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CONGRESSIONAL SCHEDULE NEW

The House and Senate are both in pro forma session today and will reconvene on Tuesday, January 22, following the Martin Luther King holiday on Monday.

CongressDaily reports that the Senate next week will debate legislation dealing with health care programs for Native Americans, and is expected to consider changes to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (S. 2440). The chamber also may finish work on changes to the vetoed FY08 Defense authorization bill (H.R. 4986) to meet the President’s objections. The House earlier this week approved a modified version of the Defense bill to address those White House concerns.

The House next week will try to override the President’s veto of the latest version of the State Children's Health Insurance Program extension. The chamber will meet only Tuesday and Wednesday because of party policy retreats.

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD REITERATES IMPORTANCE OF R&D TO U.S. COMPETITIVENESS NEW

Declining support for U.S. research and development (R&D), particularly basic research, raises serious questions about the future of U.S. high technology competitiveness and highly skilled jobs at home, according to a policy statement issued January 15 by the National Science Board (NSB), the oversight body of the National Science Foundation (NSF). The statement, which accompanied release of the Board’s biennial, “Science and Engineering Indicators,” was prompted by the Board’s concern that the data show a substantial decline of industry support for R&D over the past 10 years and a decline in federal support of R&D since 2005. “These trends are especially alarming in light of the growing importance of knowledge-based industries in the global economy,” the Board said.

The statement recommends that the federal government increase its support for basic research, particularly “transformational” research; that industry, government, and academia encourage greater intellectual exchange between industry and academia, including encouraging industry
researchers to participate as authors and reviewers in open, peer-reviewed publications; and that federal agencies begin gathering data to track “the implications for the U.S. economy of the globalization of manufacturing and services in high technology industry.”


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