

Minority Views and Estimates  
Committee on Science and Technology  
Fiscal Year 2010 (FY10)

It is important that we continue to make appropriate investments in science and technology research, development, and math and science education in order for the United States to remain a world leader in competitiveness and innovation. While Committee Republicans agree with the Majority that the Administration's budget summary "recognizes the benefits that science and technology and research and development investments have for our country's economic competitiveness, energy security, job growth and environmental health," we are also mindful that in the current economic environment, the nation faces numerous and difficult budgetary decisions that will require our careful consideration, diligent oversight, and appropriate action.

We are pleased that the budget summary continues to build on the American Competitiveness Initiative and the America COMPETES Act (COMPETES) (P.L. 110-69) by keeping America on track to double the funding for physical sciences and engineering at the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the Office of Science at the Department of Energy (DOE), but have some concerns that the Administration may be accelerating this funding beyond authorized levels. While we were disappointed that the House Leadership and Appropriators did not adequately fund these agencies in the FY08 Omnibus (P.L. 110-161), we are skeptical about the unprecedented amounts currently being appropriated and the rate at which this is occurring, with no oversight. The Administration considers the \$5 billion "investment in key science programs" included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus) (P.L. 111-5) to be a "significant down payment" toward doubling the funding for NSF, NIST, and the DOE Office of Science, in addition to the full-year amounts requested in the FY09 Omnibus. There are only 6 months left in FY09.

The Administration's budget summary offers only the overall budget request amounts for each agency and provides a brief narrative on Administration policies, which gives some limited guidance for NSF and NASA. Unfortunately, we do not have top line budget numbers for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), NIST, DOE Office of Science and a number of other Science and Technology Committee jurisdictional areas such as the Department of Transportation research and development, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the U.S. Fire Administration, and interagency programs such as the National Nanotechnology Initiative (NNI), the Networking Information Research and Development program (NITRD), or the Earthquake Hazards Reduction program.

Along with the Majority, we look forward to receiving a more detailed budget request.

### **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)**

The Committee has sought to enable NASA to succeed as a multi-mission agency in carrying out the goals expressed in the NASA Authorization Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-422). In general, Committee Republicans concur with the Majority that the budget seems consistent with the priorities of the NASA Authorization Act of 2008, including retirement of the Space Shuttle following completion of the International Space Station and one additional flight to deliver the Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer. We applaud the Administration's reaffirmation of NASA's initiatives to return humans to the Moon by 2020 as part of a robust space exploration program, while also stimulating the private-sector to develop and demonstrate commercial crew and cargo delivery services to the International Space Station.

We are encouraged that the Administration's budget provides \$18.7 billion for NASA in FY10. However, additional details are needed to adequately evaluate the Administration's goals and intent. For example, it is unclear whether the "new space flight systems for carrying American crews and supplies to space" is the Constellation System already under development. With Constellation, NASA is in the midst of a once-in-a-generation development of a new human launch system. This is the largest launch vehicle development since the beginning of the Space Shuttle program, with the added requirement of being capable of safely returning humans to the Moon. We are concerned that the flat funding profile in the Administration's out year projections may be unrealistic for such a large scale development effort without jeopardizing NASA's ability to successfully accomplish its portfolio of missions.

We also endorse the Administration's commitment to modernize our nation's air traffic control network by allocating \$800 million to the Next Generation Air Transportation System. This multi-agency program, led by the FAA and NASA, requires a high level of research, development, and validation to ensure mission success. A robust, safe and efficient air transportation system, capable of handling three-times current traffic levels, is fundamental to promoting economic growth as well as maintaining our quality of life.

### **National Science Foundation (NSF)**

The FY10 budget request for NSF is \$7 billion. This is \$1.1 billion less than what was authorized in COMPETES; however, NSF also received \$3 billion in the Stimulus and is slated to receive another \$6.5 billion in the FY09 Omnibus for roughly a six-month period. Committee Republicans support a robust budget request for NSF, but remain concerned that we not exceed current authorization amounts. We hope to see FY10 increases spread across all of the research fields NSF supports in the more detailed budget.

With regard to education, we agree with the Majority that NSF has an important and unique role to play in strengthening science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education at all levels. We further agree with the Majority that the FY10 budget should provide, to the extent practical, sufficient funding for the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program in order to achieve the goals set out in COMPETES. We note that the budget summary highlights the Advanced Technological Education program (ATE) and the Graduate Research Fellowship and Faculty Early Career Development programs, all programs

that were also emphasized in COMPETES, but fails to mention the COMPETES-authorized Math and Science Partnerships program (MSP).

The budget summary makes climate change research and education a priority. We note that NSF currently funds numerous research and education programs that address climate change.

### **Department of Energy (DOE)**

In general Committee Republicans agree with the Majority's views on the budget summary for the DOE. However a majority of us in the Minority continue to be opposed to the establishment of an Advanced Research Projects Agency for Energy (ARPA-E). Those of us in opposition maintain the view that creating a new agency to do work that is currently being done at the DOE is not a justified use of the limited funds available to the Department, and we support the Department's previous decision to not establish ARPA-E, but to engage in ARPA-E-type projects within the current DOE structure.

We also express our deep disappointment that the President's budget summary proposes to repeal the Ultra-Deepwater and Unconventional Natural Gas and Other Petroleum Research Program that was established in Section 999 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (P.L. 109-58). Section 999H(a) sets the funding for this program at a level of \$50-million-per-year provided from Federal lease royalties, rents, and bonuses paid by oil and gas companies – not taxpayers. It should be clear that the overall program was initiated and carried out to reach energy known to exist in the areas targeted – energy that was impossible to produce without new technology – and that the required technology would be eventually paid for from the energy captured. The funds are to be directed towards research specifically targeting four areas: ultra-deepwater resources, unconventional natural gas and other petroleum resources, technology challenges of small producers, and research complementary to these areas. While we are wholly supportive of research into renewable and alternative forms of energy, we feel that domestically produced oil and natural gas will continue to play an important role in powering our country and must therefore receive support to increase our domestic supply and reduce our foreign dependence. The budget summary appears to focus solely on coal within the area of fossil energy research and development. We are pleased that research into carbon capture and storage is playing a prominent role in the budget summary, but we encourage the Budget Committee to continue to recognize the importance of oil and natural gas research and development to our country's future.

We note the President's proposal to scale back the Yucca Mountain program to "those costs necessary to answer inquiries from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission" and hope that this announcement and decision does not have a detrimental effect on building new nuclear plants in the United States, but would rather expedite research and development into reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel and the next generation of nuclear plants. Nuclear energy is just the type of clean energy technology that will reduce dependence on foreign oil that President Obama talks about in his budget blueprint.

### **National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)**

The Department of Commerce's NIST supports U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology to enhance economic competitiveness and address important societal challenges. The Administration's FY10 budget summary does not include an overall agency total for NIST, but specifies a request of \$70 million for the Technology Innovation Program (TIP) and \$125 million for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP).

NIST's core research and facilities programs are widely recognized as well-managed, high-leverage activities supported by world-class researchers. Accordingly, Committee Republicans continue to believe these activities should receive priority in the budget, and, along with MEP and TIP, be funded in accordance with the levels authorized in COMPETES. Additionally, we intend to continue close oversight of NIST's budget and activities, and hope to work with the majority and the Administration to ensure appropriate and effective use of taxpayer dollars. Of particular interest will be NIST's recently created external construction grant program, which received a dramatic increase in the stimulus bill even though the program has not been authorized or formally reviewed and considered by the Committee.

### **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)**

Committee Republicans agree with the Majority regarding support for the FY10 funding request of \$1.3 billion for satellite and instrument acquisitions at NOAA. However, we believe this request is a substantial increase compared to previous years, requiring much greater oversight by the Committee of NOAA's plan to use them.

### **Department of Transportation (DOT)**

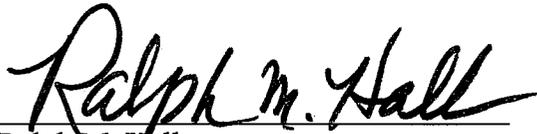
The budget summary does not include information on research and development activities at DOT (most DOT R&D is funded through mandatory spending), but does note that the Administration intends to work with Congress to reform transportation programs as we near expiration of the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Committee Republicans welcome this commitment to reform, and look forward to working with the Majority, the Administration, and the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to produce a responsible bill that strengthens Federally-funded transportation R&D programs.

### **Department of Homeland Security (DHS)**

The Administration's budget summary does not include information on science and technology activities at DHS, except to note that \$355 million is requested for cybersecurity activities that include research and development. Committee Republicans are pleased to see cybersecurity highlighted as a key priority in the budget and look forward to reviewing further details on DHS programs in this area. We also look forward to reviewing budget details for major programs within our jurisdiction—the DHS Science and Technology Directorate, Domestic Nuclear Detection Office (DNDO), and firefighter grants programs—which together total over \$2 billion. We also welcome the Majority's commitment to pursue legislation to better align DHS research priorities to address the most critical threats and departmental needs.

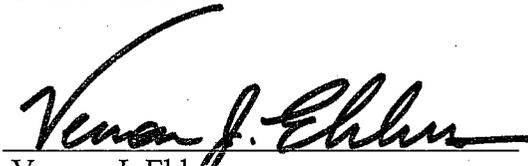
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

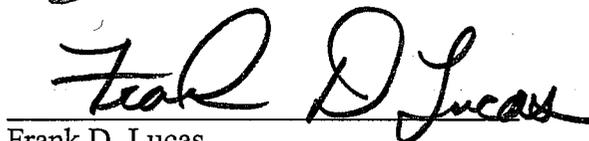
Committee Republicans share the Majority's view that investments in research and development will be beneficial in the form of greater cost-efficiency of environmental protection programs. However, we believe that any increase in funding levels should be done with thoughtful consideration. The \$3.9 billion FY10 budget request for research, regulation and enforcement is almost an 18 percent increase over the FY09 request. Although we are aware that funding level requirements for research and development go through cycles, this budget request increase, by nearly one-fifth, may be out of proportion to what is needed; therefore, the minority would encourage increased oversight of EPA's research and development agenda.

  
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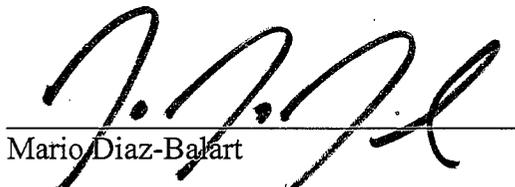
  
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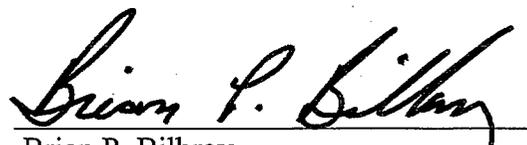
  
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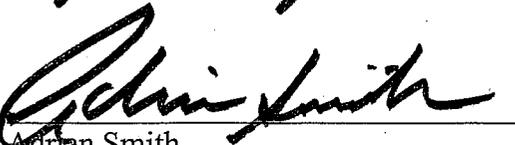
  
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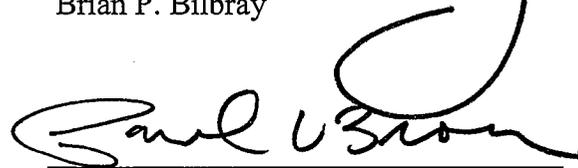
  
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