

March, 2011

Dear Members of Congress:

We the undersigned 315 members of the Users Organization of the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams are writing in support of funding to support the scientific research missions of the Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Science and the National Science Foundation (NSF). We also strongly urge Congress to provide full funding for the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams (FRIB) through the Nuclear Physics program at the DOE Office of Science. This will bolster America's global economic competitiveness and enhance our national security by enabling the U.S. to sustain and enhance its technological leadership position in the critical field of nuclear science.

We recognize that the 112th Congress is faced with a difficult budget environment, but we are very pleased that a strong bipartisan consensus has emerged over the past few years in Congress that robust investments in science and technology play a critical role ensuring continued U.S. prosperity. The Facility for Rare Isotope Beams is a key component of the research infrastructure needed to advance the field of nuclear science, as confirmed by both the DOE Nuclear Science Advisory Committee¹ and the National Academies². This national user facility will enable scientists across the country to understand the workings of nature's strong force, unravel the mysteries of the cosmic origin of atoms, devise tests for the fundamental laws of nature, and create new isotopes and tools for other fields of science, medicine, national security, and industry.

Not only does U.S. leadership in nuclear science have broad scientific and economic impact, it is also critical to the development of a talented and skilled nuclear workforce. Advances in the field of nuclear science have underpinned many of the world-changing breakthroughs in modern medical imaging, nuclear medicine, computer modeling and simulation, and energy production that have improved our lives and the world around us. However, the American Physical Society report on the Readiness of the U.S. Nuclear Workforce for the 21st Century Challenges³ discusses the "critical shortages in the U.S. nuclear workforce" and states that "There will be a continuing, long-term, significant need for nuclear scientists and engineers in industry, government, and academia, across a wide range of disciplines."

Continued funding for the foundations of our nuclear science research capabilities, such as the Facility for Rare Isotope Beams, is critical to U.S. technological leadership, our national security, and to our long-term economic prosperity. We hope you will take the broad support of the nuclear science community - evidenced by this letter - into close consideration as you set Congressional budget priorities.

Sincerely,

The following undersigned Members of the FRIB Users Organization*

* We are signing of our own accord and not on behalf of the institution for which we are employed.

¹ Nuclear Science Advisory Committee 2007 Long Range Plan: "The Frontiers of Nuclear Science"; U.S. DOE

² "Scientific Opportunities with a Rare-Isotope Facility in the United States", Nat. Res. Council, Nat. Academy, 2007

³ "Readiness of the U.S. nuclear Workforce for 21st Century Challenges", American Physical Society Report from the Panel on Public Affairs, 2008

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