



January 17, 2020

Kelvin Droegemeier, Ph.D.
 Director
 Office of Science and Technology Policy
 Executive Office of the President
 Eisenhower Executive Office Building
 1650 Pennsylvania Avenue
 Washington, DC 20504

Dear Dr. Droegemeier:

The undersigned organizations representing the cardiovascular research and care community write to express concerns regarding a pending Executive Order, originated within the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), which would mandate that federally funded research be made publicly available immediately. This would include all manuscripts related to that research that were submitted, peer reviewed, and accepted in our respective journals. We believe such a change would disrupt the publishing ecosystem in a manner that would create entry burdens to researchers and their publication of scientific articles, delaying or diminishing improvements in the care of cardiovascular patients.

In 2013, the Holdren memorandum directed federal agencies that spend more than \$100 million a year to fund research and development to establish "clear and coordinated policies" to make the results of research they support publicly available within a year of publication. This 1-year mandate is the industry standard within science, technology, and medical publishing. The standard allows professional societies and publishers to recoup the expenses involved with supporting a rigorous peer review system with editorial boards of the highest academic excellence, ensuring the highest quality research is disseminated to the cardiovascular clinician and researcher, and protects the public health.

The Holdren memorandum allows medical societies and publishers to offer exclusive content to their physician members and institutional subscribers for 1 year, after which all content becomes

freely available to all online readers. The leading general medical and cardiovascular peer-reviewed journals, including *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, *Circulation*, and *European Heart Journal*, among many others, adhere to this model. Within this construct, these entities advance research that improves care and eases the tremendous burden of cardiovascular disease in the United States and around the world.

While the pending Executive Order could have a negative impact on publishers, it also has the potential to create significant downstream effects on cardiovascular patients, clinicians, and researchers. For example, an Executive Order requiring immediate availability will impact 20-40% of the research published in cardiovascular journals, forcing major clinically focused peer-reviewed journals to orient toward an Open Access model. Moving to an Open Access model shifts fixed publishing costs associated with rigorous peer review to the researchers and authors through article publishing charges (APCs), imposing significant financial burden to researchers and authors publishing manuscripts of clinical relevance. It could also be another factor that negatively influences the number of researchers who pursue an academic career, consequently impacting the viability of the research enterprise and discoveries that improve population health. Another anticipated effect is an increase in the amount of grant monies requested of public funders, such as the National Institutes of Health, in order to cover the cost of publishing in an Open Access environment. Such a shift would effectively diminish the amount of funding available to the research and scientific community in the United States.

Our organizations are deeply concerned by the potential negative ramifications to scientific research, clinical practice, population health, and the publishing ecosystem that would result from the potential Executive Order. We encourage the Administration to engage with stakeholders to collaboratively ensure openness and reliability in research development.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue. We stand ready to participate in ongoing discussions to ensure our scientific community and our nation continue to lead the world in the development and delivery of cutting-edge research. Please contact James Vavricek at jvavricek@acc.org for any additional information.

Sincerely,

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President, American Association for Thoracic Surgery

Richard J. Kovacs, MD
President, American College of Cardiology

Valentin Fuster, MD, PhD
Editor-in-Chief, *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*

Robert A. Harrington, MD
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Joseph Hill, MD, PhD
Editor-in-Chief, *Circulation*

Madhav Swaminathan, MD
President, American Society of Echocardiography

Sharmila Dorbala, MD
President, American Society of Nuclear Cardiology

James Beck, MD
President, American Thoracic Society

Biykem Bozkurt, MD
President, Heart Failure Society of America

Andrea M. Russo, MD
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