

A clash is underway in Washington, D.C. between two starkly different visions for the U.S. government's role in research and development. The outcome of this debate will shape the nation's economic landscape for years to come.

The first vision is a grim and pessimistic "No, We Can't" view. Its proponents insist that the federal government can play no substantive role in advancing science or technology. The argument is that the only way forward is for the government to lower its sights, stop making new investments, and scale back spending. Considering that, as a share of the US economy, the government's support for research and development (R&D) has fallen by nearly two-thirds since the 1960s, I have little doubt that R&D will bear more than its share of the pain.

Fortunately, there exists another, far more hopeful vision for the federal government. In 2009, I was part of the negotiations that put \$22 billion of new R&D funding into federal science agencies. How many jobs did these funds create, and how many more will they create in the future? It appears that the short-term benefits are similar to shovel-ready construction projects, and for the long term, past experience is very promising. The return on scientific investment over the decades appears to be very large.

Science is usually a smart investment for a nation's future, and it is more important today than ever before. When the private sector is not making enough investments and consumers are not spending, Congress should make the investments that will pay large dividends: public and private scientific research, education in science and engineering, and infrastructure projects to support scientific growth.

Failure to make these investments would be, in effect, an insistence that federally sponsored science has no role to play in advancing the economy, that unemployment is a problem that only time will cure, and that the nation's best days are behind us. How contrary to American tradition that would be! This pessimistic vision must not prevail.

### **PLEASE CONTINUE TO KEEP IN TOUCH**

In the last 12 months, I have responded to more than 44,000 letters, e-mails, and phone calls

on a wide range of subjects from New Jerseyans like you. I hope you will [continue to keep in touch](#) so that I can better represent you in Congress.

## **FREE WORKSHOPS FOR FAMILIES APPLYING FOR STUDENT AID**

Do you have concerns about affording higher education? Next month, I will be holding two Student Aid Workshops for high school students and their parents in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Education, the New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, and Rutgers University.

Experts will be on hand to offer information on financial aid opportunities at the federal, state, and campus levels, including Pell Grants, Perkins Loans, and scholarship and loan programs offered by the State of New Jersey. For more information, please contact Andrew Black of my staff at (609) 750-9365 or [andrew.black@mail.house.gov](mailto:andrew.black@mail.house.gov).

### **Wednesday, October 19, 7:00 p.m.**

Hopewell Township Municipal Complex, Committee Room  
201 Washington Crossing-Pennington Road  
Titusville, New Jersey

### **Thursday, October 20, 7:00 p.m.**

Warner Student Life Center  
Brookdale Community College  
765 Newman Springs Road  
Lincroft, New Jersey  
(Parking is available in Lot 7)

Sincerely,

Rush Holt  
Member of Congress