

May 9, 2019

Hon. Cindy Hyde-Smith, Chairman  
Hon. Chris Murphy, Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate, Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: Strengthening Legislative Branch Capacity on Science and Technology**

Dear Chairman Hyde-Smith, Ranking Member Murphy, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and individuals, we write to express our concern that Congress does not have sufficient capacity to tackle 21st century science and technology policy challenges. Accordingly, we urge you to prioritize efforts to augment this institutional capacity, including providing funding for the Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), as part of the fiscal year 2020 Legislative Branch Appropriations bill.

The Senate has played a leading institutional role in promoting science and technology capacity in Congress. We note with favor the recently created Science, Technology Assessment and Analytics (STAA) team inside the Government Accountability Office, and its expanding capabilities to serve Members of Congress with expert advice and analysis.<sup>1</sup> We also look forward to the forthcoming report from the National Academy of Public Administration later this year.

But OTA and STAA have different comparative advantages: the former in foresight and emerging technologies, and the latter in oversight and evaluating federal government programs and expenditures. Congress must have both these capabilities to meet the ever-increasing demands on its oversight and legislative responsibilities.

We thank you for the opportunity to express our support for the reestablishment of the Office of Technology Assessment and welcome the opportunity to discuss this further. Please contact: Zach Graves, Head of Policy at Lincoln Network, at [zach.graves@joinlincoln.org](mailto:zach.graves@joinlincoln.org) or 202-733-8976; and Daniel Schuman, Policy Director at Demand Progress, at [daniel@demandprogress.org](mailto:daniel@demandprogress.org) or 240-237-3930.

Sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup> "GAO Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics Team: Initial Plan and Considerations Moving Forward," GAO, April 10, 2019. <https://www.gao.gov/pdfs/about/GAOScienceTechPlan-2019-04-10.pdf>.

## **ORGANIZATIONS**

Lincoln Network  
FreedomWorks  
TechFreedom  
R Street Institute  
American Principles Project  
Stand Up Republic  
Log Cabin Republicans  
Federation of American Scientists  
Union of Concerned Scientists  
Code for America  
Information Technology and Innovation Foundation  
American Library Association  
CompTIA  
Medium  
DuckDuckGo  
Mozilla  
Consumer Reports  
Engine  
Tech:NYC  
Demand Progress  
American Civil Liberties Union  
Center for Democracy & Technology  
Center for Humane Technology  
Open Markets Institute  
Public Knowledge  
X-Lab  
Issue One  
Sunlight Foundation  
Project On Government Oversight  
Campaign for Accountability  
Government Accountability Project  
Joseph Rainey Center for Public Policy  
Copia Institute  
The New Center  
Future of Life Institute  
Defending Rights & Dissent  
Government Information Watch  
Latino Tech Policy Initiative  
Senior Executives Association  
Longpath

## INDIVIDUALS\*

Vint Cerf, Internet Pioneer

Craig Newmark, Founder of Craigslist and Craig Newmark Philanthropies

Douglas W. Elmendorf, Dean and Don K. Price Professor of Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School

Adam Keiper, Co-Founder and Senior Editor, *The New Atlantis*

Tim O'Reilly, Founder and CEO, O'Reilly Media

Allison Berke, Executive Director, Stanford Cyber Initiative

Jerry Taylor, President, Niskanen Center

Alan Davidson, VP of Global Policy, Trust, and Security at Mozilla Corporation

Mike Godwin, Board of Trustees, The Internet Society

Bruce Schneier, Lecturer in Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School

Jon Peha, Professor of Electrical Engineering and Public Policy, Carnegie Mellon University

Daniel Sarewitz, Consortium for Science, Policy and Outcomes, Arizona State University

Robert Cook-Deegan, Consortium for Science, Policy and Outcomes, Arizona State University

Robert Friedman, VP for Policy, J. Craig Venter Institute

Daniel J. Chenok, Executive Director, IBM Center for The Business of Government

Ryan Calo, Co-Director, Tech Policy Lab, University of Washington

Robert Seamans, Professor, NYU Stern School of Business

William A. Galston, Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution

Jason Schultz, NYU School of Law

Eric Goldman, Professor, Santa Clara University School of Law

David Eaves, Digital HKS, Harvard Kennedy School

Joan D. Winston, former CRS, OTA, and GAO analyst

Matthew Might, Director and Professor, Hugh Kaul Precision Medicine Institute, University of Alabama at Birmingham

John Leary, CEO, DotGov.com

Gladys B. White, Ph.D. Georgetown University, School for Continuing Studies

Gigi Sohn, Distinguished Fellow, Georgetown Law Institute for Technology Law & Policy

Rodney Sobin, Senior Program Director, National Association of State Energy Officials

Benedicte Callan, Clinical Professor, Arizona State University

DJ Patil, Former U.S. Chief Data Scientist

Sean Tunis, Principal, Rubix Health

Nick Sinai, Adjunct Faculty, Harvard Kennedy School

Austin Brown, Executive Director, UC Davis Policy Institute for Energy, Environment, and the Economy

Jillian Grennan, Assistant Professor, Duke University, Fuqua School of Business

Richard Forno, Senior Lecturer, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

Lorelei Kelly, Fellow, Resilient Democracy Lead, Beck Center for Social Impact + Innovation at Georgetown University

Kathy Hill, Director Center of Advanced Governmental Studies, Johns Hopkins University

Christopher T. Hill, Prof. Emeritus of Public Policy and Technology, George Mason University

Annemarie Bridy, Allan G. Shepard Professor of Law, University of Idaho  
Renee DiResta, Mozilla Fellow  
Colleen Chien, Visiting Professor, Columbia Law School; Professor, Santa Clara Law School  
Rebecca Williams, DC Legal Hackers  
Alexander Howard, Founder, e-PluribusUnum.org  
Ryan Khurana, Executive Director, Institute for Advancing Prosperity  
Andy Lee Roth, Associate Director, Project Censored  
Steve Plotkin, Argonne Associate, Argonne National Laboratory  
Henry Kelly, University of Michigan  
Grant Tudor, Harvard University  
Justin Warner, Harvard University  
Ross Dakin, New Jersey Office of Innovation  
Adam Bly, Former VP Data at Spotify  
Caroline S. Wagner, Wolf Chair in International Affairs, Ohio State University  
Michael Stebbins, President, Science Advisors, LLC

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