

## (February 28, 2007) Innovation, Competitiveness Efforts Advance

Innovation, Competitiveness Efforts

Advance in Several Bills Cleared by Committee

<http://science.house.gov/press/PRArticle.aspx?NewsID=1481>

Washington, D.C. - Legislation designed to increase support for scientific research and encourage young scientists and researchers to pursue high-risk/high-reward research cleared the U.S. House Committee on Science and Technology Committee today, along with several other bills aimed at boosting U.S. competitiveness.

"You've heard me say this time and again, when this Committee sees good ideas with broad bipartisan support, we are going to move those ideas forward. The legislation we considered and passed today fits that bill," said Chairman Bart Gordon (D-TN).

Ranking Member Ralph Hall (R-TX) said, "We have before us today four bills that were passed by this Committee in the last Congress, and I am pleased that they were approved again today. The continued bipartisan support for these bills reflects their broad appeal and the fact that they are good bills that are good for the country."

Today, the Committee approved H.R. 363, the Sowing the Seeds through Science and Engineering Research Act (as amended). This bill is one piece in a package of innovation bills reintroduced earlier this year by Chairman Gordon based upon the recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences report, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm."

"This bill invests in our nation's capacity to innovate," said Chairman Gordon. "It is through measures like this one that we guarantee a science infrastructure to support a continuing high standard of living in our nation in the decades ahead."

- administers awards to outstanding early-career researchers in academia and in nonprofit research organizations;
- provides graduate research assistantships in areas of national need;
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and establishes a national coordination office to prioritize university and national research infrastructure needs.

H.R. 1068, amending the High-Performance Computing Act of 1991, also cleared the committee today. Research and Science Education Subcommittee Chairman Brian Baird (D-WA) introduced the bill with co-sponsor Rep. Judy Biggert (R-IL), who proposed similar legislation in both the 108th and 109th Congress.

"The is still highly competitive in high-performance computing capabilities, but we need to improve our planning and coordination of information technology," said Chairman Baird. "This bill will help develop and deploy the high-end systems necessary to ensure the research community has access to the most up-to-date and advanced computing systems."

The measure is designed to improve planning and coordination for interagency research and development in information technology under the research program established by the High Performance Computing Act of 1991. It would also require the development of a roadmap to provide for the sustained deployment of high performance computers for use by the research community and a plan to support the research and development efforts needed for the next generation of high-performance computers.

H.R. 85, the Energy Technology Transfer Act as amended - offered by Rep. Biggert and Rep. Brad Miller (D-NC) - would help move technologies for advanced energy efficiency and renewable energy from the laboratory into the public domain where those technologies can be put to practical use.

"The federal government spends billions of dollars on energy-related R&D," said Rep. Biggert. "This bill represents just a small investment in the tech transfer capabilities we need to help our universities and labs move advanced energy technologies from labs into the market so Americans can enjoy the tangible benefits of our federal investment in R&D."

The bill amends the Energy Policy Act of 2005, to establish a network of Advanced Energy Technology Transfer Centers. That network partners local entities with the Department of Energy to showcase advanced energy technologies. This bill was Section 13 of H.R. 5656 approved by the Committee in the 109th Congress.

H.R. 1126, a bill to reauthorize the Steel and Aluminum Energy Conservation and Technology Competitiveness Act of 1988, authorizes \$12 million/year for five years to fund advanced metals research. The measure was sponsored by the full Committee's Vice-Chairman, Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-IL), along with Rep. Todd Akin (R-MO) and Rep. Vernon Ehlers (R-MI).

"While the steel industry is much more modern than a decade and a half ago, the pace of technology and the competition from overseas is relentless. Reauthorization of this bill is essential to preserve American jobs, to keep the customers of the steel industry strong, and to assure that our defense industry has the secure supply of domestic steel products it needs," added Rep. Lipinski.

These federal cost-share funds, along with funds from the steel industry, would support research at universities to promote energy-efficiency, increased competitiveness and environmental improvements.

Also during today's full Committee mark-up, Chairman Gordon announced the appointment of several Members to serve as subcommittee vice-chairs.

Those vice-chairs include:

Subcommittee on Energy & Environment	Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, (D-AZ)
Subcommittee on Space & Aeronautics	Rep. Charlie Melancon (D-LA)
Subcommittee on Research & Science Education	Rep. Jerry McNerney (D-CA)
Subcommittee on Technology & Innovation	Rep. Harry Mitchell (D-AZ)
Subcommittee on Investigations & Oversight	Rep. Darlene Hooley (D-OR)