

August 27th, 2020

Dear Chairwoman Johnson, Ranking Member Lucas, and Representatives Beyer, Garcia, Lipinski, Weber, Bonamici, Gonzalez, Tonko, and Cohen,

Re: Endorsement of the Supporting Early-Career Researchers Act by the MIT Graduate Student Council and the CMU Graduate Student Assembly

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) represents the nearly 7,000 graduate students of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) represents the approximately 7,700 graduate students of Carnegie Mellon University (CMU). We support policies that strengthen the resiliency of the STEM pipeline during and after the coronavirus pandemic. Therefore, **we are happy to endorse the Supporting Early-Career Researchers Act and urge its quick passage to help retain STEM talent during this public health crisis.**

As graduate researchers complete their degrees amidst the coronavirus pandemic, they enter into a disrupted job market with severely limited opportunities. Many of these newly-minted PhDs would normally apply for post-doctoral positions, however considering the uncertainty in the job market and the fact that these new PhDs are ineligible for unemployment insurance, they cannot wait for research jobs to return and thus turn elsewhere to support themselves and their families. In a time of ongoing public health crisis and increasing global competition in science and technology, we must support our future leaders in research and innovation or face serious, long-term loss.

We appreciate the leadership and forethought shown by Chairwoman Johnson, Ranking Member Lucas, and Representatives Beyer, Garcia, Lipinski, Weber, Bonamici, Gonzalez, Tonko, and Cohen with their introduction of the Supporting Early-Career Researchers Act, creating a postdoctoral fellowship program at the National Science Foundation to help prevent the loss of talent during and after the pandemic.

If you would like to know more about the impact that COVID-19 has on graduate students and the research enterprise or would like to discuss additional methods of advancing graduate education and research, please reach out to us at gsc-eab-fed@mit.edu and/or gsa-vpea@andrew.cmu.edu.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Lane

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