

Statement from the National Task Force on Rule of Law & Democracy in support of the Scientific Integrity Act

The [National Task Force on Rule of Law & Democracy](#) commends the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology for its bipartisan support of [H.R. 1709/S. 775](#), the Scientific Integrity Act of 2019. We strongly urge the House of Representatives and the Senate to take up this important legislation and pass it into law.

In October 2019, our Task Force — a group of former government officials, which includes both Republicans and Democrats — published a [report](#) highlighting how objective government research and data are essential to effective governance and democratic oversight. The report documents the ways the guardrails historically protecting government research from politicization, manipulation, and suppression are deteriorating. From [altering](#) a weather map to [burying](#) reports about climate change, we are at a crisis point, with regularly recurring violations of previously respected norms protecting the role of government research in policymaking.

The Scientific Integrity Act contains many provisions in line with the legislative proposals in our report and is a bipartisan defense of previously respected safeguards. It would require agencies to have scientific integrity policies and mandate across-the-board scientific integrity standards. It would also require agencies to have appropriate rules, procedures, and safeguards in place to ensure the integrity of the scientific process.

Further, the Scientific Integrity Act would prohibit the alteration and suppression of scientific findings, as well as retaliation against scientists. And it would bar efforts to impede the timely release and communication of scientific findings.

These reforms are sorely needed. Scientific integrity is a pillar of ethical and trustworthy government. It should not be a partisan issue. We are pleased that the Scientific Integrity Act has both Republican and Democratic [co-sponsors](#). We call on members in both houses of Congress to support this critical legislation.