

02 August 2006

The Honorable Daniel Akaka
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Akaka:

I am writing on behalf of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers-United States of America (IEEE-USA) to urge your support for the Kennedy-Collins Amendment to the FY07 Defense appropriations bill (H.R. 5631). This bipartisan amendment, which would increase funding for 6.1 basic research accounts by \$45 million, represents a strong commitment to Department of Defense's (DOD) Science and Technology (S&T) program that will be critical to maintaining this country's technological edge in defense capabilities.

The DOD's S&T program supports research in the nation's universities that is the bridge between fundamental science discoveries and future military applications. These activities make essential contributions to national defense by fueling innovation in militarily critical technologies and by training the scientists and engineers of tomorrow. The S&T program also funds research in the DOD laboratories and private sector industries that focus on technologies to support future DOD systems. This focus on the long-term revolutionary changes in military technology will keep U.S. forces ahead of future adversaries and enable a quick response to emerging threats such as chemical and biological agents. We strongly feel that continuing support for long-term research is critically important to ensuring the nation's future security.

The Kennedy-Collins Amendment increases funding for several important areas within the defense Research Development, Test, and Evaluation (RDT&E) budgets: (1) the University Research Initiatives (URIs) within each of the services; (2) the SMART National Defense Education Program; and (3) the University Research Program in Computer Science and Cybersecurity within the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). In addition, the amendment proclaims the Sense of the Senate that, "It should be a goal of the Department of Defense to allocate to basic research programs each fiscal year an amount equal to 15 percent of the funds available to the Department of Defense for science and technology in such fiscal year." We wholeheartedly support these goals, and we encourage the Senate to approve this important amendment.

IEEE-USA is an organizational unit of The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc., created in 1973 to advance the public good, while promoting the careers and public-policy interests of the more than 235,000 electrical, electronics, computer and software engineers who are U.S. members of the IEEE. The IEEE is the world's largest technical professional society. For more information, go to <http://www.ieeeusa.org>. If you have any questions, please contact Bill Williams at IEEE-USA, (202) 530-8331.

Sincerely,



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