



Press Release

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SURA Urges Restoring Investment in Science

Washington, DC – The Executive Committee of the Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA) today ratified a resolution calling on Congress to increase funding to the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of Science. The unanimously adopted statement warned that “federal research investments are falling significantly behind the growth of the U.S. economy at a time when our nation is even more reliant on innovations stimulated by science and engineering.”

Dr. Stephen J. Trachtenberg, SURA Executive Committee Chair and President of George Washington University said, “At a time of rapid change and global competition, the United States must preserve its leadership with research and development dollars. Our homeland economic security will be put at risk if we continue to see our investment in science shrink.”

In its annual meeting in Washington, April 7 and 8, the SURA Board of Trustees reviewed the Administration’s budget recommendations for DOE, which would cut the Office of Science by 3.8 percent. The organization formally called for a 7 percent increase for the DOE office – a position first advocated by the Energy Science Coalition, a consortium of university and industry partners supporting federal laboratories. SURA, a member of the coalition, manages and operates the Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility for DOE in Newport News, Virginia.

The resolution also illustrated the importance of DOE funding of physical sciences in universities. It noted that “the Office of Science also allocates nearly 20 percent of its budget for university-based research, including 51 of the 62 SURA member universities in the amount of \$151 million in fiscal year 2004.”

“If Congress were to adopt such a drastic reduction in science funding, it could begin a steady erosion of federal support which is essential for long-term research,” said Dr. Jerry P. Draayer, President and CEO of SURA. “We cannot continue to have the world’s leading ‘knowledge economy’ without adequate resources, anymore than we can have the leading military without adequate resources.”

In Congressional testimony last month, Dr. Draayer asked the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development to increase the Office of Science by \$250 million to a total of \$3.85 billion – a 7 percent increase over the fiscal year 2005 funding.

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The Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA) is a consortium of over 60 leading research institutions in the southern United States and the District of Columbia established in 1980 as a non-stock, nonprofit corporation. SURA serves as an entity through which colleges, universities, and other organizations may cooperate with one another, and with government and industry in acquiring, developing, and using laboratories and other research facilities and in furthering knowledge and the application of that knowledge in the physical, biological, and other natural sciences and engineering. For more information, visit www.sura.org.