

## Public Statements

Stimulating public dialogue and raising awareness of issues affecting the scientific enterprise are key goals for AAAS. Board statements, opinion essays in newspapers, letters to policy-makers, and major events all helped in 2007 to promote public engagement with science and technology.

### GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

- ▶ 18 February. In a consensus statement approved 9 December 2006 and released at a town hall event 18 February 2007, the AAAS Board of Directors noted that “global climate change caused by human activities is occurring now,” and called for “stronger leadership at all levels” to curb greenhouse gas emissions.
- ▶ 28 April. The AAAS Board issued a statement calling for adequate funding of Earth observation satellites when budget cuts threatened the network critical to weather forecasting, hurricane warning, global climate change studies, and more. AAAS senior staff also testified on Capitol Hill.

### EVOLUTION IN THE NEWS

- ▶ 26 May. “Museum of Confusion,” op-ed, *Lexington Herald-Leader*. Exhibits depicting dinosaurs co-existing with humans could confuse people, especially children, about the nature of science, wrote AAAS CEO Alan I. Leshner, executive publisher of *Science*.
- ▶ 1 June. “Faith, Reason and a G.O.P. Hopeful,” letter to the editors, *New York Times*. “Religion should not be substituted for science, nor the reverse,” the AAAS CEO wrote, in response to an op-ed by Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kansas).

### HUMAN EMBRYONIC STEM

#### CELL RESEARCH

- ▶ 20 June. AAAS again decried the U.S. President’s veto of the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act, which would expand federal support for human embryonic research.
- ▶ 3 December. “Standing in the Way of Stem Cell Research,” op-ed, *Washington Post*, by Leshner and stem-cell researcher James Thomson. This piece, republished in at least nine newspapers, cautioned that “further delays in pursuing the clearly viable option of embryonic stem cells will result in an irretrievable loss of time.”

### SCIENCE BEYOND BORDERS

- ▶ 8 January. “Building Science, Building Trust,” op-ed, *The Kuwait Times*, by the AAAS CEO and Farkhonda Hassan, a professor of geology at the American University in Cairo, a member of the Egyptian Parliament, and then-secretary-general for the National Council for Women in Egypt.
- ▶ 6 June. AAAS issued a statement declaring its opposition to a U.K. University and College Union motion to boycott research collaborations with Israeli academic institutions.
- ▶ 16 July. “Use Science for Diplomacy, Not Division,” op-ed, *The Baltimore Sun*, by the AAAS CEO.

### SCIENCE EDUCATION

- ▶ 15 August. “National Standards: The Time Is Now for Washington to Heed the Call,” op-ed, *The Washington Times*, by the AAAS CEO.
- ▶ 11 December. “Don’t Mess with Science Standards,” op-ed, *The Star-Telegram of Texas*, by the AAAS CEO. This op-ed also appeared in *The Waco Tribune Herald* on 13 December.

### SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- ▶ 26 October. “Celebremos las Historias de la Ciencia,” op-ed, *El Pais* of Spain, by *Science* Executive Editor Monica Bradford. This op-ed on science communications helped to celebrate an honor bestowed upon the journal *Science* by the Prince of Asturias Foundation.
- ▶ 19 September. “Beyond the Teachable Moment,” op-ed, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, by the AAAS CEO.

### SUPPORT FOR THE SCIENTIFIC ENTERPRISE

- ▶ 20 December. “While we recognize that both the Congress and the White House face many competing priorities ... we see a missed opportunity to honor the commitment made by both branches of government to support basic research,” AAAS announced at the end of 2007, following up on many previous efforts throughout the year to speak up for adequate R&D funding across all disciplines.

“Every scientist and technologist should tithe 10 percent of his or her professional time and effort to working to increase benefits of science and technology for the human condition and to decrease the liabilities. The challenges demand no less.” JOHN P. HOLDREN, AAAS CHAIR (2007-2008), THE WOODS HOLE RESEARCH CENTER AND HARVARD UNIVERSITY

- ▶ 28 February. In an ever-more technology-based economy, the AAAS CEO testified before a House appropriations subcommittee, “the federal government needs a sustained commitment to a robust research portfolio.”
- ▶ 7 March. Maintaining U.S. competitiveness “relies on a strong foundation of federal investment in research and education across a broad spectrum of disciplines,” the AAAS CEO testified before a Senate commission.

**ANIMAL RIGHTS EXTREMISM**

- ▶ 28 November. The AAAS Board issued a statement decrying extremist attacks against researchers involved in animal studies. While recognizing the right of all citizens to protest and dissent from policies with which they disagree, the Board emphasized that “unlawful and dangerous actions should not be tolerated,” and noted that intimidation tactics can derail biomedical advances.

