



Council of Graduate Schools

Statement on Senate Passage of S. 761

April 30, 2007

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) commends the United States Senate's passage of S. 761, the "America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science (America COMPETES)" Act. This bill will enhance U.S. competitiveness and innovation through investments in our research and education enterprises.

CGS is grateful for the leadership shown by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) in introducing the America COMPETES Act. They were joined by a bi-partisan group of Senators who voted 88-8 in favor of this important legislation necessary to ensure America's continued competitiveness in the global economy.

CGS applauds the bill's recognition of the role that graduate education plays in our nation's ability to maintain a highly-skilled workforce, capable of remaining on the cutting edge of innovation and discovery. Key provisions in support of graduate education include:

- A doubling of the National Science Foundation (NSF) budget and increases in the number of Graduate Research Fellowships and Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeships (IGERT). These programs provide critical support for students pursuing graduate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.
- The establishment of a competitive fellowship program at the Department of Energy (DoE) for up to 700 students pursuing doctoral degrees in math and engineering, as well as increased funding for DoE's Office of Science.
- Authorization of funds to NSF for grants to higher education institutions to establish or improve Professional Science Master's (PSM) degree programs. PSM programs address the needs of industry, government and non-profit sectors for professionals highly trained in science or mathematics as well as in business and communication skills.
- Authorization of funds to implement part-time Master's degree programs in math, science and critical foreign language education for current teachers.

The role of graduate education in enhancing U.S. competitiveness is addressed in the new CGS report, **Graduate Education: The Backbone of American Competitiveness and Innovation**. This report describes the important role of graduate education in producing the innovators of tomorrow.

The Council of Graduate Schools looks forward to working with Congress on implementing a national strategy to maintain U.S. leadership in the 21st century global economy.

The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of over 480 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. CGS member institutions award more than 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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