

On September 19, Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12) joined The Dylan Ratigan Show on MSNBC to discuss his recent op-ed in the journal Science opposing cuts to job-creating investments in science and research. Excerpts from the conversation follow below, and you can [watch the full clip online](#)

Rep. Holt also discussed the op-ed [on NPR's Science Friday last week](#)

"Some [investments in science] will succeed, some of them will succeed big, some of them will change the quality of life for Americans. That has been historically true for decades, even centuries."

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Take energy, for example. We cannot sustain what we've been doing.

The way we produce and use energy is unsustainable for 10 different reasons: who supplies us the oil, how much it costs us, what it does to our environment. We have to find new ways."

"The same applies in health care. **The pharmaceutical companies do wonderful research... but even they are not investing in the basic science: the kinds of things that gave us the human genome, the kinds of things that gave us an understanding of recombinant DNA, and so forth.**

They weren't doing that; that was National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, even Department of Energy did some important work in human genome sequencing."

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What worries me right now is, in this cutting frenzy in Washington, science is... going to take a heavy hit, and our future economy will have nothing to grow on.

Because our productivity growth has come from past innovation, from past investments in research."

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Not everybody in America has to be a mathematician. Not everybody has to wear a lab coat. But everybody in America should understand what [science] gets them.

They should understand what it does for their quality of life and the quality of life of the next generation. Not just our economic wellbeing... but also their ability to live longer, more fulfilling lives, the quality of life, the cleanliness of our water and air. All of these things have come from work that -- you didn't know quite where it was leading at the moment, and it would have been easy to do away with any one of these pieces of the research projects because, you know, it looks like this might be a blind alley. But put all together, that is what has made America."