H. R. 1891

To establish a position of Science Laureate of the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 8, 2013

Ms. LOFGREN (for herself, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. ESTY, Mr. KILMER, Mr. KENNEDY, Ms. BROWNLEY of California, Mr. HULTGREN, Mr. BERNA of California, and Ms. WILSON of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

A BILL

To establish a position of Science Laureate of the United States.

1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4 This Act may be cited as the “Science Laureates of
5 the United States Act of 2013”.

6 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

7 Congress finds the following:
1 (1) Scientific research and advancement has driven success in the United States and global success for centuries.

2 (2) Scientific research has saved, improved, and extended lives, increased the standard of living, expanded economic opportunity, and advanced human understanding.

3 (3) Such research holds the promise of continuing this progress, protecting the environment, creating jobs, growing the economy through innovative ideas and discoveries, and generally advancing all mankind.

4 (4) People in the United States can benefit when scientific research is conducted and communicated in a transparent manner to better inform citizens about the nature and status of such research.

5 (5) Scientific education is a critical element of preparing our Nation and our citizens for a technology-intensive future and ensuring that the United States remains the world leader in innovation and high-tech success.

6 (6) A spokesperson who can embody, demonstrate, and articulate the importance and excitement of scientific research and education will help
improve the current and future state of science to
the benefit of all people in the United States.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF SCIENCE LAUREATES OF THE
UNITED STATES.

(a) Position Established.—Congress recognizes
that science contributes to the economic prosperity and
general welfare of the United States, and that increasing
the public’s awareness about the sciences will increase
such benefits. Congress also recognizes that scientists who
are both accomplished in their fields and who foster the
public’s interest in science do a special service to the
United States. To honor their service and to further in-
crease the public’s awareness about the sciences, there is
established the position of Science Laureate of the United
States.

(b) Appointment.—

(1) In general.—The President shall appoint
a Science Laureate on the basis of—

(A) merit, particularly the ability of an in-
dividual to—

(i) foster and enhance public aware-
ness and interest in science; and

(ii) provide ongoing significant sci-
entific contributions; and
(B) recommendations received from the National Academy of Sciences, based on the factors described in subparagraph (A).

(2) VARIETY OF SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES.—The President shall strive to choose for the position of Science Laureate of the United States individuals, in different years, from different scientific disciplines, including biology, physics, geosciences, astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, and other science disciplines.

(3) NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS.—The President may, in exceptional circumstances, appoint more than 1, but not more than 3 Science Laureates to serve simultaneously in the position of Science Laureate of the United States.

(e) DUTIES.—Each Science Laureate shall engage the public, from time to time, to increase the public’s awareness about science. A Science Laureate is encouraged to continue the Science Laureate’s scientific work. The National Academy of Sciences shall facilitate the duties of a Science Laureate.

(d) LIMITATION.—The Science Laureate position shall not have the effect of duplicating or superseding the role of the President’s Science Advisor.
(e) Term.—Each Science Laureate shall serve a 1-year or 2-year term, as determined by the President. A Science Laureate may be reappointed for additional terms.

(f) Compensation; Reimbursement.—

(1) Compensation.—A Science Laureate shall serve without pay and shall not be considered to be a Federal employee based on such individual’s appointment as a Science Laureate.

(2) Reimbursement for Travel.—The National Academy of Sciences may in its discretion provide a Science Laureate with reimbursement for travel expenses incurred while performing duties as a Science Laureate, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with applicable provisions in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in the Government service are allowed expenses under section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.