

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

Additional Views

on

UNLOCKING THE FUTURE

Final Report of the
House Science Committee Science Policy Study
Washington, DC

We want to commend Chairman James Sensenbrenner for recognizing the importance of bringing the nation's national science policy into the 21st century. We also commend the leadership of our colleague, Congressman Vernon Ehlers, for assuming responsibility for a such a daunting task. The report is the culmination of many hearings, many discussions and much research, and we are pleased to release this report for public consumption.

Knowing this report will serve as a framework for future deliberations on congressional science policy and funding, we are concerned about some of recommendations associated with technology research and development. It is our hope that the report does not lead to a disinvestment in federally initiated and sponsored technology research development. As our colleagues know, the U.S. federal government has a long history of conducting and sponsoring technology research and development. We have seen tremendous technological advancements in aerospace, manufacturing, telecommunications, computer software, energy and the environment.

We believe the federal government must continue to pursue this line of inquiry and we believe it is an appropriate role for the federal government. To rely solely on the private sector to take on risky research would be ill-advised and detrimental to our nation's economic vitality and future. It is not enough to only provide tax incentives and less onerous regulations. The federal government must stimulate technology research and development by bringing the private sector, universities and small businesses together and fund cutting edge research.

As we move forward in our national dialogue about a new national science policy, it is our contention that we should not over-emphasize the value of basic research at the expense of technology research and development. Maintaining the competitive edge in a global economy is a worthy research and development objective.

