



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

April 18, 2007  
(House Rules)

## STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

### H.R. 363 – Sowing the Seeds Through Science and Engineering Research Act

(Rep. Gordon (D) Tennessee and 18 cosponsors)

The Administration supports House passage of H.R. 363 with the changes described below and believes that the goals of this legislation are consistent with the programs and activities at Federal science agencies and with the priorities outlined in the President's American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI). However, the Administration also believes that placing certain requirements, such as award amounts and funding levels, on the programs discussed below may prove detrimental to achieving the bill's goals. The Administration looks forward to working with Congress to address these concerns as the legislative process moves forward.

Specific provisions of the legislation of concern are:

- **Program allocation floors.** H.R. 363 would require the National Science Foundation (NSF) to allocate 3.5 percent of the Research and Related Activities account for Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) grants and 1.5 percent for Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT) grants. These floors may hinder NSF's ability to respond to new and different program goals in a timely manner or to adjust to changes in the number and quality of meritorious grant applications. Additionally, implementation of the requirement would be disruptive, because management of the CAREER program is distributed across NSF programs, and program officers make award decisions based on the merits of the proposals and the funds available in their programs. The requirement would also be disruptive for the IGERT program, because its funding is currently split between various programs within the Research and Related Activities account and the Education and Human Resources account.
- **National Coordination Office for Research Infrastructure.** The provision establishing a National Coordination Office for Research Infrastructure within the Executive Office of the President is unnecessary and redundant with the statutory mission of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). OSTP already coordinates the identification and prioritization of research infrastructure needs through the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) as well as through day-to-day agency consultation, interaction, and integration.
- **Early Career Awards.** The bill would set both the NSF and Department of Energy's (DOE) early career programs' award size at a minimum of \$80,000 per year. This minimum level may inhibit future flexibility regarding potential proposals in theoretical disciplines such as mathematics that may not require significant investments in equipment. To set the minimum award amount in law could limit the ability to provide awards in certain disciplines. DOE and NSF need flexibility to fund the highest quality

competitive research by early career faculty, whether at universities or the national laboratories, with priority given to research that supports the needs of both DOE and NSF's missions.

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