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Dear Friends of the University of Washington,

The mission of the University of Washington is rooted in service to our students, our state, our nation and our world. We are dedicated to the belief that higher education and research are essential for our economic vitality and the future of the nation. This is our passion, and our federal priorities for 2018, presented here, look to continue to strengthen our partnership with the federal government in fulfilling our mission.

We are a global leader in innovation, committed to finding answers to the grand challenges of our time. From the development of earthquake warning systems to treating diseases with Precision Medicine, from restoring the oyster population in the Puget Sound to developing the fusion science that will power the energy grid of the future, the University of Washington is preparing the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and doers by developing collaborative and innovative educational opportunities that address the complexities of challenges facing our nation and world.

Our successes are not accomplished alone, but in partnership with and support from the federal government through its financial investment in research and development, support for students through financial aid programs, and so much more. We thank you for your service to the great state of Washington and our University and look forward to working with you to advance our priorities in the coming year.

Warmest regards,

Ana Mari Cauce
President
Professor of Psychology
A thriving nation requires strong, sustained investment in its public colleges and universities. Robust education and talent development are crucial to the future of the State of Washington and the nation. As one of the world’s leading research universities, the University of Washington is proud to be a long-term partner with the federal government on a host of programs and initiatives to improve society. We constantly seek to be good stewards of federal dollars and investments. Together, we are fostering the next generation of leaders, thinkers and doers by developing collaborative and innovative opportunities that address the complexities of many of the nation’s greatest challenges through our initiatives, like those on Population Health and Race & Equity.

Our legislative priorities for 2018 reflect our public promise, innovative spirit and commitment to excellence, and they highlight those federal investments that are critical to the overall success of our dual research and education missions. Federal investment in student programs and financial aid, as well as scientific research funding are fundamental to our national security, economic growth and prosperity, in addition to the health and well-being of Washingtonians. Through our partnership with the federal government, we will continue our drive to be the greatest public research university in the world as measured by our impact on our students, state, nation and society.

**UW receives more federal research dollars than any other public university in the nation.**

In FY17, UW conducted $1.628 BILLION IN RESEARCH. ($1.033 BILLION was from federal resources)

This amount helped support 14,000+ UW EMPLOYEES.
Federal Investment in Research and Higher Education

Research and its resulting innovations have driven the U.S. economy for decades. The University of Washington produces knowledge, enables business creation and growth, develops new medicines, improves health care and tackles complex public policy challenges. This work occurs in all of our schools and colleges, with each making unique contributions to our communities. We urge Congress to maintain critical federal investments for basic and applied science in a broad spectrum of research fields across all federal research-driven agencies and directorates. Sustaining scientific research of the highest quality in the face of rapidly rising costs for equipment, compliance, labor and facilities is increasingly challenging when federal support for research remains stagnant and purchasing power declines. This situation sets researchers, research institutions, agencies and our nation up for failure.

While robust research funding across all federal research agencies is critical to the innovation ecosystem, UW continues to deem support for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as its top federal funding priority. Nearly half of UW federal research funding support comes from NIH and enables us to pursue exciting developments like regenerating beating heart tissue from skin cells and developing and demonstrating in clinical trials in Africa new, cost-effective methods that give women the means to reduce the chances of being infected with HIV by means they could control, which can in turn be implemented domestically in rural and underserved areas.

We greatly appreciate that Congress has been a strong champion of increasing NIH funding in the last several fiscal years. Such increases, however, should not come at the expense of other federal agencies and programs. Following closely behind the NIH in terms of priority is support for the National Science Foundation (NSF). Every college and school across the UW has a grant funded by either NIH or NSF, if not both agencies. Each agency serves vastly different functions and to focus on one exclusively at the expense of the other harms the overall research enterprise and puts unnecessary stress on both agencies, as one struggles with cuts and the other struggles to fill gaps created by the cuts.

The stability of the federal research enterprise — both the strategic goals of its agencies and levels of financial support for such agencies — is imperative to reach our mutual goals. Unsteady direction of federal agencies or rapidly-passed legislation which does not always take into adequate account its consequences have significant repercussions on our mutual goal of moving our nation forward, in both the short- and long-term. The mere threat of some of these changes, regardless of whether they are realized, leads to a significant sense of uncertainty and has a long-term chilling effect. Additionally, the constant specter of threats — whether that be from consistently funding the government via continuing resolutions, proposed cuts to research funding or proposed financial restrictions on federal funding — ultimately undermines the decades of our nation’s investment in research, health care and innovation.
Impacts of Regulatory Burden on Research

Maintaining federal investment in research is not simply about initial monetary investments. Programs need time, resources and infrastructure to grow and become successful. Closely linked to funding in terms of importance is the complex and time-consuming regulatory burden imposed on research grants. A host of disparate agency regulations on the research ecosystem hinder and divert limited resources from the intended work of a given program to the task of responding to duplicative or unrelated requirements. In 2016, the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report (GAO-16-573) showing that the cross-agency burden, both in workload to comply with regulations, as well as their financial costs, is hindering federal researchers with the volume of tasks with which to comply.

Regulatory burden exists across all federal agencies. We applaud many of the recent directives, including Executive Orders and Presidential Memorandum, to streamline regulations. While these efforts are much needed first steps, there is still more work to be done for grants at all stages.

To be clear, the University supports full transparency of and access to federally reported information. The federal government and all agencies must have oversight and accountability of how federal funds are used. That said, we believe there is a disconnect between how much information is currently required in a federal grant application and high-level of information essential to the appropriate administration of those funds.

UW’s Primary Research Priorities for 2018

- Maintain robust funding for the NIH and NSF, as well as other federal scientific research agencies and directorates.
- Continue support for undergraduate and graduate research and support programs that engage all students, especially traditionally underrepresented populations, in meaningful basic and applied research.
- Oppose efforts to arbitrarily cap cost reimbursement associated with federally-funded research at institutions of higher education.
While today’s global challenges are significant and those of the future are unpredictable, the UW remains engaged and committed to defying the odds and conventional thinking to solve the problems of today and tomorrow. One of our signature initiatives on this front is our 25-year Population Health Initiative, which works towards not only the elimination of diseases and afflictions, but also seeks to address the intersecting and overlapping factors that influence health and well-being. Our efforts will continue to advance the health of people locally and around the world by leveraging capabilities and opportunities at the UW, in the Puget Sound region and beyond.

Achieving this vision will take long-term collaboration, partnerships and engagement. We look forward to growing our strong federal partnership in this ambitious initiative so that together we can improve the health and well-being of our nation and the world.

To help us achieve this goal, robust federal research funding across all research agencies is crucial. Specifically, we urge Congress to:

- Strongly support NIH and NSF, as well as other federal scientific research agencies and entities through robust fiscal year funding.
- Oppose efforts to reduce or eliminate federal funding for individual scientific directorates or specific fields of study due to political pressures or ideology, such as EPA STAR grants. It is only through a broad spectrum of discovery that we can develop the solutions for today’s and tomorrow’s problems.
At the University of Washington, diversity is integral to excellence. Diversity, in all its forms, is necessary to advance our understanding of the world and arrive at solutions that serve society more effectively. As we broaden our community, we strengthen our ability to identify key issues, frame questions and tackle problems that span physical, health and social dimensions.

We are unwavering in our resolve to create an inclusive, equitable and welcoming community for all. We can and will work together to find the best in each other, to bridge our differences and to treat each other with the respect and kindness that all people deserve. We constantly strive to create a safe and respectful place to discover, to challenge the status quo and to grow intellectually.

Our mission is to educate and all serve students and we believe that financial circumstances should not prevent a student from attending the UW. That is why we created the Husky Promise program. Over the last decade, a combination of federal grants, support from the state and private donors funding has allowed 39,000 students from Washington have attended the UW tuition-free.

They join the more than 57,000 students who study at the UW each year. These students combine experiences in the classroom with experiential learning opportunities ranging from field research to entrepreneurship competitions to community service projects. This provides them with the skills and tools required to navigate a complex society, enabling them to become successful in the fields of their choice, from STEM to the arts and everything in between.

| In 2016–17, 31% of UW undergraduate residents — nearly 10,000 students — were eligible for the Husky Promise, which provides free tuition to students with financial need. | In 2017–18, 35% of all domestic UW students entering college for the first time are the first generation in their families to attain a bachelor’s degree. THAT NUMBER IS 44% at UW Bothell, 58% at UW Tacoma. |
Access, Excellence and Inclusion

As Congress turns its attention to the cornerstone legislation of modern educational enterprise, we recognize a complete reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) faces many challenges. That said, we urge Congress to look at HEA reauthorization as a whole, and not in disparate parts, so that there can be integration and unity across programs and purposes.

To better serve students, we ask that the HEA focus on improved consumer-centric changes for student and family borrowers, such as eliminating student loan origination fees, providing greater annual borrowing limits at the undergraduate level, and developing a payroll deduction system to help borrowers repay their loans. Similarly, we urge that HEA reauthorization simplify federal repayment options to provide a standard payment plan and a single federal income-based repayment program to encourage students from a host of educational endeavors (law, medicine, business or art) to pursue careers in public service. While these jobs are often highly rewarding, they are not often highly compensated and nonprofit and public-sector jobs are critically important to a functioning society. We believe that the overall objective of the HEA should be to make higher education more accessible and rewarding for all those who are interested in pursuing such an experience, regardless of their ability to pay.

Finally, we urge Congress help us maintain a healthy and welcoming environment for all students and scholars. It is through fostering the best and brightest with the global exchange of ideas that true scholarship and innovation is born. The access to and sharing of ideas is a fundamental to the fabric of our nation, and we must maintain the free flow of ideas in people, whether that be robust Title VI International Education funding, a strong H-1B visa program or protections for students covered by the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program.

We urge Congress to continue to invest in all students. Specifically:

• Continue to support funding Pell Grant awards, and invest in the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and Federal Work-Study, which provide additional financial aid above the Federal Pell Grant, making higher education a more viable possibility for financially disadvantaged students.

• Simplify federal student loan repayment options to provide a standard payment plan, continue and consolidate the Federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness program as one simple and comprehensive income-based repayment program, and support the development of a payroll deduction system for repayment.

• Provide robust funding for TRIO and GEAR UP programs, as well as programs funded by NSF and NIH designed to increase pathways for students underrepresented in STEM degree programs.

• Reinvest in and strengthen Title VI and Fulbright-Hays, as they are the federal government’s most comprehensive international education programs. Graduates of these programs are essential to our diplomatic, defense, commercial and educational interests, among many other areas of society.

• Help institutions protect students from virtual and physical attacks, assaults and bullying by examining existing federal laws that address campus safety in the Clery Act and Title IX and strengthening related resources and protections, as needed.

• Maintain a welcoming environment for all through a rigorous immigration program, such as a robust H-1B visa program, and protections extended to DACA students.
UW FAST FACTS

UW Medicine is the most comprehensive integrated health system in the Puget Sound region, and each year its four hospitals admit 63,000+ patients.

UW’s WWAMI Family Medicine Residency Network trains more than 200 residents annually in 29 residency programs.

Graduate and undergraduate students contributed to 41% of the 652 patent applications that the UW filed in academic year 2016-2017.

UW Continuum College annually educates 50,000+ students.

NATURE INDEX RANKS UW

#1 in Earth and Environmental Science Research.

UW leads the nation in FEMALE ENGINEERING FACULTY WITH 22.4% in tenure-track positions.

The UW Tacoma student body has been ranked among the TOP 50 MOST DIVERSE CAMPUSES in the nation.

39,000+ Washington students have attended the UW tuition-free, thanks to the Husky Promise.

41% of UW students are pursuing at least one STEM major (FALL 2017).

41% of STEM students are women.

Graduate and undergraduate students contributed to 41% of the 652 patent applications that the UW filed in academic year 2016-2017.