

February 23, 2021

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
U.S. Senate
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

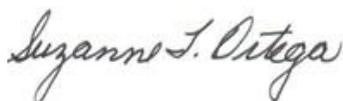
Dear Senator Blumenthal,

On behalf of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), I write in support of the Supporting Early-Career Researchers Act. We commend your work to support researchers beginning their careers in our country's research and development (R&D) enterprise, especially during this time of unprecedented uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For almost 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 recognizes the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the STEM research pipeline and invests in the postdoctoral researchers who are conducting scientific discoveries that touch the lives of Americans daily.

The fellowship program established this legislation would provide early-career scientists the opportunity to continue their work as they face a challenging workforce environment due to COVID-19. For doctoral students, budget shortfalls occurring on college and university campuses have directly affected their job prospects in academic research. Additionally, contractions in private industries have reduced job opportunities outside of academia, thus adding to the strain. The Supporting Early-Career Researchers Act addresses this challenge head on by creating postdoctoral fellowships to carry out independent research for up to two years, therefore ensuring top talent continues to thrive in the U.S. research enterprise.

Again, we thank you for introducing this legislation, which is paramount to advancing science and maintaining our nation's competitiveness. If our organization can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Matthew Smith, Public Policy and Government Affairs Manager, at Msmith@cgs.nche.edu.

Sincerely,



Suzanne T. Ortega
President

AFFILIATES

Conference
of Southern
Graduate Schools

Midwestern
Association
of Graduate Schools

Northeastern
Association
of Graduate Schools

Western
Association
of Graduate Schools