

November 4, 1998
President William J. Clinton
White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Your vision for the future of America rests on a strong foundation of investments in science, technology, and education. The FY 2000 budget provides an important opportunity to expand your legacy of vigorous national commitment that will keep the United States at the leading edge of discovery across all frontiers of knowledge and innovation. We urge you to be bold in your FY 2000 budget requests and to support strongly a broad science and technology (S&T) portfolio.

At our September PCAST meeting, Reps. Ehlers and Brown and Senators Frist and Rockefeller briefed us about their efforts in the Congress to strengthen support for S&T. Their initiatives, as evidenced in the House of Representatives science policy study and S 2217, are generally supportive of your principles of substantial investment in S&T and echo the theme of maintaining balance in the research portfolio. Sustained investment in all fields allows us to exploit their interdependence and growing interdisciplinary cooperation. As budgets grow for the critically important and broadly admired biomedical research programs sponsored by the National Institutes of Health, for example, it will be important to make comparable investments in the other agencies' basic and applied research programs.

Federal investments in S&T are essential to the creation of new, well paying jobs; our competitiveness in the global economy; our national security; protection of the environment; and our health. The Council on Competitiveness report, *Going Global: the New Shape of American Innovation*, released last month emphasizes, in fact, that there is no room for complacency about the United States' current economic strength and technological leadership.

As you shape your FY 2000 budget request, we advise you to continue to focus Federal resources on strengthening the United States' research capacity through an approach such as the "Twenty-first Century Research Fund," which identifies important civilian research programs. Further, we recommend that this concept be broadened to encompass the basic research programs of the Department of Defense, since it is a major sponsor of research in the critical fields of mathematics, computing, complex systems, and engineering.

We are aware that the budget caps place tight constraints on the resources available for the FY 2000 budget. We urge you, nonetheless, to reaffirm the centrality and importance of S&T through strong and balanced investment increases in your budget. A firm commitment to FY 2000 R&D budget support will position the United States for even

greater success in the 21st century.
Sincerely,

John A. Young, Co-Chair

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**President's Committee of Advisors
on Science and Technology
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