

Coalition for National Security Research

September 30, 2004

Michael W. Wynne, Under Secretary
Acquisition, Technology and Logistics
Department of Defense
3010 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-3010

Tina W. Jonas, Under Secretary
Comptroller
Department of Defense
1100 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1100

Dear Undersecretaries Wynne and Jonas:

We are writing today to urge you to provide funding in the Fiscal Year 2006 (FY06) Budget Request to enable the Department of Defense (DoD) to recruit the finest scientists and engineers into service of the military. Specifically, we are requesting that you work to ensure that in the FY06 President's Budget Request the Department requests no less than \$15 million for the Science Mathematics And Research for Transformation (SMART) Defense Scholarship Program. This funding will build on the \$10 million authorized in the Senate National Defense Authorization Act and will provide DoD with the ability to support approximately 250 young scientists and engineers pursuing degrees in defense-critical areas of research.

The Hart/Rudman Commission on National Security clearly articulated the need for a program like SMART when it stated, "Second only to a weapon of mass destruction detonating in a U.S. city, we can think of nothing more dangerous than a failure to manage properly science, technology, and education for the common good over the next quarter of a century."

SMART is an innovative pilot program that would provide scholarships to students seeking a baccalaureate or advanced degree in science and engineering disciplines critical to national security. In exchange for support from DoD, students would agree to repay the nation by accepting employment as a civilian researcher in service of our defense needs.

All indications are that science and technology (S&T) will play an increasingly important role in the future warfighting capabilities of the United States military. Unfortunately, 57% of the civilian defense workforce will be eligible for early or regular retirement in the next five years and are not being replaced in sufficient numbers by new scientists and engineers. Further exacerbating the problem are reasonable restrictions that hamper DoD's ability to mitigate the impacts of a diminished, technically proficient workforce through importing talent or locating work offshore. Something must be done to address concerns about the state of our technical workforce if the nation expects to have the scientists and engineers necessary to support the research so essential to the nation's military.

SMART represents a modest investment in beginning to address critical concerns about the S&T workforce. SMART would attract some of the brightest scientists and engineers in America's universities into the defense workforce. Most importantly though, it would enhance the science and technology base of tomorrow's military. We look forward to working with you to ensure that DoD has the resources necessary to bring the finest science and engineering talent into the service of America's warfighters.

Sincerely,

American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics
University of California System
University of Central Florida
Columbia University
Duke University
Marine Technology Society
Optical Society of America

ASEE Engineering Deans Council
Carnegie Mellon University
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IEEE – USA
University of North Carolina
The University of Texas System