Statement of AAU and NASULGC Presidents on Passage of The American COMPETES Act

Following is a statement by the President of the Association of American Universities, Robert M. Berdahl, and the President of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC), Peter McPherson, regarding the passage of H.R. 2272, The American COMPETES Act. The bill passed the House last night by a vote of 367-57 and the Senate by a unanimous vote. AAU and NASULGC represent the majority of the nation’s top public and private research universities.

“On behalf of America’s research universities, we applaud the swift passage in the House and Senate of H.R. 2272, The America COMPETES Act,” said NASULGC President Peter McPherson. “Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Congressman Bart Gordon, and Congressman Vern Ehlers are to be commended for shepherding this bill through the House to the final vote last night. They, and the others who supported this bill, have the foresight to see that America’s future competitiveness relies strongly on a well-educated workforce with a strong background in science and mathematics.”

AAU President Robert M. Berdahl added, “Two years ago the National Academies issued a call for action to strengthen the nation’s competitiveness in the report, Rising Above the Gathering Storm. In approving the America COMPETES Act, Congress has addressed many of the significant challenges raised in that report. The House leadership identified by Mr. McPherson, as well as Senators Lamar Alexander, Jeff Bingaman, Pete Domenici, John Ensign, Joseph Lieberman, and others, recognized that our nation’s economic competitiveness and national security were at long-term risk if we did not take action. I commend our elected officials for their leadership in working together in a bipartisan manner to approve this far-reaching measure to bolster U.S. education, innovation, and ultimately, our future.”

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The Association of American Universities (www.aau.edu) is an association of 62 leading public and private research universities in the United States and Canada organized to develop and implement effective national and institutional policies supporting research and scholarship, graduate, professional, and undergraduate education, and public service in research universities. AAU universities award over one-half of all U.S. doctoral degrees and 55 percent of those in the sciences and engineering.

Founded in 1887, the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC, A Public University Association), is an association of public research universities, land-grant institutions, and many state public university systems. Its 215 members enroll more than 3.6 million students, award approximately a half-million degrees annually, and have an estimated 20 million alumni. As the nation’s oldest higher education association, NASULGC is dedicated to excellence in learning, discovery and engagement. For more information visit www.nasulgc.org.