

April 25, 1967

Dr. Robert M. Bock
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Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Dear Bob:

For some time I have been watching with even some little envy the very ambitious program that you have been developing at Wisconsin. At one time I had urged the Comp Center here to try to jump to something of the level of the B8500, and we just found that we could not afford it. But it would be quite wonderful if U.W. could lead the way in showing what a system of this scope would be able to do.

We have been facing essentially the same problems here, and I am afraid we have no better answers than you know how to offer yourself with regard to obtaining support. There was a recent report from the Office of the Science Advisor that gave some moral encouragement to federal underwriting of these kinds of programs, but I just have no idea where one can obtain large sums of money for such purposes. In fact, we are skimping along with a rather miniscule budget to develop and maintain the 360-50 system for the medical school. This is regarded as a special purpose satellite (data acquisition), the campus 360-67 being the main bulwark of the computational utility.

It seems to me that your main point of impact might be Congressman Reuss. I have been quite perturbed at the direction his committee has been taking in the last year or two with its severe criticism of extensive research support. He might be sold on this kind of program because of its obvious educational aims. I suppose Senator Proxmire would be rather hopeless, but Gaylord Nelson might be a very useful person to talk to as well. If you haven't already done it, I would strongly urge you to get in close communication with these congressmen. You probably can get a certain amount of mileage from the geographic distribution argument, something that we in California have to be fighting all the time now.

I am a little surprised that you don't mention ARPA in your list of sponsors.

I wish I could be of more help, and in any case let me say how exciting it has been to learn of the initiative that U.W. has taken in this area since I myself left the institution.

Perhaps I will see you again on Commencement Day.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

Bock