

Relations Committee Update/Overview
SURA Board of Trustees Meeting
November 9-10, 2006

Federal Relations – SURA continues to pursue funding objectives for Jefferson Lab through the Office of Science with Congress. We worked with the Energy Science Coalition this Spring to help get a record-breaking 67 Senators to sign on to a “Dear Colleague” letter pushed by Senators Lamar Alexander and Jeff Bingaman calling for an increase in this funding (i.e., support of the President’s Budget). SURA was also one of 25 organizations which supported the ESC Funding Statement calling for support of “a 14.1% increase above the FY 2006 funding level.” SURA also pursues objectives to leverage the applied research capabilities with the Free Electron Laser through Department of Defense funding and with its Biolaser Center initiative with the Department of Health and Human Services. Further, SURA pursues the funding objectives of the SCOOP program through funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration which received \$5M. in the Senate bill.

State Relations – SURA was successful in attaining the continued commitment of the Commonwealth of Virginia for the financial assistance (\$1,082,238) to “support faculty positions and industry-led research that will promote economic development” opportunities in the Commonwealth for FY07 and 08. Additionally, a significant budget increase is being planned for FY 08 to support a multi-year commitment to assist with a capital project in support of the 12 GeV upgrade.

Stakeholder Partnerships – SURA remains engaged with and participating in the projects of our regional colleagues (Southern Governors’ Association, Southern Growth Policies Board). Additionally, we are active in more localized activities that expose SURA programs to coalitions such as the Hampton Roads Technology Council, the Virginia Research and Technology Advisory Commission and COVITS (Commonwealth of Virginia Innovative Technology Symposium). Additionally, our relations efforts continue to support SURA programs with corporate stakeholders in the form of workshop sponsorships and joint media relations opportunities (e.g, SURAgrid-IBM partnership announcement.)

Coalition Efforts – SURA actively participates with coalition partners who advocate for expanding the research capacity for our region and nation. In concert with the groups like Alliance for Science and Technology Research in America (ASTRA), the Task Force for the Future of American Innovation (TFFAI), the Innovation & Competitiveness Coalition, and the Competitiveness Council, SURA has advocated for the American Competitiveness Initiative (legislation to double the federal research funding in 10 years) through efforts including:

- * Planning meetings for the TFFAI Benchmarks Study II at the National Press Club for November 16
- * Participated ASTRA’s advocacy for the ACI
- * Co-hosting the Competitiveness Advocacy Day Reception on Sept. 27
- * Co-signing Congressional Appropriator letters supporting ACI funding, Oct. 18
- * Announcement of the first Distinguished Friend of Science Award to Senator Lamar Alexander