Statement on the Endless Frontier Act

We are writing on behalf of graduate researchers and student governments from 9 universities across the country to express our support for policies that strengthen American science and technology base and ensure American economic competitiveness. **We support the mission of the Endless Frontier Act (EFA) and thank you for your leadership in putting forth this bold science and technology strategy that our nation needs, but feel that it misses critical opportunities to eliminate obstacles currently facing the STEM workforce, namely mentorship and workforce development.**

American investment in science is faltering. In 2018, investment in research & development was the smallest percentage of the federal budget since 1962. If we are to sustain American leadership into the 21st century, we must invest in research and build a thriving technological ecosystem. We must expand fundamental research at universities and strengthen the bond between industry and academia. We support the allocation of $100 billion over the next five years for technology research and development; **the creation of at least 2,000 graduate student fellowships and 1,000 post-doctoral fellowships;** and the authorization of $10 billion to build at least 10 regional technology centers across America.

As Vannevar Bush points out in his eponymous report, we must ensure the renewal of talent in science and technology, remove barriers, and build a diverse and capable workforce as the future of innovation and research begins with them. **To create a more robust scientific workforce, legislation should specifically seek to improve STEM workforce conditions.** Measures doing so should include mentoring and development plans for graduate students; funds for career exploration; programs to support historically underserved institutions; and mechanisms for further study of the graduate workforce. We hope you will include these measures in this legislation.

If you would like to know more about the importance of improving graduate education and research for our nation’s global competitiveness, please reach out to us at gsc-eab-fed@mit.edu.

*Prepared by the External Affairs Board on behalf of the MIT Graduate Student Council. April 2021.*