



**Southeastern Universities  
Research Association** ®

## ***Press Release***

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**For Immediate Release**  
[www.sura.org](http://www.sura.org)

**For more information contact:**  
**Greg D. Kubiak**  
**Director of Relations and Communications**  
**202-408-7872 \* [kubiak@sura.org](mailto:kubiak@sura.org)**

### **Statement by Jerry P. Draayer, SURA President and CEO**

I am gravely disappointed in the funding levels approved by the Energy and Water Development conference committee, and signed into law by the President last week. It will reduce the nuclear physics program by over 8 percent in the Department of Energy's Office of Science. The impact this will have on the Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility, which is managed and operated by SURA, will present a tremendous challenge.

Shortly after the Administration's budget request for FY06 was released in February, I submitted testimony to the House appropriations subcommittee warning that the 8.4 percent cut recommended by the Administration would cause Jefferson Lab to "reduce operating time by roughly 25 percent," and may require a reduction in force. SURA also worked with several coalition partners in an effort to turn around this recommendation. We'd previously joined with the Energy Sciences Coalition in calling for a 7 percent increase in the Office of Science funding – as opposed to the 3.8 percent cut proposed in the President's budget. Furthermore, we participated in an effort which successfully secured the unprecedented, bipartisan support of 68 U.S. Senators on a letter supporting "an inflation-adjusted increase of 3.2 percent over FY05 budget levels" for the Office of Science.

SURA has also worked with a broad coalition of industry and academic partners committed to growing the R&D budgets. From the Alliance for Science and Technology Research in America to the Task Force for the Future of American Technology, the echoes of support for Office of Science funding have come not only from our academic institutions and consortia, but from industry partners like the Council on Competitiveness the Business Roundtable, Hewlett-Packard, Intel, Lucent, Microsoft, Northrop-Grumman and Texas Instruments.

As a result of this focused support from a broad community, the budget recommendation of \$371 million for nuclear physics (which includes funds for JLab and Brookhaven National Laboratory) grew to \$408 million in the House bill and \$420 in the Senate. Normally, a compromise would put the final number somewhere between those two figures. However, after the closed-door meetings of the conferees, there were two factors which we have learned influenced Members to resort to the earlier \$371 million recommendation: Army Corps of Engineers funding at \$1 billion above the President's request; and a 62 percent increase in funding for Congressionally-directed projects.

While it is clear Congress is faced with very tight budgetary constraints, there are two primary reasons why this cut affecting Jefferson Lab is short-sighted.

First, the federal government has invested over \$550 million in the infrastructure of Jefferson Lab beginning in 1984 to create a world-class, one-of-a-kind research facility. With an already lengthy experiment backlog of 3 to 5 years, taxpayers are being short-changed on their return-on-investment. With a user community of over 2,000 university researchers from the U.S. and abroad, a reduction in accelerator run-time and workforce to support the laboratory is the opposite direction needed for this facility. Furthermore, this is not just a priority acknowledged by that user community. The Department of Energy itself, in its 20-year, long-range plan released just two years ago, outlined the need for a major energy upgrade for JLab (to 12 GeV), listing the expansion as a “near-term priority.” In fact, when the Department officially committed to this “critical decision” in April 2004, the deputy secretary described it as a “top priority” in the Secretary’s facilities plan, concluding, “CEBAF will be in the future, as it is today, one of the premier nuclear physics machines in the world.”

Second, the chorus calling for an increase in overall research spending, as the linchpin to our national and economic security, is gaining new voices every week. Two such recent reports deserve particular attention. The Center for Strategic and International Studies, in their *Waiting for Sputnik* report released last month warned: “The underfunding of basic research in the physical sciences ... puts U.S strength at risk. Although the damage might not appear for years, America is not making the R&D investment decisions needed to sustain its strength and competitiveness.” Equally alarming is the statement by the (Norman R.) Augustine Commission, in *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* released last month as well. The Congressionally requested report of the National Academy of Sciences states: “[T]he scientific and technical building blocks of our economic leadership are eroding at a time when many other nations are gathering strength.”

Going forward, we were encouraged by the *Congressional Record* colloquy engaged with committee leaders by the Virginia and New York Senators of behalf of Jefferson Lab and Brookhaven, and will follow-up with the Department of Energy as to how existing funds might be reprogrammed to ease the financial and scientific impact on Jefferson Lab. And we will continue to engage our friends in Congress and the public and private sectors to see that the FY07 budget request restores the trajectory of growth that Jefferson Lab is on, and deserves to remain.

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