INNOVATION TASK FORCE PRAISES HOUSE SCIENCE COMMITTEE INTRODUCTION OF COMPETITIVENESS LEGISLATION

Following is a statement by the Task Force on the Future of American Innovation (www.futureofinnovation.org) in support of members of the House Science Committee for their introduction of competitiveness legislation today.

The Task Force on the Future of American Innovation, on behalf of the nation’s business, research university, and scientific communities, commends Representatives Joe Schwarz (R-MI), Michael T. McCaul (R-TX), and other members of the House Science Committee, including Chairman Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY), for introducing legislation today that would strengthen the nation’s competitiveness by improving science and math education and encouraging careers in science-related fields.

We are pleased that there is bipartisan support in the committee for competitiveness legislation, and it is our hope that the committee and the full House will now act quickly to adopt measures aimed at strengthening the nation’s competitiveness through enhanced research and education.

The measures introduced today complement the President’s American Competitiveness Initiative, which would bolster the nation’s investment in research in the physical sciences and engineering. The investments proposed by the President would provide real, immediate resources for university-based research, and they are under consideration in the FY2007 appropriations process right now. It is our hope that Congress will provide the President the full amount that he has requested for the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy Office of Science, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

Our nation’s unquestioned leadership in science and technology since the end of World War II has paid enormous benefits for our economy, our national security, and our quality of life. Other nations and regions of the world are pouring their resources into research and education in an effort to compete with us. If Congress does not act to strengthen our nation’s research and education capabilities, we will be increasingly vulnerable to that competition. We cannot allow that to happen. Today’s action is a sign that Congress recognizes the urgency with which this situation must be addressed.

The Task Force on the Future of American Innovation (www.futureofinnovation.org), a coalition of businesses and business organizations, scientific societies, and higher education associations, was founded in 2004 to advocate greater federal investments for basic research in the physical sciences and engineering. The group focuses on the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy Office of Science, the Department of Defense research budget, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology labs at the Department of Commerce.

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