



**ENERGY SCIENCES
COALITION**

July 25, 2019

The Honorable Rick Perry
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independent Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20585

Mr. Russell Vought
Acting Director
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Secretary Perry and Acting Director Vought:

The Energy Sciences Coalition (ESC) strongly urges you to retain the six Federal Advisory Committees (FACs) that currently provide invaluable advice on research priorities and infrastructure investments to the Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science. ESC is concerned that the June 14 Executive Order (EO) 13875 – Evaluating and Improving the Utility of Federal Advisory Committees – could result in the arbitrary and unnecessary termination of several of these important Office of Science FACs.

Based on the criteria of the EO, the Office of Science FACs should be exempt from termination because they are “necessary for effective program delivery...and warranted by the public interest.” For example, the Office of Science FACs have played a critical role in DOE’s stewardship of the largest collection of leading-class scientific user facilities in the world. Since their inception, the Office of Science FACs have provided valuable, independent advice to the Office of Science on complex scientific and technical issues concerning the scientific user facilities. The six Office of Science FACs are essential to engaging the scientific community in open and transparent processes related to user facility planning, assessment, ranking and prioritization. Maintaining the existing scientific user facilities and constructing new ones are among the most important activities of the Office of Science and its system of laboratories.

The Office of Science FACs also help establish consensus across the scientific community on priorities and goals. They ensure that key voices, including experts from academia, other federal agencies and the private sector, have an opportunity to participate in the discussions that help determine the direction of DOE research. The inclusion of these key groups has been critical to maintaining broad support for Office of Science research directions and infrastructure investments.

Today, the Office of Science FACs are more important than ever. As the U.S. works to maintain its global science and technology leaderships and faces growing international competition, these committees do not meet the criteria for elimination provided by EO 13875. The work of these FACs is not “obsolete;” their “primary functions” cannot be “assumed by another entity;” and the return on investment greatly outweighs the small cost of their operation. Office of Science FACs have a track record of producing

definitive reports, with recommendations that have been immediately accepted by Congress and the Executive Branch, and have changed the course of the Office of Science's plans. It is clear that without these committees, decisions on scientific user facilities and research investments would have been very different, almost certainly leaving the U.S. in a position of weakness in the face of international competition.

In short, FACs have helped deliver the best results for the taxpayer investment. Their independent guidance has led to building the right world-leading facilities at the right time, improving the efficiency of operations, eliminating ineffective research programs and paving future research directions to stay ahead of international competition.

Thank you for your consideration on this important topic.

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The Energy Sciences Coalition (ESC) is a broad-based coalition of organizations representing scientists, engineers and mathematicians in universities, industry and national laboratories who are committed to supporting and advancing the scientific research programs of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), and in particular, the DOE Office of Science.

ESC Membership

American Association for the Advancement of Science
American Association of Physicists in Medicine
American Association of Physics Teachers
American Astronomical Society
American Chemical Society
American Crystallographic Association
American Geophysical Union
American Geosciences Institute
American Institute of Physics
American Mathematical Society
American Physical Society
American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
American Society for Engineering Education
American Society of Agronomy
Acoustical Society of America (ASA)
American Society of Mechanical Engineers
American Society for Microbiology
American Society of Plant Biologists
American Vacuum Society
Arizona State University
Association of American Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Battelle
Binghamton University
Biophysical Society
Boston University
Case Western Reserve University
City College of CUNY
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Health Physics Society
Iowa State University
Jefferson Science Associates, LLC
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Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Materials Research Society
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Michigan Technological University
New York University
Northeastern University
Northern Illinois University
Northwestern University
Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU)
OSA—The Optical Society
Pace University
Penn State University
Princeton University
Purdue University
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics
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SPIE
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