

## **Talking Points on the Proposed “Fair Access to Science and Technology Research Act” (FASTR)**

- In the age of the Internet, we need smarter policies that take full advantage of the digital environment to strengthen our capacity to advance scientific discovery, promote innovation, generate jobs, and promote economic growth.
- This bill represents an important stride towards creating conditions that leverage the digital environment, by ensuring that the information contained in articles reporting on taxpayer funded scientific research can be freely accessed and fully reused in the digital environment.
- Access to the information contained in these articles is an essential component of our nation's investment in science, and should be widely shared with the public. Yet most taxpayers – including scientists – cannot readily gain access to all the research paid for with their taxes
- Public access to research is important because it ensures that taxpayers receive the full return on their investment in publicly funded research. By removing barriers in the sharing and use of research, we can speed the pace of scientific discovery, and encourage new, interdisciplinary approaches to research challenges.
- Expanded sharing and reuse of results will lead to increased use and application of research, and accelerate the translation of this knowledge into applications - products and services which will benefit the public, spur innovation, and fuel long-term economic growth.
- Ensuring that these articles are available in formats and under terms so that they can be fully used in the digital environment enables the use of new computational analysis tools that promise to revolutionize the research process.
- This bill provides an important mechanism to ensure that manuscripts of peer-reviewed scientific articles resulting from research funded by the U.S. Government can be accessed and used by American taxpayers via the Internet.
- This bill reflects the growing trend – by funding agencies and higher education institutions worldwide – to maximize access to and expanded sharing of research results, increasing usage by millions of scientists, professionals, and individuals, and delivering an accelerated return on their investment in research.
- The bill balances the needs of all stakeholders in the scientific research community, and helps to create a level playing field where the results of publicly-funded

research can be accessed equally by all interested citizens.

- Recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach is not practical, this bill offers a thoughtful, flexible approach to meeting the crucial policy goal of expanding access to the published results of taxpayer-funded research. Agencies will have flexibility in determining the ultimate location of their online archive, and a sliding scale embargo period provides important protection for journal publishers.
- This legislation advances the progress made by the NIH Public Access Policy, the first U.S. agency to require public access to taxpayer-funded research. Since its implementation, the NIH policy has ensured that hundreds of thousands of new biomedical manuscripts are deposited each year, resulting in millions of Americans having access to vital health care information. Demand for this information is extremely high, with ***more than 1,000,000 unique users accessing material from this repository each weekday.***
- Research results besides those covered by the NIH public access policy on issues of equal importance from areas ranging from renewable energy to sustainable agriculture to education should be made just as readily accessible to the public.
- Opponents say that the public doesn't want or need access to scholarly research. However, as citizens whose tax dollars underwrite this research, we have a right to expect that crucial details of the most recent scientific advancements in all areas are made available to us. As teachers, students, researchers, librarians, entrepreneurs, small business owners, health care workers, and other active public citizens, access to up-to-date information ensures that we can contribute as effectively as possible to our local knowledge economies, and to our national innovation and competitiveness efforts.