December 1, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
U.S House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi:

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) appreciates your efforts to negotiate a bipartisan agreement to raise the Budget Control Act (BCA) spending caps. We urge you to continue these conversations and reach a deal as soon as possible. The current spending caps short change funding for critical priorities including biomedical and biological research supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation (NSF), and other agencies.

A similar accord reached in 2015 to raise the caps allowed Congress to provide $2 billion increases for NIH in FY 2016 and FY 2017. However, without an agreement to adjust the FY 2018 spending cap for non-defense programs, it will be impossible for Congress to provide the $2 billion increase for NIH that was approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee in September. The current cap on non-defense discretionary funding is too low to accommodate adequate growth for federal research agencies, impeding our ability to support the research grants that drive scientific discovery. Inadequate and uncertain funding disrupts planning for large-scale, long-term research initiatives and limits career opportunities for younger researchers.

Stable growth is essential for a healthy scientific enterprise and to keep pace with growing international competition. Science requires sustained support in order to produce new knowledge, innovations, and cures, and train the next generation of scientists. Opportunities for scientific advances have never been greater.

Reaching an immediate agreement to raise the FY 2018 non-defense spending cap will allow Congress to pass an omnibus appropriations bill within the next few weeks. We urge you to take all steps necessary to ensure that the U.S. will remain the world leader in medical and scientific research.

Sincerely,

Thomas O. Baldwin, PhD
FASEB President