

September 18, 2017

Senator Ron Johnson
Chairman
Senate Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs Committee
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Claire McCaskill
Ranking Member
Senate Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs Committee
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member McCaskill,

On behalf of these 14 national and regional library, publishing, funding, research and advocacy organizations, we are writing in support of S. 1701, the Fair Access to Science and Technology Research (FASTR) Act and ask that the Committee act quickly to report out this legislation. This bill provides an important mechanism to ensure that manuscripts of peer-reviewed scientific articles reporting on research funded by the federal government can be freely accessed and fully used by all American taxpayers – including researchers, teachers, students, entrepreneurs, businesses and the public at-large. And, while we fully support the goals and intention of this proposed legislation, we urge the Committee to consider shortening the waiting period for this crucial information to be made available to the public to no longer than six months as the bill moves through the legislative process. As you may be aware, the House bill (HR 3427) includes a six-month embargo period, which we strongly support.

Timely, barrier-free access to the results of taxpayer funded research is an essential component of our collective investment in research, innovation and discovery. The increased sharing and use of this information will help to advance the pace of discovery and to speed the translation of these discoveries into innovative new services and products – fueling economic growth and helping to create jobs.

This bill builds on the progress made by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the first U.S. agency to require public access to articles reporting on taxpayer-funded research. Since its implementation in 2008, the NIH policy has resulted in 4.4 million articles being made publicly available. Demand for this information is extremely high, with more than *one million* unique users accessing material from the NIH repository each day, and using the information to better understand complex diseases, paving the way for new treatments and cures, and building new businesses. Under FASTR, research results related to a broader range of equally important issues will be just as readily accessible to the public.

In your positions as Chairman and Ranking Members on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, which has jurisdiction over this bill, we call on you to hold the necessary hearings and business meetings required for this bill to progress through Congress.

We look forward to working with you on this endeavor, and appreciate your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
American Association of Law Libraries (AALL)
<http://www.aallnet.org>
Contact: Emily Feltren

American Library Association (ALA)

www.ala.org

Contact: Adam Eisgrau

Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL)

www.aahsl.org

Contact: Daniel Burgard

Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)

www.acrl.org

Contact: Kara Malenfant

Association of Research Libraries (ARL)

www.arl.org

Contact: Prudence Adler

Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL)

www.aserl.org

Contact: John Burger

Coalition of Open Access Policy Institutions (COAPI), Steering Committee

www.sparcopen.org/COAPI

Contact: Laura Bowering Mullen, Chair

Creative Commons

<https://creativecommons.org>

Contact: Tim Vollmer

Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF)

<https://eff.org>

Contact: Corynne McSherry

Greater Western Library Alliance (GWLA)

www.gwla.org

Contact: Joni Blake

PeerJ

<https://peerj.com>

Contact: Peter Binfield

Public Library of Science

www.plos.org

Contact: Donna Okubo

Right to Research Coalition (R2RC)

www.righttoresearch.org

Contact: Nick Shockey

Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC)

www.sparcopen.org

Contact: Heather Joseph

cc: Majority and Minority Members of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee via email