

[Open letter from liberal arts college presidents supporting Federal Research Public Access Act. Made public on September 6, 2006. Additional signatories added September 12, 2006. Total signatories: 56.]

To the Higher Education Community:

As liberal arts college presidents, we are writing to express our strong support for S. 2695, the Federal Research Public Access Act of 2006, which has been introduced into the U.S. Senate by Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Joseph Lieberman (D-CT). This bill would require federal agencies whose external research budgets exceed \$100 million to develop policies that would ensure public access via the Internet to their funded research.

Liberal arts colleges are important components of our nation's scientific and scholarly productivity. Studies have shown that our institutions are highly effective in producing graduates who go on to obtain Ph.D. degrees in the sciences. Our faculty actively pursue scientific research, much of it with government funding, and often working in partnership with talented undergraduates who later become productive scientists. Unfortunately, access to research information paid for with tax dollars is severely limited at our institutions--and indeed at most universities. Academic libraries simply cannot afford ready access to most of the research literature that their faculty and students need.

The Federal Research Public Access Act would be a major step forward in ensuring equitable online access to research literature that is paid for by taxpayers. The federal government funds over \$55 billion in research annually. Research supported by the National Institutes of Health, which accounts for approximately one-third of federally funded research, produces an estimated 65,000 peer-reviewed journal articles each year. Given the scope of research literature that would become available online, it is clear that adoption of the bill would have significant benefits for the progress of science and the advancement of knowledge.

We are also supportive of the Federal Research Public Access Act because it has been crafted in a way that provides ample protection for the system of peer review. It incorporates a six-month window, following publication in peer-reviewed

journals, before manuscripts are required to be openly accessible on the Internet. This embargo period on access to publicly-funded research safeguards the interests of scholarly societies and other publishers. In addition, the bill leaves control of the final published version of articles, which is generally used for citation purposes, in the hands of publishers.

Adoption of the Federal Research Public Access Act will democratize access to research information funded by tax dollars. It will benefit education, research, and the general public. We urge the higher education community, American taxpayers, and members of Congress to support its passage into law.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth E. Kiss, President
Agnes Scott College

Peter T. Mitchell, President
Albion College

Anthony W. Marx, President
Amherst College

Steven C. Bahls, President
Augustana College (IL)

Oscar C. Page, President,
Austin College

Judith R. Shapiro, President
Barnard College

Elaine Tuttle Hansen, President
Bates College

Barry Mills, President
Bowdoin College

Nancy J. Vickers, President
Bryn Mawr College

Brian C. Mitchell, President
Bucknell University

Rob Oden, President
Carleton College

John Bassett, President
Clark University

James R. Phifer, President
Coe College

William "Bro" Adams, President
Colby College

Rebecca Chopp, President
Colgate University

R. Stanton Hales, President
The College of Wooster

Richard F. Celeste, President
Colorado College

Leo I. Higdon, Jr., President
Connecticut College

Robert Vagt, President
Davidson College

Dale Thomas Knobel, President
Denison University

Robert G. Bottoms, President
DePauw University

William G. Durden, President
Dickinson College

Douglas Bennett, President
Earlham College

Donald R. Eastman, President
Eckerd College

John A. Fry, President
Franklin & Marshall College

Katherine Haley Will, President
Gettysburg College

James L. Peterson, President
Gustavus Adolphus College

Thomas R. Tritton, President
Haverford College

Eileen Wilson-Oyelaran, President
Kalamazoo College

Daniel H. Weiss, President
Lafayette College

Stephen D. Schutt, President
Lake Forest College

Jill Beck, President
Lawrence University

Brian Rosenberg, President
Macalester College

Ronald D. Liebowitz, President
Middlebury College

Joanne V Creighton, President
Mount Holyoke College

Nancy S. Dye, President
Oberlin College

Susan Prager, President
Occidental College

Mark W. Huddleston, President
Ohio Wesleyan University

Robert R. Lindgren, President
Randolph-Macon College

Colin S. Diver, President
Reed College

William E. Troutt, President
Rhodes College

Lewis M. Duncan, President
Rollins College

Philip A. Glotzbach, President
Skidmore College

David R. Anderson, President
St. Olaf College

Daniel F. Sullivan, President
St. Lawrence University

Carol Christ, President
Smith College

Alfred H. Bloom, President
Swarthmore College

John R. Brazil, President
Trinity University (TX)

Catharine B. Hill, President
Vassar College

Patrick E. White, President
Wabash College

Kenneth P. Ruscio, President
Washington and Lee University

Diana Chapman Walsh, President
Wellesley College

Douglas Bennet, President
Wesleyan University

Ronald A. Crutcher, President
Wheaton College (MA)

George Bridges, President
Whitman College

M. Lee Pelton, President
Willamette University