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The Honorable Richard Burr
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Burr:

I write to express my deep concern with the proposed Continuing Resolution that seeks to fund the federal government for the remainder of the FY 11 budget cycle. The funding proposal released by the House Appropriations Committee, H.R. 1, seeks to reduce the deficit through counterintuitive cuts to many of the research and education programs that help drive our economy.

Innovation and the American entrepreneurial spirit have been lauded by policymakers across the political spectrum as key to driving the nation's economic growth. I, too, am a great believer in this assertion. I am also aware of the federal budget situation and the need to bring the deficit under control. We're still trying to discern what a return to the FY 08 funding level will mean for Duke, but one of the most troubling aspects of this proposal is the degree of uncertainty it will inject into our research laboratories. Wild fluctuations in research budgets can lead to a more conservative approach to science – stifling the innovative spirit needed to move the nation past recovery mode and into a period of robust economic growth.

Technology has played a transformative role in revitalizing North Carolina's economy. Our state, once ranked one of the last in the nation for per-capita income due to the downturn of the tobacco and furniture industries, is now consistently ranked as one of the top states in which to live and do business. This remarkable turnaround can be traced to the once-novel idea that scientific innovation can drive economic growth, which resulted in the birth of the Research Triangle Park.

I agree that some restraint is needed in the federal budget. However, that restraint needs to be coupled with a vision for strategic and sustainable growth. As you work to finalize the FY 11 budget, I urge you to look to North Carolina as a model of how the nation can regain its economic solvency and support the key research and education programs at their current FY 10 level.

With all best wishes,



Richard H. Brodhead

cc: Michael Schoenfeld
Chris Simmons