



06 April 2006

The Honorable Bill Frist
U.S. Senate Majority Leader
S-230 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Frist:

On behalf of IEEE-USA, I urge you to bring S. 2197, the Protecting America's Competitive Edge (PACE) Energy Act, up for a vote in the full Senate as soon as possible.

As evidence of the legislation's significance and bipartisan nature, PACE Energy was passed on March 8 by voice vote in the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The legislation has the support of the committee chair and ranking minority member, as well as 65 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle. As part of the PACE legislation package, S.2197 is the first of three companion bills, S.2198 - PACE Education and S.2199 - PACE Finance, to be passed out of its respective committees. It is our hope and expectation that the other bills will quickly follow suit.

The National Academies' report, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm," upon which this legislation is based, has singled out energy independence as the single most important challenge facing American science and technology researchers. The PACE-Energy Act provides a positive start to addressing this daunting challenge by strengthening basic research programs at the Department of Energy and providing support for science and math education at all levels through the DOE and the National Laboratories.

In addition to education provisions, PACE Energy also establishes early-career research grants for scientists and engineers and a Distinguished Scientist program to promote scientific and academic excellence at national laboratories. We urge the Senate leadership to capitalize on the increasing momentum and support that this crucial issue is garnering in the legislature, the executive branch and the public at large, and move quickly to pass S.2197 as soon as possible. IEEE-USA stands ready and willing to assist this effort in any way we can. For more information, please contact Bill Williams at (202) 530-8331, or at bill.williams@ieee.org.

IEEE-USA advances the public good and promotes the careers and public policy interests of more than 220,000 engineers, scientists and allied professionals who are U.S. members of the IEEE. IEEE-USA is part of the IEEE, the world's largest technical professional society with 360,000 members in 150 countries. For more information, go to <http://www.ieeeusa.org>.

Sincerely,

Ralph W. Wyndrum, Jr., Eng.Sc.D.
President, IEEE-USA

RWW:bw/bc