

21 March 2022

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Chairwoman  
House Science Committee  
2321 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Lucas  
Ranking Member  
House Science Committee  
2321 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Johnson, Ranking Member Lucas, and Honorable Members:

We, the undersigned, represent organizations working to promote and protect science for the public good. We urge you to move forward expeditiously to finalize and pass H.R.849, the *Scientific Integrity Act*, legislation which would safeguard the rights of scientists working at federal agencies and ensure the public can benefit from their work. We support requiring agencies that fund, conduct, and or oversee scientific research to develop strong scientific integrity policies that include enforcement mechanisms. It is vital that these safeguards are codified in statute this Congress to ensure their permanence and stability in the coming years.

Our various organizations work to advance science, public health, environmental justice, civil rights, reproductive health, worker safety, government oversight, and whistleblower protections. All of us depend on high-quality federal scientific research and the hard work of federal scientists to protect our health, safety, economy, and environment. The Biden-Harris administration has committed to strengthening federal agency policies to support scientific integrity and protect against politically motivated manipulation of scientific evidence or attacks on science. However, internal agency policies can only go so far without statutory requirements. As noted in the recent report on scientific integrity by an interagency task force, many issues have arisen in the past from senior leadership, and agency policies cannot fully hold these leaders accountable for internal policy violations.

H.R. 849, the *Scientific Integrity Act*, introduced last year and referred to the House Science Committee, contains provisions that would address many challenges of consistency, stability, accountability in ensuring federal science and scientists are not censored or politically manipulated. It would prohibit political appointees from altering or suppressing scientific findings and give scientists final review over how agencies portray their research. It also would ensure that federal agencies designate scientific integrity officers and provide federal employees with ethics training to help prevent misconduct.

Another vital component of the *Scientific Integrity Act* is its codification of scientists' right to disseminate their work without interference. It would enable scientists to talk about their research with reporters, in scientific journals, and at scientific conferences, as well as directly with members of the public. Such communication is essential both for public understanding

and for federal scientists' ability to share their insights for better oversight and accountability of agency decisions.

The organizations below have worked long and hard to help codify scientific integrity in law. We have connected with committee staff, participated in briefings, drafted suggested text, and highlighted issues with our supporters around the country. Although we understand that the House Science Committee and Congress have many competing priorities, ensuring the government and the public have access to the best available science, free from political manipulation, directly impacts the most pressing issues facing our country.

We urge you to bring H.R.849, the *Scientific Integrity Act*, up for consideration in the Science Committee and keep the passage of this important bill a high priority for this Congress.

Sincerely,

Union of Concerned Scientists  
American Association of Geographers (AAG)  
American Institute of Biological Sciences  
Breast Cancer Action  
Center for Auto Safety  
Center for Inquiry (CFI)  
Center for Progressive Reform  
Center for Science in the Public Interest  
Climate Science Legal Defense Fund  
Diamond Ivy Technologies  
Endangered Species Coalition  
Government Accountability Project  
Government Information Watch  
Green Science Policy Institute  
GreenFaith  
Ibis Reproductive Health  
In the Public Interest  
Jacobs Institute of Women's Health  
National Center for Health Research  
Native Plant Conservation Campaign  
Oceana  
Open The Government  
Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility  
Sciencecorps  
Society for Conservation Biology North America  
The Digital Democracy Project  
UCSF Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment  
Woodhull Freedom Foundation

cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives