Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 19, 2016

Donald J. Trump
President-elect
Trump Tower
725 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear President-elect Trump:

As Members of Congress who represent and/or or sit on committees with jurisdiction over the 17 Department of Energy National Laboratories ("DOE labs"), we write to express our extreme concern over reports your transition team has asked for personal information on their employees and to inform you we will always act to defend them and their scientific freedom.

Our DOE labs are among the crown jewels of America. Their hard-working, brilliant scientists and researchers are working to solve some of the most pressing and vexing questions and problems we face. These include keeping our nuclear weapons stockpile safe and secure, developing advanced supercomputers, improving the detection of weapons of mass destruction, and creating new ways to produce cleaner energy. What they learn also helps create jobs and grow our economy, goals we all share.

This is why it was so concerning to learn that your transition team has, according to *The Washington Post*, asked for "a list of the top 20 salaried employees of the labs, the labs' peer-reviewed publications over the past three years, a list of their professional society memberships, affiliations, and the websites they maintain or contribute to 'during work hours'." This was part of a larger set of questions asking DOE about which employees worked on the issue of climate change.

Such questions about DOE lab staff are worrisome because they suggest there may be attempts by the incoming Administration to retaliate against them or defund their work, even if blame for the questionnaire is now said to rest with a reportedly "rogue" transition team employee. Regardless of one's views on climate change, it is simply inappropriate to target hard-working public servants simply for doing their jobs. Staff at our DOE labs go where the science takes them, and for that they should be praised, not punished. Should DOE lab employees be improperly subjected to adverse employment actions and then decide to take legal recourse, we will stand as *amici curiae* to support them.

Further, as you may know, DOE labs are owned by the government but almost all are operated by contractors. This restricts employment decisions to DOE lab management and should protect the important and well-earned academic freedom of DOE lab staff from political interference.

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Such scientific integrity is a critical part of the DOE lab structure and something we will work diligently to protect.

For the forgoing reasons, it is important that we better understand what is being done by your transition team with respect to DOE labs and their recent questions. Please send us the specific questions that were asked of DOE about lab staff, the purpose behind them, and what you plan to do with any information that is learned.

Lastly, it may help you to understand our DOE labs better if you saw them firsthand. We would welcome the opportunity to show you in person, at your earliest convenience, the great work being done at any of these tremendous institutions.

We look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress

Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Daniel Lipinski
Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

John Garamendi
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy, III
Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui
Member of Congress

Alan Grayson
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer, Jr.
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

Michael F. Doyle
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Janice D. Schakowsky
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David Loebsack
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Ed Perlmutter
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Paul Tonko
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Ben Ray Luján
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Mark Takano
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