



May 2, 2019

The Honorable Bill Foster  
United States House of Representatives  
2366 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Foster,

On behalf of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), I am writing in support of the *American Innovation Act* (H.R. 2400), which you introduced on April 30, 2019. For more than five decades, CGS has served as the national organization dedicated solely 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 confer 87 percent of all U.S. doctorates and the majority of U.S. master's degrees. CGS is committed to furthering the nation's science and research enterprise, of which graduate education is a key component.

The United States has long been the world-wide benchmark of excellence for technological breakthroughs and innovation, with U.S. research universities playing a vital role. Funding provided by the federal government has been integral in these successes. Federal grants and fellowships to graduate students have also been critical, not only in their training as future scientists, but also in their ability to contribute to innovation and the economy, while still in graduate school. For example, both the initial versions of Google® and the touchscreen technology used in smartphones were invented by graduate students on the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship.<sup>1</sup> These are discoveries that have revolutionized everyday life across the world.

However, federal investment in science and research has continued to decrease in recent years, declining precipitously from the highs of the 1960s.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, other nations have ramped up their investments.<sup>3</sup> For the U.S. to remain a global competitor, it is imperative to provide federal agencies—including the NSF, the Department of Energy Office of Science, the Department of Defense Science and Technology Programs, the National Institute of Standards and Technology Scientific and Technical Research, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Science Directorate—with increased, steady funding that is sustainable over time. The *American Innovation Act* proposes five percent annual increases for the aforementioned agencies—an investment that will yield great outcomes.

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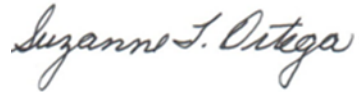
<sup>1</sup> National Science Foundation. "NSF-funded graduate researcher developed multi-finger touch function now used in smartphones." October 17, 2017. Available at [https://www.nsf.gov/impacts/impact\\_summ.jsp?cntn\\_id=243197&org=NSF&from=news](https://www.nsf.gov/impacts/impact_summ.jsp?cntn_id=243197&org=NSF&from=news). National Science Foundation. "On the Origins of Google." August 17, 2004. Available at [https://www.nsf.gov/discoveries/disc\\_summ.jsp?cntn\\_id=100660](https://www.nsf.gov/discoveries/disc_summ.jsp?cntn_id=100660).

<sup>2</sup> National Science Foundation, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics 2019. *National Patterns of R&D Resources:2016–17 Data Update*. NSF 19-309. Alexandria, VA. Available at <https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf19309>.

<sup>3</sup> National Science Board. 2018. Science and Engineering Indicators 2018. NSB-2018-1. Alexandria, VA: National Science Foundation. Available at <https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/indicators/>.

CGS commends your efforts to address the need for important federal investment in U.S science and research. If we can be a resource to you or your staff as you consider issues related to graduate education, please contact CGS's Vice President of Public Policy and Government Affairs, Lauren Inouye, at [Linouye@cgs.nche.edu](mailto:Linouye@cgs.nche.edu) or (202)-461-3864.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne T. Ortega".

Suzanne T. Ortega  
President