

Dear Mr. McGuinty:

I am writing to call your attention to the recently released Fundamental Science Review (a.k.a. the Naylor Report), and to urge you and your colleagues in Parliament to fully support the implementation of all recommendations in this Report.

I am a new Assistant Professor at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine. My nascent research group will consist of two master's students and at least two undergraduates in the upcoming school year. We conduct research on DNA damage, including that caused by exposure to agents that are known or suspected of causing cancers. Our work is funded in part by a grant from NSERC, for which we are very grateful.

Over the course of daily life, I have talked about our research with many non-scientists. This happens all the time, at the grocery store, bus stops, restaurants, barber shops, airports, building lobbies, elevators, etc. etc. Folks are very interested in the work of scientists, because they understand that discoveries we make can lead to benefits for everyone. Perhaps one of the best examples of an interested non-scientist is a colleague at uOttawa who is keenly concerned about how and why cancers originate. She is a cancer survivor herself, with other family members who have battled cancer. We have had many lengthy conversations about cancers, how they start, and what can be done to prevent and treat them. I have conversations like this all the time with people I meet, because as soon as I tell them about my research, these questions start coming.

In the bigger picture, let me point out that discoveries from fundamental science are the basis for innovative technologies, which in turn empower economic growth, better health, and better quality of life. Although we easily take modern technology for granted, all of it is based in countless ways on discoveries made by scientists. Over the decades, fundamental science research in Canada itself has driven the development of: treatments for life-threatening diseases; strategies to combat climate change; important food crops; broadband internet and telecommunications; improved automobile safety; digital photography and imaging; the list goes on and on.

Investing in fundamental science discovery is one of the very best investments that any Government can make. We know from previous history that every public dollar invested in research will yield returns that are many times greater. But Canada has been backsliding and lagging behind other industrialized nations in research and development over the past decade because of scarce funding. Now is the time to turn the situation around.

The Trudeau Government promises to "strengthen the recognition of, and support for, fundamental research to support new discoveries." Fully implementing the Naylor Report will go a long way toward fulfilling this pledge. Right now, this Parliament has an historic opportunity to make its mark and restore Canada to its rightful place among

the global leaders in research and development. The question that Parliament must decide is, "Do we want Canada to be a leader nation in R&D?" If the answer is yes, then the way forward is clear: fully implement the Naylor Report, support fundamental discovery research at levels commensurate with Canada's standing as a great nation on the world stage.

In closing, let me extend an invitation for you and your staff to visit the Faculty of Medicine. My colleagues and I would be delighted to show you our labs, introduce you to our dedicated staff and students, and show you how government funding support leads to discoveries that can benefit all Canadians.

Thank you for your consideration.