



May 18, 2017

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mazie K. Hirono
730 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Congresswoman Johnson and Senator Hirono:

On behalf of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the world's largest general scientific society, I write to express our support for the goals of promoting a more inclusive U.S. science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce.

The nation needs to improve data collection on the demographics of STEM faculty at federally-supported institutions of higher education and on the demographics and funding outcomes of Federal merit-reviewed research grants. Detailed, reliable data are essential for measuring progress on improving the representation of women and underrepresented minorities in STEM fields and for identifying areas where progress still remains to be made. As a data-driven organization, AAAS applauds proposals to use data to improve our collective understanding of the people participating in the U.S. science and engineering enterprise.

AAAS always advocates evidence-based policies; a growing body of scientific evidence based on cognitive sciences shows that most people hold implicit biases. These implicit biases play a role in evaluations and reviews and have been shown to hinder the advancement of women and minorities in STEM fields. Federal agencies should take efforts to reduce the impact of implicit bias on federal research grant reviews.

AAAS supports research to gather more evidence on what works and to implement best practices based on research and evidence. The National Science Foundation should develop innovative reforms, fund research, and scale up evidence-based reforms to improve the recruitment, retention, and advancement of individuals from underrepresented minority groups in STEM education and careers.

We appreciate efforts to recognize the importance of providing opportunities in STEM education and careers for all Americans. We at AAAS stand ready to work with the Congress, federal agencies, and institutions of higher education toward our common goal of an inclusive, world-leading U.S. STEM enterprise that provides opportunities for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rush Holt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rush D. Holt
Chief Executive Officer
Executive Publisher, *Science*