

July 15, 2019

Dear Senators and Representatives,

As organizations working to promote and protect science for the public good, we urge you to co-sponsor and champion the Scientific Integrity Act, 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, or oversee scientific research to develop strong scientific integrity policies that include enforcement mechanisms.

Our various organizations work to advance science, public health, the environment, 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. Unfortunately, as the report *Protecting Science at Federal Agencies: How Congress Can Help*¹ describes, over the past two years, we have seen the impact of federal policies and political appointees that suppress, mischaracterize, and ignore evidence on topics from contraception to climate change.

S. 775/H.R. 1709, the Scientific Integrity Act of 2019² contains provisions that would address many of these attacks on science. 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 important 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.

Our nation relies on scientific integrity to maintain the role of best available science in policymaking. This research is critical to improving air and water quality, protecting workers, safeguarding public health and safety, advancing reproductive health, defending civil rights, preserving biodiversity, and responding to threats posed by diseases and extreme weather events. We urge you to sign on as co-sponsors of S. 775 or H.R. 1709 to take this important step toward ensuring that our government uses science and evidence-based information to best protect our public health and well-being.

Sincerely,

1. A Better Balance: The Work & Family Legal Center

¹ Climate Science Legal Defense Fund et al. *Protecting Science at Federal Agencies: How Congress Can Help*. November 2018. <http://bit.ly/ProtectingScienceReport>

² Scientific Integrity Act of 2019. <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr1709/BILLS-116hr1709ih.pdf>

2. Advocates for Science at Indiana University
3. American Bird Conservancy
4. American Public Health Association
5. Center for Biological Diversity
6. Center for Inquiry
7. Center for Progressive Reform
8. Center for Reproductive Rights
9. Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington
10. Climate Science Legal Defense Fund
11. Common Cause
12. Cumberland Countians for EcoJustice
13. Defenders of Wildlife
14. Earthjustice
15. Empire State Consumer Project
16. Endangered Species Coalition
17. Equity Forward
18. Food Chain Workers Alliance
19. Government Accountability Project
20. Government Information Watch
21. Green Faith
22. Green Latinos
23. Greenpeace USA
24. International Union, United Automobile Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America
25. Jacobs Institute of Women's Health
26. March for Science
27. National Center for Health Research
28. National Employment Law Project
29. National Federation of Federal Employees
30. National Institute for Reproductive Health
31. National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
32. National Parks Conservation Association
33. National Partnership for Women & Families
34. National Wildlife Federation
35. National Women's Health Network
36. Native Plant Society of the United States
37. Network for Environmental & Economic Responsibility of United Church of Christ
38. New Jersey Association for Floodplain Management
39. New Jersey Education Association
40. New Solutions: A Journal of Environmental and Occupational Health Policy
41. Ocean Conservancy
42. Open the Government
43. oSTEM
44. People for the American Way

45. Project on Government Oversight
46. Public Citizen
47. Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility
48. Rutgers AAUP-AFT
49. Save the Manatee Club
50. Sciencecorps
51. Service Employees International Union
52. Society for Conservation Biology
53. Society for the Advance of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science
54. Sunlight Foundation
55. The Wilderness Society
56. Union of Concerned Scientists
57. Unitarian Universalist Humanist Association
58. WildEarth Guardians
59. Wildlands Network
60. Wisconsin Alliance for Women's Health