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Statement on Protecting America's Competitive Edge Act

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) applauds Senators Domenici, Bingaman, Alexander and Mikulski for introducing the Protecting America's Competitive Edge (PACE) Act. This legislation responds to recommendations made by the National Academies' *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* report for ensuring America's continued prosperity in the global economy.

The National Academies report described the critical role played by science and technology in achieving America's economic pre-eminence for the past 50 years, and many of its recommendations are directed toward bolstering education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

The PACE Act represents an important step toward strengthening the U.S. innovation infrastructure for the 21st century. Among other things, the legislation creates Graduate Research Fellowships to provide tuition and financial support for students enrolled in graduate programs in STEM fields, increases appropriations for the National Science Foundation, and creates a new visa category for doctoral students in mathematics, engineering, technology and the physical sciences. It also creates several new programs to support groundbreaking research in critical areas such as energy.

This legislation reflects the broad consensus that has emerged across the academic and business communities concerning the need to strengthen education in STEM fields, particularly at the graduate level, as a key component of a national competitiveness strategy.

CGS and its 450-plus member institutions urge Congress to consider this important legislation as soon as possible, and we look forward to working with the sponsors on this initiative.

About the Council of Graduate Schools

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of over 450 institutions of higher education engaged in graduate education, research and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. CGS member institutions award 90% of the doctoral degrees and over 75% of the master's degrees in the U.S. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.

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