



March 17, 2006

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), I am writing in follow-up to our letter of December 9 to thank you for your emphasis on the importance of basic research, science education, and innovation in your State of the Union Address and as outlined in the American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI) in the FY07 budget.

As I stated in my Presidential Address at the AAAS Annual Meeting in St. Louis last month, “Protecting our nation’s security includes protecting our economic security. America today remains the world leader in innovation, but our lead is slipping. We must inspire our children and our communities to look towards the future. We must make the investments that will invigorate research, strengthen science education, and nurture innovation in all fields.”

The ACI represents a crucial first step toward keeping the United States at the forefront of technological development, economic growth, and workforce capabilities.

We are also very pleased to see the intensive collaboration on this issue that is taking place between the branches of government and across party lines. Bringing the various elements of multiple bills currently introduced in the Congress to fruition in legislation that can be enacted this year will benefit from and depend upon strong leadership on these critical national priorities and a continued bipartisan effort.

Thank you, again, for your attention to these important issues. AAAS, the nation's largest general scientific organization, representing 127,000 members directly and about 10 million scientists and engineers through our affiliates, stands ready to assist.

Sincerely yours,

Gilbert S. Omenn
Chairman of the Board, AAAS