

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

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, the Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 2051

Dear Leader Schumer and Speaker Pelosi:

I am writing on behalf of Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) 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 mission of the Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) is to serve the collective interests of graduate and professional students at UCSF in order to improve student life on a university and system wide level through dialogue, action, and activities between students, faculty, and staff. The GPSA shall serve as an open forum to discuss graduate and professional student concerns and University policy, to inform its constituents, to advocate student interests, to foster relationships between all academic programs, to strengthen connections to better support students, to initiate actions and proposals, and to serve as the voice of students. The GPSA shall also provide services and activities to enhance the quality of student life, educational experiences, and academic benefits for its graduate and professional student members.

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,

Sukhmanpreet Kaur, President  
Woody Faugas, VP of Finance  
Leila Lu, VP of Internal Affairs  
Alexander Merriman, VP of External Affairs, Graduate Division  
Sanjana Mulugund, VP of Diversity Affairs  
Nishat Jahan, School of Pharmacy Representative  
Dyana Kenanova, Graduate Division Representative  
Christine Yoon, School of Dentistry Representative  
Lemuel Vince Rivera, School of Medicine Representative

Graduate & Professional Student Association

University of California, San Francisco