

Vladimir Putin
President,
Russian Federation

Dear President Putin,

Since 1960 I have had the good fortune to interact with your physicists, many of whom are members of the Russian Academy of Sciences. In 2003 I had the great honor to be elected a foreign member of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

I understand that proposed legislation will make major changes in the Academy itself and also on how science is to be funded in Russia. I also understand that there has been no consultation with the Russian scientific community concerning the proposed legislation. From the past to the present the scientific accomplishments of my Russian colleagues have been enormous, in part because the best science has been funded through the Academy. It is important that a developed country like Russia maintain a high level of scientific activity both in applied research and in fundamental research. Over the years it has been many of the same scientists who have made significant contributions to the security of Russia and have also made crucial advances in fundamental science that are recognized by the world at large.

The Russian scientific community feels that the legislation must be returned to the Duma for further consideration and that they be represented a revived discussion of the Academy reform. Reforms in venerable institutions are often necessary and sometimes unpopular. But reforms should never be made without consulting those who will be most affected.

James W. Cronin
University Professor of Physics, Emeritus
University of Chicago

Recipient, Nobel Prize in Physics, 1980
Recipient, United States National Medal of Science, 1999
Member, National Academy of Sciences, United States of America
Foreign Member, Royal Society, United Kingdom
Foreign Member, Russian Academy of Sciences

e-mail jwc@hep.uchicago.edu
Telephone 773 702 7102
Fax 773 702 6645