

September 1, 2020

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Chairwoman  
House Committee on Science, Space, and  
Technology  
2321 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Johnson:

At this time of great challenges for our nation, we write to thank you for your leadership in confronting inequities in the U.S. scientific enterprise that have prevented full participation of racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in STEM. We therefore support your call for the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) to undertake a study to acknowledge and assess this structural problem, namely systemic racism in academia.

As we have seen in stark terms over the last six months, while the novel coronavirus is a threat to everyone living in the U.S., the burden has not been equally felt. There are disproportionately higher rates of illness and death in communities of color in the U.S. The reasons for this are many, but it illustrates with new urgency the need to foster a diverse and inclusive scientific workforce to tackle these and other challenges from a wider range of perspectives.

While efforts to increase diversity in the scientific workforce may have produced incremental change, we have yet to see large-scale results. Across disciplines, demographic representation throughout the ranks of academia still fails to reflect the diversity of our society. We are hopeful that a comprehensive study by the NASEM will yield the data and tools that the academic community needs to pursue evidence-based changes leading to more rapid progress.

A scientific enterprise that reflects the diversity of our nation will be more innovative and better equipped to address the challenges before us. Collectively, our organizations are working to change culture and improve diversity, equity and inclusion efforts within our staff, our members and our disciplines. The scientific community stands ready to work with you and your committee as you endeavor to address the systemic racism that exists within academia.

Sincerely,

Acoustical Society of America  
Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation  
American Anthropological Association

American Association for Anatomy  
American Association for Cancer Research  
American Association for Dental Research  
American Association for the Advancement of Science  
American Association of Immunologists  
American Association of Physicists in Medicine  
American Association of Physics Teachers  
American Astronomical Society  
American Chemical Society  
American College of Sports Medicine  
American Educational Research Association  
American Geophysical Union  
American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering  
American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics  
American Institute of Biological Sciences  
American Institute of Physics  
American Mathematical Society  
American Physical Society  
American Physiological Society  
American Political Science Association  
American Psychological Association  
American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
American Society for Cell Biology  
American Society for Investigative Pathology  
American Society for Microbiology  
American Society for Nutrition  
American Society of Agronomy  
American Society of Human Genetics  
American Society of Plant Biologists  
American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene  
American Sociological Association  
American Thoracic Society  
ASME  
Association for Molecular Pathology  
Association for Psychological Science  
Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO)  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities  
AVS - The Society for Science and Technology of Materials, Interfaces, and Processing  
AWIS - Association for Women in Science  
Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences  
Biophysical Society  
Coalition for the Life Sciences  
Consortium for Ocean Leadership

Consortium of Social Science Associations  
Council of Scientific Society Presidents  
Council on Undergraduate Research  
Crop Science Society of America  
Ecological Society of America  
Endocrine Society  
Entomological Society of America  
Federation of American Scientists  
Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology  
Federation of Associations in Behavioral & Brain Sciences  
Genetics Society of America  
Geological Society of America  
Harvard University  
Human Factors and Ergonomics Society  
Mathematical Association of America  
National Communication Association  
National Council for Science and the Environment  
National Institute of Building Sciences  
OSA-The Optical Society  
Research!America  
SACNAS  
SAGE Publishing  
San Jose State University  
Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Honor Society  
Society for Freshwater Science  
Society for Personality Assessment  
Society for Research in Child Development  
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues  
Society of Toxicology  
Soil Science Society of America  
The Gerontological Society of America  
University of Colorado Boulder  
University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine