To: Massachusetts Congressional Staff

From: **Boston University** – Jennifer Grodsky and Jessica Wong, Federal Relations
Harvard University – Suzanne Day, Kara Haas, and Peter DeYoe, Office of Federal Relations
Massachusetts Institute of Technology – Karen Knutson, Hannah Frye, and Tom Giancola, Washington Office
Tufts University – Mary Jeka and Rocco DiRico, Government and Community Relations

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Re: Fiscal Year 2027 Programmatic Requests

To support your programmatic requests to the Appropriations Committee, please find attached the FY 2027 (FY27) priorities for Massachusetts research universities. The Commonwealth is a national leader in research and education in no small part because of the dedication of its Congressional delegation. We are grateful for your continued, strong support and partnership as we work together to support innovation and strengthen America's competitive advantage.

In Massachusetts, we understand the power of the knowledge economy and the economic, social, and security benefits that our innovation ecosystem broadly shares. The Boston Chamber of Commerce quantified some of these benefits in its 2025 report – *Anchored in Excellence* – which found that the Commonwealth's colleges, universities, and health systems generate more than $155 billion in economic activity each year and support 1-in-5 jobs in the state, including 220,000 outside of education and healthcare. Federal funding cuts jeopardize the direct economic contributions of these sectors as well as the role of higher education and the health care sector in fostering innovation, attracting and retaining talent, and enhancing quality of life throughout the region.

We appreciated your offices' strong defense of the federal investments in research and education in FY26, and we urge you to continue to reject similarly devastating cuts in FY27 and to seek opportunities to grow these investments to meet national need and strategic priorities in science, health, and education.

We also urge you to continue to protect and strengthen the federal agencies and programs in our FY27 programmatic priorities, including by ensuring that all funds appropriated by Congress are being spent as intended. This requires your continued attention to funding freezes, the cancellation of awards for reasons unrelated to merit, and the de-prioritization of entire fields of science and education, often contrary to agency mission and statute. For example, the total number of new grants funded by NSF and NIH dropped by 25 percent and 24 percent respectively relative to the historical average and despite a funding increase for NIH in FY26. This has a direct impact on the existing scientific workforce, and it has consequences for students who are planning for future careers in science, health, and education.

Finally, we appreciate your successful efforts in the FY26 spending bills to prevent the Administration from establishing an arbitrary fixed cap on facilities & administrative (F&A) rates, which represent a real cut to the research entities that conduct research on behalf of the federal government. Although national associations have been successful in district court and the court of appeals in their efforts to block the implementation of these caps at DOD and NSF, the cases for DOE and NIH are still pending. For these reasons, we urge your continued support for the inclusion of so-called "blocking language" in each of the relevant FY27 appropriations bills, and we include an example below. Additionally, we encourage you to support the national higher education and research associations' proposal to establish a process to develop a new, more transparent model for the reimbursement of indirect research costs, which includes important guardrails on the Office of Management and Budget, as part of the FY27 Financial Services and General Government appropriations bill. We will share that language when it is available.

In conclusion, the Commonwealth is, as it has been for years, positioned to lead in cutting-edge fields and educate the visionaries of tomorrow, but we can only continue to realize the potential of these technologies, cures, and people through a strong federal-university partnership.

While the innovations that grow out Massachusetts universities play a key role to invigorate the region's economy, this progress is shared well beyond our borders, providing benefits in every corner of the nation. Around the world, the U.S. federal-university partnership is a cornerstone of the American competitive advantage in business, workforce development, and STEM R&D. To outcompete our global rivals and lead the way forward, we cannot abandon this proven partnership.

We appreciate your continued support and all your hard work on behalf of our institutions, students, faculty, and staff. Thank you for considering these requests, which we will also submit jointly through your respective forms and processes. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of us with questions or for more information.

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES

National Institutes of Health (NIH)
FY 2027 Request: $51.3 billion
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $47.2 billion

More than 200 Massachusetts institutions successfully competed for almost $3.7 billion in funding from NIH in FY25, making it an important driver of the economy. According to the 2025 United for Medical Research study, every dollar invested in NIH generates more than $2.56 in economic activity and more than 407,782 jobs nationwide. In addition to the economic benefits, researchers at our universities are developing new treatments and cures for diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer's, and mental health disorders to improve human health and reduce the personal and economic toll of these diseases. NIH also provides training support to students and early career biomedical researchers. Our request would allow the agency to keep pace with inflation as well as ensure real growth in NIH-funded research. However, NIH itself has reported that success rates and total number of awards, including for early-stage and established applicants, fell in 2025, following other reports that the agency's pace of awarding grants is well below historic trends. As the Administration seeks to reduce F&A rates and to implement multi-year funding of NIH grants, which would dramatically reduce the number of awards the agency makes each year, we support the extension of legislative language that blocks the unilateral implementation and expansion of these policies respectively and ensures NIH is administering its lifesaving and lifechanging mission with integrity and based on merit.

Advanced Research Projects Agency – Health (ARPA-H)
FY 2027 Request: $1.7 billion
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $1.5 billion

ARPA-H seeks to transform health care by bringing together a variety of scientific disciplines to tackle health problems that require research breakthroughs, serving as an important complement to NIH, which focuses on discovery research. Established in 2022 with an authorized budget of $6 billion, ARPA-H has become known for high-risk, high-reward research using nimble contracting approaches and bold, cross-disciplinary milestone-driven projects to accelerate the development of health solutions that will be accessible to diverse populations. We support $1.7 billion for ARPA-H, which will allow the agency to continue its work on important initiatives, like the Sprint for Women's Health that is led by the Investor Catalyst Hub in Cambridge. It also will ensure support for ongoing efforts, like the Harvard-led collaboration with MIT and others to engineer off-the-shelf, universal, transplant ready graft for liver failure – a condition that causes the death of 2 million worldwide each year.

Department of Education, Pell Grant (Maximum Award)
FY 2027 Request: $7,595
FY 2026 Enacted: $7,395

The Pell Grant program is the cornerstone of the federal student aid portfolio, providing more than $607 million to help nearly 120,000 students attend Massachusetts colleges and universities. Our universities supplement the Pell Grant and other federal aid programs by providing students with our own institutional aid. Through these federal and institutional investments, we can maintain affordability and outstanding educational quality. But without the foundation of the federal Pell Grant, student access and national affordability would suffer greatly. The Congressional Budget Office is predicting a shortfall of at least $104 billion over the next 10 years, threatening the program's ability to provide access and drive aspirations for future generations of students. As Congress considers proposals to support the long-term viability of Pell, we urge you not to back away from this promise to America's students or limit student benefits.

Department of Education, Federal Work Study (FWS)
FY 2027 Request: $1.31 billion
FY 2026 Enacted: $1.23 billion

Federal Work Study helps students succeed in college and prepare for the world of work. Massachusetts universities participate in campus-based student aid programs at a very high level, with nearly 20,000 students in Massachusetts receiving FWS in the 2023-24 academic year.

Department of Education, Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG)
FY 2027 Request: $966.2 million
FY 2026 Enacted: $910 million

Campus-based student aid programs, like Federal Work Study and SEOG, help students by leveraging federal dollars with universities' own aid. SEOG awards are available to students with "exceptional need" and are an important complement to the Pell Grant program. More than 35,000 students in Massachusetts received SEOG during the 2023-24 academic year.

Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES)
FY 2027 Request: $900 million
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $789.6 million

Investing in peer-reviewed education research activities at the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) results in innovations in both teaching and learning, improving classrooms around the nation. IES is the only federal agency exclusively devoted to funding educational research and is playing a critical role in understanding learning loss due to the pandemic. Notably, proposals submitted to the agency's fiscal year 2025 grant competition have gone without review for over a year and no new funding opportunities for fiscal year 2026 have been released. It is essential that Congress ensure proper staffing and agency infrastructure to maintain this vital national resource.

Department of Education, International and Foreign Language Education (IFLE)
FY 2027 Request: $85.7 million
FY 2026 Enacted: $80.7 million

The Title VI/ Fulbright-Hays International and Foreign Language Education (IFLE) programs support training in critical foreign languages, educational outreach activities for K-12 schools, and curriculum development for the multidisciplinary study of regions around the world, including Eurasia, Africa, and the Middle East. In an increasingly interconnected world, these international education programs are an essential means for Massachusetts to develop a globally engaged citizenry. The Department of Education announced the transfer of IFLE to the Department of State and abruptly cancelled all existing, competitively awarded grants – including several in Massachusetts, citing inconsistency with Administration priorities. However, Congress provided funding for these critical programs in the final FY26 spending package, and we urge you to continue that investment and ensure these programs are being administered properly, lawfully, and effectively.

Department of Education, Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN)
FY 2027 Request: $28.6 million
FY 2026 Enacted: $19.5 million

GAANN fellowships provide financial support for Massachusetts graduate students pursuing doctoral education in fields that are critical to national priorities, including: biology; chemistry; computer and information sciences; engineering; mathematics; nursing; physics; and educational assessment, evaluation and research.

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE, AND RELATED AGENCIES

National Science Foundation (NSF)
FY 2027 Request: $9.9 billion
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $8.75 billion

NSF is a major sponsor of basic research in the physical sciences and engineering, supporting work across scientific disciplines with the potential to expand the frontiers of knowledge and support discovery. NSF also supports STEM education and training through K-12 schools, post-secondary institutions, and informal settings, like libraries and museums, and seeks to grow the future STEM workforce. In FY24, NSF provided nearly 1,144 competitive awards in Massachusetts, totaling more than $554 million. Congress recognized the enormous role NSF plays in the American innovation ecosystem when it enacted the CHIPS & Science Act (P.L. 177-167), authorizing historic funding increases to meet the societal challenges of our time. However, the agency's budget was cut by 8 percent in FY24 and 3 percent in FY26. Providing at least $9.9 billion will restore the funding cuts and allow the agency to fund additional meritorious proposals, including through the Technology, Innovation, and Partnerships Directorate's use-inspired research in critical fields like AI, machine learning, and robotics. NSF lost 35% of its staff over the last year and its leaders have stated they will need to rebuild in order to fulfill the agency's mission. Diminishing an agency poised to play a critical role across the most competitive emerging fields means we will confront our adversaries on the world's stage with one hand tied behind our back.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Science account
FY 2027 Request: $9 billion
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $7.25 billion

NASA is a key federal contributor to advancing research in the physical sciences on Earth and in space, and NASA-funded climate research is critical to understanding our planet. Massachusetts institutions continue to play key roles in major NASA missions. Researchers seek funding through the Science Mission Directorate's pool of grants, which are divided across the Directorate's four discipline-specific Divisions and the Space Grant Program to encourage space education. According to the agency's most recent fiscal year data, NASA provided educational institutions in Massachusetts with more than $52 million. Reports of widespread funding freezes intended to implement cuts proposed in the President's budget request – but rejected by Congress – raise significant concerns about the dispensation of appropriated funds, and we ask you to provide strong safeguards for Congressionally approved funds.

DEFENSE

Department of Defense (DOD) Basic (6.1) Research
FY 2027 Request: $2.52 billion
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $2.37 billion

Our institutions support strong investments that allow for at least six-percent growth in basic research, or 6.1, programs, within the Army, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, and Defense-wide, including those program elements that support extramural research, fellowships, and partnerships across a wide variety of scientific fields from biomedicine to critical technology areas like AI and biotechnology. We support sustained investments in the University Research Initiatives programs, the Multidisciplinary University Research Initiative, which supports teams of faculty conducting research in high priority fields that cross typical scientific disciplines, and the National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowships program, which provides fellowships for doctoral students pursuing a degree of interest to the DOD. We also support the restoration of the Minerva Initiative, a research program that deepens understanding of social, cultural, and political forces of strategic importance, that was eliminated by the Administration. The Secretary has also tapped Research, Development, Testing, and Evaluation funds to backfill other DOD priorities or programs, repeatedly transferring these Congressionally appropriated funds out of the Science and Technology enterprise.

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)
FY 2027 Request: $4.64 billion
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $4.38 billion

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) funds high-risk, high-reward research that can lead to innovative applications for the warfighter. DARPA is known for its willingness to fund ambitious research, leading to game-changing technologies such as GPS, automated voice recognition, and the Internet.

ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES

Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Science
FY 2027 Request: $9.5 billion
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $8.4 billion

The DOE Office of Science is a key sponsor of discovery-based and use-inspired basic research in fields including physics, chemistry, materials science, environmental science, advanced scientific computing, biology, and applied mathematics. Massachusetts scientists also take advantage of world-class user facilities at the ten DOE National Laboratories funded through the Office of Science. However, Massachusetts universities and scientific organizations received approximately $84 million in DOE Office of Science funding in FY25, a 28 percent reduction from the previous year. Congress recognized the importance of the Office of Science in the CHIPS and Science Act, and an investment of $9.5 billion will ensure the Office has the resources it needs to begin to support its mission priorities.

DOE Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E)
FY 2027 Request: $460 million
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $350 million

ARPA-E supports early-stage energy technologies with transformational potential to lessen our reliance on energy imports, reduce energy-related emissions such as greenhouse gases, and improve energy efficiency. The request would allow the agency to continue its work on the technologies needed to improve the management and disposal of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel and enhance the resilience, reliability, and security of the energy infrastructure.

INTERIOR, ENVIRONMENT, AND RELATED AGENCIES

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Science and Technology
FY 2027 Request: $781.4 million
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $744.2 million

EPA's Science and Technology (S&T) programs provide the foundation for credible decision-making to safeguard human health and ecosystems from environmental pollutants. EPA supports research in several areas, including air quality, chemical safety, climate change, water, and homeland security, among others.

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)
FY 2027 Request: $215 million
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.

FY 2026 Enacted: $207 million

NEH provides support for humanities research, education, preservation, and public programs in areas such as history, preserving endangered languages and cultures, and literature. NEH programs stimulate creativity and innovation, helping us better understand the social and international dimensions of complex questions, as well as enhancing the quality of life for MA residents. Over the last five years, Massachusetts civic organizations, historical societies, museums, filmmakers, and universities have successfully competed for more than 250 NEH-funded grants. Recent changes to the focus and process of awarding NEH grants raise concerns about the role of merit and excellence in agency grantmaking, as well as the pressure caused by widespread staffing shortages.

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)
FY 2027 Request: $215 million
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $207 million

NEA provides support for the public to participate in and engage with the arts across a wide variety of media and programs, including exhibits, concerts, readings, and other performances. This commitment to the arts – through state, local, and public-private partnerships – shares the benefits of these programs with every district in every state. From FY 2019 to 2023, the NEA distributed more than $34.4 million in grants in Massachusetts.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES

National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) - Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)
FY 2027 Request: $500 million
FY 2027 Bill Language Request: See F&A blocking language below.
FY 2026 Enacted: $435 million

AFRI is the leading organization for competitive research grants in agricultural sciences. Massachusetts institutions play key roles in grant programs that support increased food production, improvement of food security, and enhancing human nutrition. Increased funding for this program will provide additional grant opportunities to continue this work and train the next generation of the agricultural research workforce.

REQUEST FOR F&A BLOCKING LANGUAGE IN APPROPRIATIONS BILLS:

Below is a generic updated version of the blocking language section that appeared in HR 7148, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2026. We support the inclusion of these sections in all FY27 appropriations bills that fund federal research, tailored to cover the appropriate funding agency.

Adapted from the version that appeared in FY26 as HR 7148, Division B, Title II, Sec. 224
Sec. xxx. In making Federal financial assistance, the provisions relating to indirect costs in part 75 of title 45, Code of Federal Regulations, including with respect to the approval of deviations from negotiated rates, shall continue to apply to the [INSERT RESEARCH AGENCY] to the same extent and in the same manner as such provisions were applied in the third quarter of fiscal year 2017. None of the funds appropriated in this or prior Acts or otherwise made available to the [INSERT RELEVANT DEPARTMENT/AGENCY] or to any department or agency may be used to develop or implement a

modified approach to such provisions, or to intentionally or substantially expand the fiscal effect of the approval of such deviations from negotiated rates beyond the proportional effect of such approvals in such quarter.