



## ***Press Release***

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**For Immediate Release**  
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### **SURA Urges Congress to Invest in “Innovation Economy”**

**Washington, DC** – The President of the Southeastern Universities Research Association (SURA) today urged the House Appropriations Subcommittee for Energy and Water Development to increase the nation’s investment in the “innovation economy” and resist a proposed 3.8 percent cut to the Department of Energy’s (DOE) Office of Science.

Dr. Jerry P. Draayer, President and CEO of SURA, in testimony submitted to the subcommittee chaired by Rep. David Hobson (R-OH), stated, “At a time when our nation is even more reliant on innovations stimulated by science and engineering research, federal research investments are falling significantly behind the growth of the U.S. economy.” He noted that physical science funding as a percentage of GDP has been cut roughly in half since 1970. Further, the unprecedented cut recommended in the Administration’s FY06 budget would impact not just federal laboratory research, but the research base in university programs in all 50 states.

Dr. Draayer noted that an 8.4 percent cut was proposed for DOE’s Nuclear Physics program, which funds several federal laboratories including the Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility in Newport News, Virginia – for which SURA is the management and operating contractor. Draayer explained that, because of fixed costs at the lab, a multiplier effect of such a cut would drastically curtail lab operations. “The impact of this reduction at Jefferson Lab will reduce operating time by roughly 25 percent, and may require up to a 10 percent reduction in force.”

As a member of the Energy Science Coalition – a consortium of university and industry partners supporting federal labs – Draayer echoed SURA’s support for a 7 percent increase in the funding for the Office of Science. “History demonstrates that healthy federal support for basic research provides for the basis of our national security, technology-based economy, fast and efficient means of communication, a health care system unmatched in the world, and quality of life.”

In addition to support for federal labs, the Office of Science allocates almost 20 percent of its \$3.85 billion budget for university-based research. Currently, 52 of SURA’s 62 member institutions receive such grants.

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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, 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](http://www.sura.org).*