May 9, 2019

Hon. Cindy Hyde-Smith, Chairman
Hon. Chris Murphy, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate, Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Strengthening Legislative Branch Capacity on Science and Technology

Dear Chairman Hyde-Smith, Ranking Member Murphy, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and individuals, we write to express our concern that Congress does not have sufficient capacity to tackle 21st century science and technology policy challenges. Accordingly, we urge you to prioritize efforts to augment this institutional capacity, including providing funding for the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), as part of the fiscal year 2020 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill.

The Senate has played a leading institutional role in promoting science and technology capacity in Congress. We note with favor the recently created Science, Technology Assessment and Analytics (STAA) team inside the Government Accountability Office, and its expanding capabilities to serve Members of Congress with expert advice and analysis.[1] We also look forward to the forthcoming report from the National Academy of Public Administration later this year.

But OTA and STAA have different comparative advantages: the former in foresight and emerging technologies, and the latter in oversight and evaluating federal government programs and expenditures. Congress must have both these capabilities to meet the ever-increasing demands on its oversight and legislative responsibilities.

We thank you for the opportunity to express our support for the reestablishment of the Office of Technology Assessment and welcome the opportunity to discuss this further. Please contact: Zach Graves, Head of Policy at Lincoln Network, at zach.graves@joinlincoln.org or 202-733-8976; and Daniel Schuman, Policy Director at Demand Progress, at daniel@demandprogress.org or 240-237-3930.

Sincerely,

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[1] "GAO Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics Team: Initial Plan and Considerations Moving Forward," GAO, April 10, 2019. https://www.gao.gov/pdfs/about/GAOScienceTechPlan-2019-04-10.pdf.

ORGANIZATIONS

Lincoln Network
FreedomWorks
TechFreedom
R Street Institute
American Principles Project
Stand Up Republic
Log Cabin Republicans
Federation of American Scientists
Union of Concerned Scientists
Code for America
Information Technology and Innovation Foundation
American Library Association
CompTIA
Medium
DuckDuckGo
Mozilla
Consumer Reports
Engine
Tech:NYC
Demand Progress
American Civil Liberties Union
Center for Democracy & Technology
Center for Humane Technology
Open Markets Institute
Public Knowledge
X-Lab
Issue One
Sunlight Foundation
Project On Government Oversight
Campaign for Accountability
Government Accountability Project
Joseph Rainey Center for Public Policy
Copia Institute
The New Center
Future of Life Institute
Defending Rights & Dissent
Government Information Watch
Latino Tech Policy Initiative
Senior Executives Association
Longpath

INDIVIDUALS*

Vint Cerf, Internet Pioneer
Craig Newmark, Founder of Craigslist and Craig Newmark Philanthropies
Douglas W. Elmendorf, Dean and Don K. Price Professor of Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School
Adam Keiper, Co-Founder and Senior Editor, *The New Atlantis*
Tim O'Reilly, Founder and CEO, O'Reilly Media
Allison Berke, Executive Director, Stanford Cyber Initiative
Jerry Taylor, President, Niskanen Center
Alan Davidson, VP of Global Policy, Trust, and Security at Mozilla Corporation
Mike Godwin, Board of Trustees, The Internet Society
Bruce Schneier, Lecturer in Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School
Jon Peha, Professor of Electrical Engineering and Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University
Daniel Sarewitz, Consortium for Science, Policy and Outcomes, Arizona State University
Robert Cook-Deegan, Consortium for Science, Policy and Outcomes, Arizona State University
Robert Friedman, VP for Policy, J. Craig Venter Institute
Daniel J. Chenok, Executive Director, IBM Center for The Business of Government
Ryan Calo, Co-Director, Tech Policy Lab, University of Washington
Robert Seamans, Professor, NYU Stern School of Business
William A. Galston, Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution
Jason Schultz, NYU School of Law
Eric Goldman, Professor, Santa Clara University School of Law
David Eaves, Digital HKS, Harvard Kennedy School
Joan D. Winston, former CRS, OTA, and GAO analyst
Matthew Might, Director and Professor, Hugh Kaul Precision Medicine Institute, University of Alabama at Birmingham
John Leary, CEO, DotGov.com
Gladys B. White, Ph.D. Georgetown University, School for Continuing Studies
Gigi Sohn, Distinguished Fellow, Georgetown Law Institute for Technology Law & Policy
Rodney Sobin, Senior Program Director, National Association of State Energy Officials
Benedicte Callan, Clinical Professor, Arizona State University
DJ Patil, Former U.S. Chief Data Scientist
Sean Tunis, Principal, Rubix Health
Nick Sinai, Adjunct Faculty, Harvard Kennedy School
Austin Brown, Executive Director, UC Davis Policy Institute for Energy, Environment, and the Economy
Jillian Grennan, Assistant Professor, Duke University, Fuqua School of Business
Richard Forno, Senior Lecturer, University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Lorelei Kelly, Fellow, Resilient Democracy Lead, Beeck Center for Social Impact + Innovation at Georgetown University
Kathy Hill, Director Center of Advanced Governmental Studies, Johns Hopkins University
Christopher T. Hill, Prof. Emeritus of Public Policy and Technology, George Mason University

Annemarie Bridy, Allan G. Shepard Professor of Law, University of Idaho
Renee DiResta, Mozilla Fellow
Colleen Chien, Visiting Professor, Columbia Law School; Professor, Santa Clara Law School
Rebecca Williams, DC Legal Hackers
Alexander Howard, Founder, e-PluribusUnum.org
Ryan Khurana, Executive Director, Institute for Advancing Prosperity
Andy Lee Roth, Associate Director, Project Censored
Steve Plotkin, Argonne Associate, Argonne National Laboratory
Henry Kelly, University of Michigan
Grant Tudor, Harvard University
Justin Warner, Harvard University
Ross Dakin, New Jersey Office of Innovation
Adam Bly, Former VP Data at Spotify
Caroline S. Wagner, Wolf Chair in International Affairs, Ohio State University
Michael Stebbins, President, Science Advisors, LLC

Affiliation listed for identification purposes only.