Mr. BINGAMAN. Regardless of the final outcome of the Presidential election, it is my hope that both sides of the aisle will be able to come together next year on a strategy for the continued technological and economic competitiveness of the United States. I hope that support for the work funded by the Office of Science will be the cornerstone of that strategy.

EXHIBIT 1

UNITED STATES SENATE,
Washington, DC.

The PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for joining us in providing strong support for the Department of Energy's Office of Science in this year's appropriation process. Together we have made great progress in advancing recognition of these critical scientific programs. Yet there remains much more that can be accomplished. Continued growth for these programs on par with that proposed for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Science Foundation (NSF) is vital to continued advances in the fields DOE supports and to the training of future scientists and engineers to continue the tremendous advances that America brings to basic science and to the marketplace.

You are aware that the Department of Energy (DOE) is the leading source of federal support for the physical sciences in the nation. In the life sciences, the DOE initiated the Human Genome Program and co-manages this enormously important and promising effort with the National Institutes of Health. It also plays a leading role in supporting other biological sciences, environmental sciences, physics, chemistry, materials science, computer science, mathematics, and engineering. As a consequence, the DOE is responsible for a significant portion of federal R&D funding for scientists and students at our colleges and universities.

One of the primary responsibilities of DOE's Office of Science is to support large-scale specialized user facilities and large teams of scientists focused on national scientific priorities. This makes the Office of Science unique among, and complementary to, the scientific programs of other federal science agencies, including NIH and NSF. Each year over 15,000 sponsored scientists and students from academe, industry, and government—many funded by agencies other than the DOE—conduct cutting edge experiments at the Department's research facilities. DOE's investments in major facilities, smaller-scale user facilities, and in university-based laboratories not only sets it apart from other federal science agencies, but helps ensure that the nation maintains its world leadership across a broad range of scientific disciplines.

Economic experts maintain that today's unprecedented economic growth would not have been realized but for the substantial research investments by the public and private sectors over the past several decades. To maintain the tremendous advances that America brings to basic scientific research and into the marketplace, we need to continue to provide strong support for basic research across the scientific disciplines. Sound science policy also demands a balance between support of individual investigator driven science—such as that conducted by the NIH and NSF—and the maintenance and operation of major facilities, smaller specialized facilities, university based research facilities, and scientific teams such as those supported by DOE's Office of Science.

The appropriation of $3.19 billion for FY 2001 is only a start at addressing these challenges. Annual increases similar to NIH and NSF are needed and merited by the important and unique work being conducted by the DOE Office of Science. They would also build on the spirit of the Senate's passage of the Federal Research Investment Act (S. 296) which calls for doubling investment in civilian research and development efforts.

Support for increases in funding for the DOE Office of Science is critical if we are to attract and retain the best minds, support the construction and operation of modern scientific facilities, and continue to capitalize on the scientific vision that has been the trademark of the Office of Science for so many years. The budget request for FY 2002 is the logical place to continue this effort. We trust you agree and look forward to strengthening our scientific and technological capabilities in FY 2002 and beyond.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bingaman, Blanche L. Lincoln, Ron Wyden, Carl Levin, John F. Kerry, Frank H. Murkowski, Mike DeWine, Patrick Leahy, Ted Kennedy, Slade Gorton, Evan Bayh, Daniel K. Akaka, Paul Sarbanes, Herb Kohl, Patty Murray, John Edwards, Frank R. Lautenberg, John Breaux, Diane Feinstein, Barbara Boxer, Bill Frist, Fred Thompson.

INDIVIDUAL FISHING QUOTAS

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, one of the most important issues we consider here in the U.S. Senate is how to balance our economic needs with our responsibility to conserve our natural resources.

I believe we can strike the right balance. With that hope, I'd like to talk about America's fisheries. In the Pacific Northwest, fishing is more than just a way of life. It is an important part of our economy and contributes to our region's culture.

Unfortunately, that way of life is becoming more difficult. Many fishing families are struggling because some fish stocks are at very low levels. For example, the West Coast salmon and groundfish and the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands crab fisheries have declined dramatically in recent years. Washington's fishing families contribute to our economy and feed consumers both here and abroad, but too often they work within a system that threatens their safety and their livelihood. I've met with harvesters and processors from my region, and I've visited small towns in Washington state that depend on fisheries. The problems they face aren't limited to Washington state. They can also be seen in Alaska and other states.

In an effort to recover decreasing numbers of fish in our waters, fisheries managers have developed complex management systems to limit fishing. In some cases, our current policies encourage fishers to catch as many fish as possible over a limited period of time. This creates a dangerous and inefficient ''race for fish'', which requires fishermen to venture out in bad weather. In fact, one of the most dangerous occupations for young people today is to work in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Island crab fishery. The ''race for fish'' is one way to manage fisheries in which too many fishermen are competing for too few fish. However, there are alternatives to this management approach.

I'm proud that there is a growing interest in an innovative management tool called individual fishing quotas. This creative approach uses the marketplace to encourage a safer, more productive, and more sustainable fishing industry. In some cases, it would be a significant improvement over the status quo.

Individual fishing quotas or IFQs would bring some regularity to what are currently short-lived, intense fishing seasons. Under this system, each participant in a fishery would be allocated a percentage of that season's total fish catch. Because they are guaranteed a certain amount of fish, fishermen wouldn't have to ''race for fish.'' They could stretch their fishing out over longer, more balanced fishing seasons.

I believe that individual fishing quotas can help fisherman, fisheries, conservation, and consumers. IFQs can help fishing families because boats won't need to go out in dangerous weather. In addition, because of the slower pace, fishermen would be less likely to lose fishing gear, a common problem in some fisheries. This new system can help fisheries because fishermen will be able to sell or lease quota. That means there will be fewer boats, which can mean cleaner, more efficient fisheries.

In addition, IFQs can improve conservation. In some cases when the fishery slows down, fishermen take better care of their catch and are more careful with bycatch. Let's look at just one example of how the speed of the current system hurts conservation. Currently, some North Pacific crabs that are too small to be caught legally end up trapped in crab pots. Under the race for fish, these pots are harvested so quickly that undersized crabs don't have time to escape. Under a slower fishery, those small crabs would have time to crawl out of the crab pots and grow to maturity, thereby helping to sustain the fishery into the future.

For consumers, IFQs mean they can enjoy fresh fish later in the seasons. For example, fresh halibut is now available more often as a result of a fish quota program put in place to manage halibut harvesting. Clearly, individual fishing quotas can be an effective management tool and can solve a lot of the problems facing fisheries today.

I'm pleased that many of my colleagues have expressed interest in IFQs. In fact, a number of members would like to see a national policy on IFQs developed. Since 1996, I've supported fish quotas and a national policy, and I reiterate my support again today.

But in the meantime, there are important steps we can take. When Congress reauthorized the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act in 1996, Congress placed a

four-year moratorium on new individual fishing quota programs. The moratorium on new quota programs expired on September 30, 2000. Now that this ban has expired, we should allow fishery management councils to develop additional fish quota programs. Councils should have the freedom to develop and implement these programs. I am not advocating that Councils be required to implement them, because individual fishing quota programs must be developed on a fishery-by-fishery basis. I do think, however, that individual quota programs should be available as one of the many management tools Councils may draw upon. I must add that all eight Councils have asked for this freedom and have asked for Congress to lift the moratorium.

However, I know that some members want to extend the moratorium. They don't want to allow some fisheries to go ahead with IFQs until there is a national policy in place. I understand and appreciate this perspective. I also recognize members of the environmental community would be more comfortable with such programs if a national policy were already in place. As I said, I support a national policy on these programs, and I look forward to working with my colleagues next year to develop one.

However, I would like to point out that all fishery management plans, including those that rely on quota programs, are required to meet the national standards already in the Act. Let me offer a few examples of these standards. Any fish quota program would have to meet National Standard 4, which prohibits conservation and management measures from discriminating between residents of different states. This standard also mandates that fishing privileges be allocated fairly and equitably, that they are calculated to promote conservation, and that they are carried out so that no entity shall have an excessive share. Any fish quota program would also have to meet National Standard 8, which requires such measures to take into account the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities. They would also have to meet National Standard 9, which requires measures to minimize bycatch, and National Standard 10, which addresses safety.

In addition, the Act requires all individual fishing quota programs approved on or after October 1, 2000, to meet several additional criteria. For example, these programs must be subject to review based on any future national policy and such revision may require reallocation of quota. These programs must also be effectively managed and enforced, which may require reliance on observers and/or cost-recovery fees. In addition, these criteria address the most contentious aspect of individual quota programs: the initial allocation of quota. The Act requires programs to ensure a fair initial allocation of quota, to prevent excessive control over quota, and to include a mechanism for entry-level fishermen, small vessel owners and crew members to access quota. I think all of these examples illustrate that some elements integral to a national policy on individual fishing quota programs are already included in the Act. I believe we are much closer to having a national policy in place than some people may believe.

Unfortunately, it appears likely that the moratorium will be extended. Therefore, I ask my colleagues to consider several caveats to this extension. First, I ask that the moratorium be extended for only 8 months. This will take the moratorium off the appropriations cycle. Placing the moratorium on the yearly appropriations cycle creates a precedent that is easy to repeat every year. Taking the moratorium off the appropriations cycle will increase the urgency for Congress to develop a national policy within the months ahead.

Second, I ask for an exception to the moratorium for fixed-gear sablefish along the West Coast. This fishery is ready for fishermen to be allowed to consolidate permits, which is technically considered an IFQ. In fact, the fishery has been ready to do so since 1994. We should not make these fishermen wait any longer. They deserve to be freed from a 9-day race for fish, and fishermen who want to get out of the fishery should be compensated for their investments. I ask for your support for this exception.

Third, I support asking NMFS to gather input from the eight regional Councils on a national policy for individual fishing quotas. It is appropriate and important for Congress to have this input before we finalize a national policy on quota programs.

Most important, however, I ask for the commitment of my colleagues to deal with this issue next year, during the first session of the 107th Congress. It is not fair to punish those few fisheries that are ready to move forward with quota programs just because other fisheries are not. We have already had four years to resolve these issues, to no avail. If my colleagues believe this issue must be addressed within the broader context of Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act reauthorization, I understand and I hope they will consider this Senator ready and willing to move forward with that challenge. I support Senator SNOWE's and Senator KERRY's efforts to hold more hearings on reauthorization, and I offer to help them in any way I can to ensure it happens.

Let's commit ourselves to have a productive, comprehensive dialogue on a national policy. Let's commit to reaching a consensus that will allow our Councils and fisheries to pursue this innovative, effective solution that can work for fishing families, fisheries, conservation and consumers.

RELIEF NEEDED FROM RISING PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today to review where we stand, near the conclusion of the 106th Congress, on the subject of prescription drugs. Few issues have caught the public's attention more than this one, and few are more deserving of our attention.

We live at a time when we can clearly discern remarkable benefits from all manner of drugs. It is nothing short of miraculous when we consider the relative ease and success of today's treatment of common disorders, as compared with that of only two or three generations ago.

When World War II began, for example, penicillin and other similar antibiotics were known only to a small number of scientists. At the conclusion of the War in 1945, penicillin was widely available, used not only for battle wounds but for infectious diseases in the general public as well. Patients with high blood pressure or high cholesterol levels were, at best, only partially and inadequately treated in the 1940's and 1950's. Now success is the rule, rather than the exception. Calvin Coolidge's son died in 1924 as a result of a blister and a skin infection after playing tennis at the White House. An infection like that today would be treated as simple, outpatient therapy.

While these examples are noteworthy and provide us with a valuable perspective of times gone by, the hard, cold fact is that many of these modern miracles are still out of the reach of too many American citizens. They simply cannot afford the drugs that might so often prove lifesaving, because of either no insurance or lack of drug coverage within their insurance.

Why is this? Because, astronomical prices have come hand-in-hand with the great improvements in drug therapy. Spending for prescription drugs in the United States doubled between 1990 and 1998. In each of the five years between 1993 and 1998, prescription drug spending increased by an average of 12.4 percent. In 1999, the increase was 19 percent. We could go into all the reasons, but the fact remains that prescription drug prices are high and getting higher.

Many millions of Americans, both Medicare age and younger have either inadequate or no prescription drug insurance at all. A by-product of no coverage is that these patients wind up paying the highest rates of anyone—an average of 15 percent more than those with insurance. Many of these uninsureds, including the seniors often called The Greatest Generation'' are not filling prescriptions because of their cost—choosing between food and medicine. Or they split pills in half to make them go farther. This is shameful. These are very real every day problems that beg for help.

So, given the fact of these well documented problems, what is the track record of this Congress in helping the citizens in my home state of South Dakota and the citizens of the United