

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE OF ADVISORS ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20502

December 10, 1999
President William J. Clinton
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The members of PCAST believe, as you do, that investment in science and technology contributes to national goals such as global stability, a strong economy, a healthy environment, and a high quality of life for all Americans. We write to commend your efforts to date, and urge you to expand your support for a strong S&T portfolio in the FY 2001 budget.

Your actions over the past seven years have helped to sustain America's ability to capitalize on creativity and innovation. For example, you funded increases in the federal research and development budget even as you steadily brought the budget into balance and, ultimately, surplus. The R&D budget has grown as a percentage of discretionary spending, a clear indication that you consider investment in S&T a high priority for the nation. Your economic policies have encouraged substantial growth in private sector R&D investment, such that we are rapidly approaching the goal you established in 1994: national R&D investment equivalent to 3 percent of GDP.

Your strong support for the 21st Century Research Fund led to an 8 percent increase in these vital programs in the FY 2000 budget. We hope to see similar progress in FY 2001, with considerable emphasis on strengthening fundamental science and engineering research. It is our hope that the FY 2001 budget will bring us closer to achieving the all-important balance among the scientific disciplines you spoke of in your December 3, 1999, speech on the economy.

We have also worked closely with your National Science and Technology Council to develop R&D initiatives that will serve many national needs, including:

- A national strategy for energy R&D and for international cooperation on diffusion of advanced energy technologies worldwide.
- Improved understanding and management of biological resources
- Improved education, training and educational research.
- Improved protection, management, and disposition of nuclear weapon materials.
- A national information infrastructure protection institute.
- A strategy to ensure world leadership in nanotechnology.

Like fundamental research in science and engineering, these initiatives serve broad goals, such as economic prosperity, environmental quality, and international political stability. As integral parts of the 21st Century Research Fund, they also serve your S&T

investment goals, such as stewardship of critical research fields, preparation of the next generation of scientists and engineers through university-based research, and promotion of international cooperation. Perhaps most importantly, substantial funding of these initiatives would help restore balance in the nation's research portfolio.

We recognize the constraints on resources available for the FY 2001 budget. We applaud your efforts to restore the bipartisan support for investment in science and technology that helped overcome those constraints in FY 2000. We are ready and eager to support your efforts to reaffirm the centrality and importance of S&T to our nation through strong and balanced investment in the 21st century.

Sincerely,



Neal Lane
Co-Chair



John Young
Co-Chair

**President's Committee of Advisors
on Science and Technology
(PCAST)**

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