ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

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AAU PRAISES BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS FOR URGING
A NEW NATIONAL EDUCATION AND RESEARCH INITIATIVE

A group of 15 leading business organizations today released an action plan urging approval of a new national innovation agenda and calling for doubling the number of science and engineering graduates by the year 2015. Entitled “Tapping America’s Potential: The Education for Innovation Initiative,” the plan recommends a comprehensive, long-term, national initiative focused on: 1) attracting and retaining students in critical fields of science and engineering; 2) improving K-12 math and science education; 3) investing in basic research, especially in the physical sciences; 4) reforming immigration and visa policies; and 5) building public support to improve U.S. scientific, technological, and engineering performance.

Following is a statement by Nils Hasselmo, president of the Association of American Universities (AAU), concerning the plan.

AAU and its research university members commend these business organizations, which represent businesses of all sizes and from all sectors of our economy, for urging a national initiative of public awareness and investment aimed at restoring U.S. scientific and technological capacity. No group is more important than the business community in making the case to the American public and its leaders that the United States must do far more to attract U.S. students to careers in science, mathematics, and engineering and to reinvest in the basic research that underlies the nation’s innovation system.

The action plan these groups have put forward recognizes that there is no higher priority for strengthening our economy and sustaining our living standards than to maintain our nation’s leadership in research and innovation. And, to maintain our global leadership in innovation we must invest in our future scientists, engineers, and mathematicians and those who teach them. Moreover, we must also have a national immigration policy that is aimed at attracting and encouraging the best and brightest in the world to come to the United States to study and work.

We greatly appreciate the leadership of the Business Roundtable, which played a major role in spearheading this effort. We look forward to working with the business community to see that the recommendations outlined in the plan are acted upon and to working to achieve its stated goals.

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The Association of American Universities is an association of 60 U.S. and two Canadian research universities organized to develop and implement effective national and institutional policies supporting research and scholarship, graduate and professional education, undergraduate education, and public service in research universities.