

March 20th, 2017

Dear President Lifton,

The NIH budget recently proposed puts funding for science in jeopardy. The proposal alone is highly symbolic even if the full measure of the cuts may not be implemented; the broader consequences of political devaluation of science undermines scientific research, critical thinking, and fact-informed policy. We are witnessing a struggle in government and by the public to distinguish what is true from what is not, to respect facts over opinions, and to make sound decisions amid such confusion. We, the signees, are individual scientists and proud members of The Rockefeller University community that seek to promote a positive social environment that supports scientific inquiry, fact-based assessment, and the critical thinking underlying both.

The Rockefeller Community was proud to read your [statement](#), issued following the first immigration ban and thank you for your advocacy in recently meeting with Dr. Collins at the NIH. It showed our continued institutional leadership not only in scientific endeavors, but also as a voice for the community, and at times, for the whole country. We have no doubt that you are also affected by shifting policy, similarly galvanized, and actively pursuing a course that reflects Rockefeller's commitment to science for the benefit of humanity. Our hope is that The Rockefeller University lead again and boldly voice the fundamental and unquestionable importance of publicly-funded scientific research.

As scientists and individuals, we act regularly to advocate for science and educate the public. As members of The Rockefeller University we look to your leadership for guidance on our responsibility to the institute, and the institute's role in the larger scientific community and to society. In the tradition of being transformative in research, it would be fitting for the voice of The Rockefeller University to set an example for all research institutions to speak up against policy change that undermines science. We have the opportunity now to defend and solidify scientific enterprise and be a driving force behind positive changes for science and, in turn, for humanity.

Nationwide, the passive silence regarding ongoing systemic corrosion of the scientific liberty is in antithesis with our personal and professional principles. We support your voice as effective guidance for the growing movement supporting medical science, with the potential to halt policies that not only undermine our work and its importance, but also threaten to erode the reputation of the United States as a pioneer in scientific advancement. With so much at stake, we, the signees, seek ways to amplify your leadership and be proactive in helping others to appreciate the necessity of our efforts to better human health and further our collective knowledge.

We choose this time to make our request for your perspective and for discussion with the community on our role as scientists and as an institute, when the eyes of the world are focused on The March for Science, taking place on Earth Day (April 22nd, 2017) in Washington D.C., in New York City, and all over the world.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

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