

May 14, 2021

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Science, Space, & Technology  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2306 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Lucas  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Science, Space, & Technology  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2405 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Haley Stevens  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Research & Technology  
Committee on Science, Space, & Technology  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1510 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Waltz  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Research & Technology  
Committee on Science, Space, & Technology  
U.S. House of Representatives  
213 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Johnson, Ranking Member Lucas, Chairwoman Stevens, and Ranking Member Waltz:

On behalf of the Association for Psychological Science (APS), congratulations on the introduction and markup of the National Science Foundation for the Future Act (H.R. 2225). APS is a scientific society of research psychologists dedicated to advancing behavioral science for the benefit of science and society. Given that funding support from the National Science Foundation (NSF) is essential to scientists conducting psychological research, supporting training and professional development, and recruiting and educating the next generation of scientists, we are pleased to see that H.R. 2225 provides strong support for NSF.

Society requires the knowledge derived from psychological science. Psychological and related behavioral sciences grow our capacity to encourage healthy behaviors, combat racism and bias, improve communication and address misinformation, understand how social and work disruptions arise from new technology, help people avoid and respond to climate and other hazards, design new artificial intelligence tools that improve productivity and enhance wellbeing, and explore the underpinnings of learning and memory and develop applications to education.

Ensuring that the United States has the most advanced insights into the human mind and behavior at its fingertips requires a vibrant scientific enterprise. The National Science Foundation and its Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) are essential to building and sustaining this research environment. SBE provides approximately two-thirds of the federal funding to colleges and universities for basic research in these sciences. We appreciate that H.R. 2225 provides ways for SBE to grow, encouraging ongoing investment in fundamental research related to human behavior while also ensuring that the behavioral sciences lead and participate in programs that bridge different scientific disciplines.

H.R. 2225 recognizes NSF's unique role as the primary federal agency that supports curiosity-driven, investigator-initiated research. This research provides the new theory and data that ultimately enable the

development of new interventions, applications, and products. NSF's support for fundamental science in all fields makes it unique among science funding organizations. As Congressional appropriators noted in fiscal year 2021 appropriations (H. Rpt. 116-455, p. 133-134), basic science—and basic behavioral science specifically—are NSF's competitive advantages.

We appreciate that the proposed Directorate for Science and Engineering Solutions would fit within NSF's existing structure and would augment, not detract from, the agency's mission. One of APS's key objectives is to support integrative research that crosses disciplines, levels of analysis, and the spectrum of basic to use-inspired research. The new directorate would provide new outlets for behavioral science to make broad impacts around the globe. It is important that the new directorate have the ability to transfer funds into existing directorates when opportunities arise to rapidly advance new fields of inquiry and support the development of new research tools and practices.

Global leadership in science and technology requires that the United States educate, recruit, train, and support scientists. Our scientific enterprise is strengthened when it is diverse and accessible to all. Building this workforce requires investments by NSF in students and early career scientists. There is an urgent need to provide support to these individuals who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but there was an unmet need prior to the pandemic. APS is also pleased that the bill calls for significant growth in NSF's Graduate Research Fellowship Program, a well-known source of support for student scientists. Recognizing the importance of this program, APS supports its expansion.

Through the vision laid forth in H.R. 2225, NSF would also play a critical role in building a more diverse scientific workforce. Codifying INCLUDES, NSF's national initiative to ensure that the U.S.'s STEM workforce reflects the U.S. population, would increase the number of leaders in science from backgrounds that have been historically underrepresented. APS enthusiastically supports the bill's focus on broadening participation in science in other ways, such as strengthening opportunities for undergraduate and graduate-level STEM education. New funding for and outreach to historically Black colleges and universities, minority-serving institutions, higher education programs that support veterans and rural communities, and emerging research institutions will strengthen U.S. scientific competitiveness and global leadership.

We are pleased H.R. 2225 places a value on research reproducibility and replicability. For years, the psychological science community has led the way on open and transparent scientific practices, and the promise those practices hold to strengthen science. We are glad that the bill encourages wider access to data and other research outputs of value to the scientific community and society.

Thank you to you and your colleagues for the scientific leadership exhibited in H.R. 2225. Please do not hesitate to contact me ([rgropp@psychologicalscience.org](mailto:rgropp@psychologicalscience.org)) or APS Director of Government Relations Andy DeSoto, PhD ([adesoto@psychologicalscience.org](mailto:adesoto@psychologicalscience.org)) if we can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



Robert Gropp, PhD  
Executive Director