

Domenici Announces Agreement on Tech Transfer Legislation

Senator Pete Domenici (R-New Mexico) praised an agreement reached on technology transfer legislation that will provide a vital link among industry, universities, and U.S. national laboratories. The National Competitiveness Technology Transfer Act of 1989 was included as an amendment to the Department of Defense Authorization Bill, approved by the House and Senate on November 3, 1989.

The bill represents Domenici's third attempt at gaining passage. Domenici lauded Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-New Mexico) and Representative Maralyn Lloyd (D-Tennessee) for their efforts in achieving the bill's passage.

Domenici explained that the legislation will generate tech transfer at the Department of Energy laboratories by changing the way technology is managed within departments. Changes prompted by the law will enable technologies to be managed more efficiently by the labs that created

them by encouraging cooperative research with outside parties, especially industry. In addition it will permit industry to have commercial protections for technologies, which should serve as an incentive for in-

dustry to embrace new initiatives.

Specifically, the bill's tech transfer provisions will create the following initiatives:

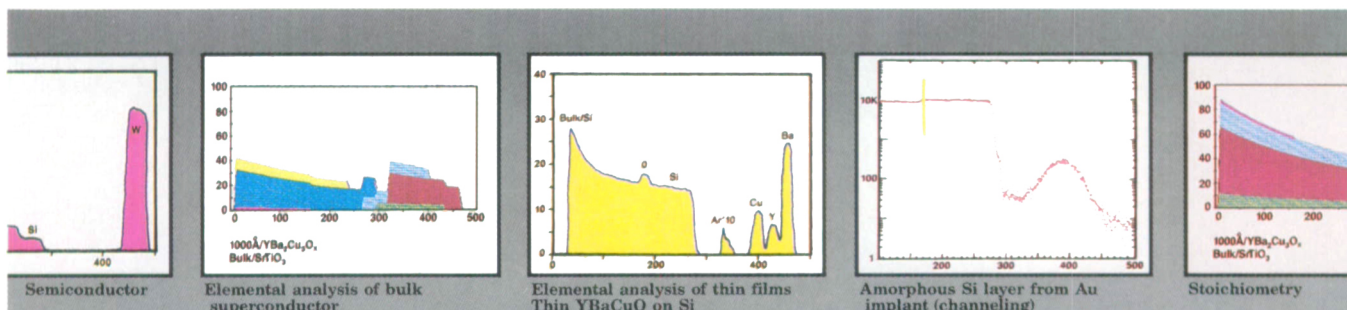
- Allow the labs to enter into cooperative research and development agreements;

APS President Voices Concerns About Federal Funding for Physics

Concerned about what he terms the "current funding crisis in the National Science Foundation," American Physical Society President James A. Krumhansl has written to President Bush and called upon the Fellows of the American Physical Society to "defend the value of scientific research and education."

Krumhansl's letter to President Bush, written on behalf of the APS governing council, appeals for the President's personal attention to the effort to restore funds cut from the National Science Foundation in the FY 90 budget, and to giving NSF the "highest priority" in the FY 91 budget request.

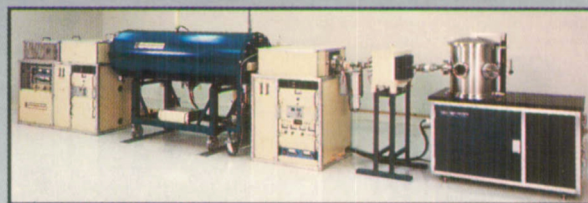
In another letter to APS Fellows, Krumhansl asks them to share the message with colleagues and policymakers, to "think about the ramifications of these developments on your institution, your field, the education and support of students, and your community and discuss these matters with your representatives, local and national."



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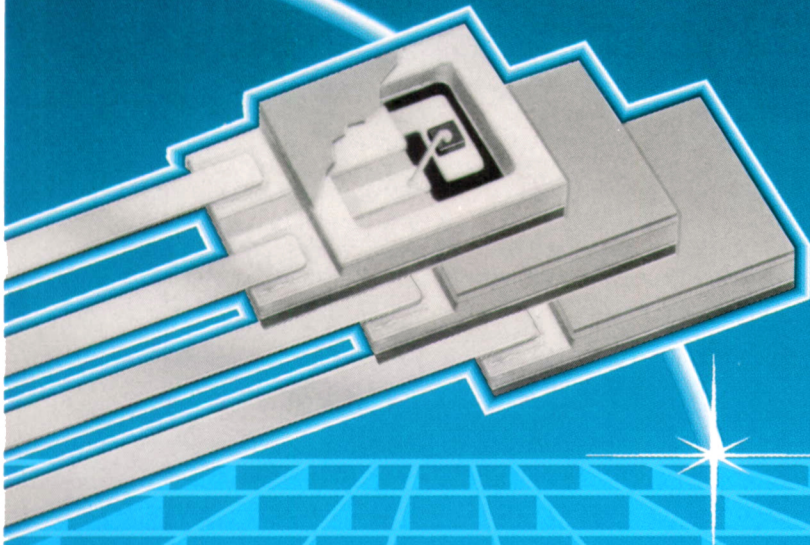
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FROM WASHINGTON

- Allow the labs to negotiate licensing agreements for inventions;
- Allow lab directors to exchange personnel, services and equipment, primarily with industry and universities;
- Allow lab directors to waive rights to lab inventions and intellectual property;
- Allow current and former lab employees to participate in commercial development to the extent there is no conflict of interest;
- Establish new deadlines within which agencies must act on proposed agreements, a move designed to expedite the approval process, thus making the labs more "user friendly";
- Allow information and innovations brought into, and created through, cooperative agreements to be protected from disclosure; and
- Provide a tech transfer mission for the nuclear weapons labs.

"To me, tech transfer needs to be an active approach to commercialization of lag-generated technology. This can take the form of extra effort by the labs to acquaint industry with research it is doing. It must mean incentives to industry, such as grant of exclusive licenses for further development and commercialization of technologies into a useful product. Spin-offs and collaboration are an important aspect of technology transfer," he said.

"We can also expect to see more Center of Excellence established among businesses, universities, and the labs. These centers would be directed toward new commercial enterprises," he said.

NSF Notes

Undergraduate Curriculum Development in Engineering

The NSF has awarded 22 grants totaling \$4.4 million to 21 universities and other organizations in the second year of its program to restructure and reshape undergraduate engineering education in the United States. Institutional contributions to the projects in the 1989 awards amount to nearly \$6 million. Last year 10 awards totaling \$4.9 million were made under the Undergraduate Curriculum Development in Engineering program. □



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