MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

Statement on the National Biomedical Research Act

S.2624, *National Biomedical Research Act*, was introduced by Senator Elizabeth Warren on March 3rd, 2016 and referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions with 10 cosponsors. The *National Biomedical Research Act* proposes a steady funding stream that provides $5 billion in new annual funding for select initiatives at the nation’s top research institutions, NIH, and FDA, in years when congressional appropriations to the agencies increase.

The MIT Graduate Student Council (GSC) represents the 6,800 graduate students of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in all matters concerning their welfare, academic opportunities, and professional careers. We support all measures that strengthen federal funding for university research and enable our students to achieve major scientific innovations. Therefore, we strongly support Bill S.2624.

MIT lies right within the heart of the most innovative biomedical community in the world. In addition to Departments such as *Biology*, *Chemistry*, and *Brain and Cognitive Sciences*, MIT further hosts top-tier biomedical research centers such as the *Center for Biomedical Innovation*. In addition, MIT maintains close ties to its affiliated research institutes, such as the *Broad Institute* and the *Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research*, and to other entities such as *Harvard Medical School* and the *Massachusetts General Hospital*. As a result, MIT has contributed to great scientific breakthroughs, such as the development of the CRISPR-CAS9 methodology, arguably the greatest accomplishment in the biomedical research community of the last decade.

To achieve such milestones, ambitious new projects require a clear picture of research funding over multiple years. As the *American Association for Cancer Research* states in its 2015 Progress Report, federal funds “represent the lifeblood of biomedical research and form the foundation upon which a majority of scientific and medical discoveries are made” and thus emphasizes the importance of “robust, sustained, and predictable funding increases”. We believe that a research fund for biomedical innovations symbolizes an exceptional addition to the current funding scheme of federal agencies.

The passage of S.2624 would enable graduate students from MIT and other universities to solve the big challenges in biology and medicine, securing the world-leading position of American research institutions and advancing the overall health of our society.

Best regards,

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