



University Libraries

February 22, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Schumer:

I am writing on behalf of University at Buffalo Libraries to urge you to protect the provision ensuring that taxpayers are guaranteed timely, free access to the results of publicly funded research (Section 2527) in the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act (S.1260) during conference negotiations with the House. Section 2527 would codify the current policy established by the 2013 [White House Memorandum on Increasing Public Access to Federally Funded Scientific Research](#) by “directing federal agencies funding more than \$100 million annually in research and development expenditures to provide for free online public access to federally-funded research no later than 12 months after publication in peer-reviewed journals, preferably sooner.” It is imperative that this language is maintained in order to ensure that the public has access to the most timely and cutting-edge information resulting from federally funded research.

The University at Buffalo Libraries is a nexus of information and knowledge, supporting and advocating for equitable, diverse, and inclusive scholarship by advancing and preserving intellectual discovery.

As regional premier academic research libraries, we serve as a conduit of information, prioritizing access and providing expertise, services, and spaces to enrich, elevate and preserve the research, learning, teaching, and creative activities of University at Buffalo faculty, students, and staff as well as the diverse local, national, and global communities we serve.

We equip our users with the resources to fill their information needs through responsive and intuitive practices and tools. We do this by engaging our users to help shape inclusive spaces, collaborative services, and diverse collections while providing equitable access; Partnering with libraries around the world to borrow the material needed to support student success and faculty research conducted here at UB; exploring innovative technologies to better achieve the principles above.

The University at Buffalo Libraries develops sustained and intentional relationships locally, nationally, and globally to foster innovation and creativity by acknowledging collaboration as essential to the instruction, research, and service missions of the university. We also are pursuing and developing collaborative relationships with faculty, staff, students, and community partners within and beyond the university, which are strengthened by mutual trust, respect, and compassion. Lastly, we embrace each relationship as an opportunity to collaborate and create innovative ways to solve our most pressing local, national, and global challenges.

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated just how hard it is for researchers, physicians, and public health experts to use research behind a paywall. At the start of the pandemic, one of the first actions policymakers (including the White House Office of Science & Technology Policy) took was to ask publishers to make all coronavirus-related journal articles openly available in order to accelerate our understanding of the virus. The resulting [database of open access articles](#) has been a tremendous asset to researchers, and has been accessed more than *275 million times* since its launch. The demand - and value - of these articles to the research community and the public is clear. We should ensure that all U.S. taxpayer-funded research on other diseases and pressing societal issues like climate change is readily available.

Despite the success of the open access database for COVID-related research, the majority of taxpayer-funded research outputs are still locked behind publisher paywalls or inaccessible in proprietary databases, stifling the broad dissemination of knowledge and our ability to innovate for the public good. The language on open access in Section 2527 of S. 1260 is a crucial step towards making taxpayer-funded research readily available and fully usable by scientists and the public alike.

We were pleased to see the Senate support the language on open access when it passed S. 1260 and urge you to maintain this language in the final bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Weinraub Lajoie', written in a cursive style.

Evviva Weinraub Lajoie  
Vice Provost for University Libraries