

Senator Reid Presents 10-Point Critical Materials Plan

U.S. Senator Harry Reid recently presented a "10-Point Plan on Critical Materials" to Congress. Critical materials, those used in manufacturing high technology defense products and hardware, include chromium, cobalt, manganese, platinum, and antimony, many of them imported from South Africa and Communist-bloc countries. The following recommendations resulted from information presented at the Joint Industry-Congress Conference on Critical Materials held February 24, 1989 in Washington, DC and organized by Reid:

1. President Bush should immediately fill existing vacancies in the National Critical Materials Council (NCCM).
2. Funding should be provided so that the NCCM can perform its duties.
3. The National Science Adviser or Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology should be appointed as a member of the NCCM.
4. The post of National Science Adviser should be established by elevating the director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy to this position.
5. The chairman and remaining members of the National Commission on Superconductivity (NCS) should be appointed as called for by the Executive Order of December 28, 1988.
6. The NCS should prepare a strategic policy report on superconductivity.
7. The federal government should pursue fiscal and monetary policies that lower the cost of capital.
8. The federal government should pursue policies promoting free and fair trade.
9. The federal government should encourage and promote innovative joint ventures and consortia.
10. The federal government should broaden its role in supporting science and technology education at all levels.

NSF Notes

Grants Renewed for 4 Supercomputer Centers

Renewal of a five-year grant, from FY 1990 through FY 1995, was approved for four NSF Supercomputer Centers at Cornell University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Pittsburgh-Carnegie Mellon University, and the University of California at San Diego. Funding will be increased from \$10

to \$14 million per center to allow upgrading of facilities and expansion of education and training aspects of supercomputing.

The centers are cooperative projects funded by NSF, states, universities, computer vendors, and other industrial participants. Supercomputer resources are used primarily for nonproprietary work by academic, government, individual, and industrial researchers. The centers also have strong programs in education and training and software development, and they frequently act as test sites for new computing hardware and software.

NSF Supercomputer Center contacts:

- Cornell University—Director David Caughey (607) 255-8686;
- University of Illinois—Director Larry Smarr (217) 244-0074;
- University of Pittsburgh-Carnegie Mellon University—Co-Directors Michael

Levine and Ralph Roskies (412) 268-4960;

- University of California at San Diego—Director Sidney Karin (619) 534-5000; and
- John von Neumann Center (grant renewal being considered in August 1989)—Director Doyle Knight (609) 520-2000.

EPSCoR Awards to Stimulate Competitive Research in 4 States

Four awards under NSF's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) are expected to help the states of Idaho, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Dakota improve the quality of science and engineering research and education, and also increase the number of scientists and engineers able to compete successfully for federal grants.

Each state will receive \$1.8 over a three-year period to strengthen academic departments and support the research of

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individual scientists and engineers. In turn, the four states will contribute a total of nearly \$32 million to the effort.

Idaho is preparing improvements in biology, chemistry, and physics. Louisiana's EPSCoR project, part of a broader Louisiana Educational Quality Support Project, includes 13 research improvement projects in science and engineering at four participating academic institutions. Mississippi plans involve approximately 40 faculty members at five academic institutions, and South Dakota will develop three major areas, including materials engineering research at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology.

DOE Notes

Committee to Assess Operation of Brookhaven High Flux Beam Reactor

A DOE Advisory Committee will provide an independent recommendation of the safety of Brookhaven National Laboratory's High Flux Beam Reactor. Brookhaven is currently assessing the safety as-

pects of the reactor, which has been shut down for scheduled maintenance and refueling since mid-March 1989. The safety reassessment follows the release of a 1988 report by the National Academy of Sciences/National Research Council. The report recommended new analysis of the exposure of reactor operators in the event of a potential loss of coolant accident during operation of the reactor at power levels of 60 MW.

The reactor is a small, 60 MW research reactor that produces a high neutron flux in a small volume that is used for basic research in physics, chemistry, and biology. Operating since 1965, the reactor has been used to investigate the properties of various materials. Most recently, the studies have included neutron scattering experiments to determine the structure of high temperature superconductors. The reactor will not be restarted until the safety assessments have been completed, the Advisory Committee's recommendations have been reviewed, and other startup criteria have been met. □

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