

# **Doubling of US science funding announced in State of the Union Address**

February 1 2006

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APS-Physics President Lauds White House focus on science competitiveness

John Hopfield, President of the American Physical Society, was exuberant about the American Competitiveness Initiative, which the White House announced this evening during the State of the Union address.

Hopfield, a renowned biophysicist at Princeton University and a Member of the National Academy of Sciences, said that he could not recall any president in recent times using his annual address to Congress to provide such a sharp focus on America's physical science and technology enterprise.

"There is little doubt that the United States is still the world's leader in science and technology," Hopfield noted, "but our lead is rapidly vanishing."

"Economists of almost every persuasion agree that the future of the American economy depends upon our ability to innovate and educate," he added. "Science research and education are two key components to achieving those goals."

Hopfield said that the President's commitment to doubling the research budgets of the Department of Energy's Office of Science, the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Standards and Technology would do wonders for the state of the physical sciences in

the United States, which have suffered from investment neglect for more than two decades.

"I am immensely pleased that President Bush, even in times of fiscal stringency, has chosen to make this issue a priority for his Administration. It would have been easy for him to seize on other things that might have more immediate pay-off in public polling, so I give him great credit for placing the long-term interests of our nation ahead of short-term political gains. Ten years from now, a strongly competitive economy will reflect this choice."

Hopfield observed that with strongly supported bipartisan "Innovation" bills awaiting action in the Senate and with the House Democrats having made their innovation agenda their number one priority for 2006, it only remains for House Republicans to join the action. "I fully expect they will. On this issue, we must set political partisanship aside and work together to get the job done. Our future depends on it."

Source: American Physical Society

Citation: Doubling of US science funding announced in State of the Union Address (2006, February 1) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-02-science-funding-state-union.html>

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