Chairman Mike Simpson  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water  
Development  
Committee on Appropriations  
2362-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Ranking Member Marcy Kaptur  
Subcommittee on Energy and Water  
Development  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office  
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 12, 2018

Dear Chairman Simpson and Ranking Member Kaptur:

As you finalize a Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 omnibus appropriations bill, I respectfully urge you to provide $75,000,000 for the OMEGA Laser Facility at the University of Rochester’s Laboratory for Laser Energetics (LLE) and $544,934,000 for the National Nuclear Security Administration’s (NNSA) Inertial Confinement Fusion (ICF) program. This is necessary to preserve high-tech research and continue operation of state-of-the-art facilities in support of the stockpile stewardship program. This funding further supports critical maintenance and modernization of weapons systems and achieving scientific milestones set in NNSA’s ten-year strategic plan for ICF.

The LLE’s OMEGA laser facility is a vital contributor to national security and an invaluable source of scientific education and leadership. LLE also has an important role to play in helping the U.S. be the first country to achieve ignition to avoid technological surprise as other countries invest in similar capabilities, especially Russia and China. The OMEGA lasers (Omega and Omega EP) are the largest and most capable found at any academic institution in both the United States and worldwide. The LLE is recognized nationally and internationally for its critical contributions to the DOE’s science-based stewardship programs.

Lisa Gordon-Hagerty, the Administrator for NNSA, recently testified that recruiting and maintaining the “brightest and the best” for NNSA is a priority and the ICF program is a magnet for such talent. Strong support of LLE’s research and academic programs help maintain the nation’s stockpile and train the future workforce. This includes the needed scientific and technical support for the 400 users from the 55 universities and over 35 centers and national laboratories that use OMEGA annually. The LLE serves as a pipeline to educate and train future talent that is critically important to our national and economic security.

For these reasons, I urge you to provide $75,000,000 for the OMEGA Laser Facility at the University of Rochester’s Laboratory for Laser Energetics and $544,934,000 for the Inertial Confinement Fusion (ICF) program in the final FY 2018 omnibus appropriation bill to advance the ICF program. Please reach out to Andy Bicos (Andy.Bicos@mail.house.gov) or Logan Hoover (Logan.Hoover@mail.house.gov) on my staff if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Tom Reed  
Member of Congress