and the majority of U.S. master's degrees. This legislation invests in the graduate students, postdocs, and principal investigators who are conducting scientific discoveries that touch the lives of Americans, daily.

The RISE Act offers graduate students and postdocs the ability to complete critical work that has been disrupted by COVID-19. Our members have witnessed first-hand the interruptions that have occurred in campus laboratories and with research staff and personnel. For example, abandoned biological samples that are sensitive to specific growth periods will need to be restarted, and that can significantly delay the overall progress of a project as well as a graduate student's progress in their academic program and career. Therefore, the supplemental funding provided in the RISE Act is a lifeline for federally-funded research, considering that much of this research will require extensions due to the effects of the public health crisis. The flexibilities provided in the RISE Act extend training programs for many of these graduate student researchers on existing projects for up to two additional years, ensuring they continue to complete their work. This legislation supports not only students' involvement in critical R&D, but also our nation's economic recovery and lasting growth.

CGS also applauds the addition of funds to conduct research on the behavioral, social, and economic effects of COVID-19 and the effectiveness of the strategies used to combat the virus. These grants provide colleges and universities the opportunity to increase research that enhances our nation's preparedness for the next possible pandemic. Graduate students and postdocs beginning careers as researchers and scientists will have the ability to contribute valuable discoveries and gain critical

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Association
of Graduate Schools

Western
Association
of Graduate Schools

experience due to this additional funding.

Again, we thank you for your bipartisan efforts to support our research enterprise, which is paramount to advancing scientific research and supporting the U.S. economy. If our organization can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our Vice President of Public Policy and Government Affairs, Lauren Inouye, at Linouye@cgs.nche.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne T. Ortega". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Suzanne T. Ortega
President