February 14, 2018

The Honorable Patty Murray
Unites States Senator
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Murray:

Thank you for reaching out to us with your February 7, 2018 letter on the importance of creating workplaces that are free from harassment. It is a topic of great importance to our members.

As the leading organization for Chief Human Resources Officers at large companies (i.e., firms ranging from 5,000 employees to those in the six figures, with revenue of $3 billion and above), our members have long recognized the fundamental role that an inclusive culture plays in enabling their respective organizations to attract, motivate, and develop the caliber of talent needed. As such, they take this issue very seriously, and their efforts go well beyond robust policies and mechanisms to ensure legal compliance. From setting clear expectations throughout their organizations by the “tone at the top” established by their leaders, to targeted training, as well as a range of employee feedback and listening initiatives, our members take proactive steps to ensure that their companies are fostering positive and respectful cultures, free from any forms of discrimination.

Having zero tolerance for any form of harassment is not only the right thing to do, it is also critical to enabling a company to achieve its objectives. In the highly competitive talent marketplace, as was emphasized in our recent Workplace 2020 report “Making the Workplace Work,” our research underscored how important diversity is to fostering an engaging workplace that talented people of all types and backgrounds are expecting of the companies for which they choose to work. Our members know that one way this has been driven is through the expansion of not only the overall number of women in their companies, but also in the roles they assume, and their presence at all levels of the organization.

While our Association has a public policy focus, we also provide a forum for our members to regularly share best practices and discuss topical issues. In that regard, your letter is very timely as we will be holding our Annual Chief Human Resource Officer Summit on March 9-10, preceded by our Board of Directors meeting. The importance of fostering diversity and inclusion and ensuring a safe and respectful workplace is already slated to be a featured topic of discussion at both sessions. In addition, we have just sent out our annual member survey, which includes a number of questions regarding this issue. Following our Summit, I would be happy to meet with you and your staff to share our survey results and learnings from the Summit.

We share your commitment to addressing this serious problem, and look forward to meeting and continuing the dialogue.

Sincerely,

Daniel V. Yager
President and Chief Executive Officer
cc: The Honorable Lamar Alexander, United States Senator
Chairman, Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Mirian Graddick-Weir, Chair, HR Policy Association
Executive Vice President, Human Resources, Merck & Co., Inc.