National Day of Prayer on the first Thursday of every May. Now, each year, the President signs a proclamation encouraging all Americans to pray on this day.

The theme for this year's National Day of Prayer is ''PRAY2K: America's Hope for the New Millennium.'' During the times of both triumph and adversity that surely lie ahead, I know prayer will help America's leaders and citizens to direct our country on the right path for the new millennium.

In the 1st Century A.D., the apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians, telling them, ''Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.''

It is my hope the citizens of my home state of Minnesota, and people across this Nation, will take that advice and present the concerns of the country in prayer not only on May 4, but every day of the year. I know many thousands of students will gather today at the State Capitol in Minnesota, to pray for their leaders and their peers in an event entitled ''Share the Light 2000.'' I applaud their efforts and commend them in their commitment to this important day.

I thank everyone involved in making this day possible year after year and all those who will take part in the National Day of Prayer. May the spirit that fills our hearts this day remain strong always.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, today we celebrate the National Day of Prayer, set aside as a day to humbly come before God, seeking His guidance for our leaders and His grace upon us as a people. I would like to take this occasion to implore my fellow Americans to remember why it is that prayer is so important for our nation.

Since the earliest days of America's heritage, we have been richly blessed by God. We have been granted liberty, prosperity, and a measure of peace unknown to most nations throughout history. Even during periods of hardship, God has given us strength to endure, and has used our tribulations to mold us into a better nation.

While we daily enjoy God's bountiful provisions, we need only look at our nation's history to realize that His blessing has not been granted to us by accident. America has been blessed as a result of our historic reliance upon Him. From the moment that Christopher Columbus first set foot in the New World until today, Americans have trusted God and sought to follow His direction. Columbus prayed to God for strength and guidance to help his companions endure the difficult voyage to the New World. Our founding fathers looked to God in prayer for wisdom to create a government that would ensure freedom and liberty. Through war and depression, America called out to God for strength and courage. In times of prosperity, we praised God for his many blessings.

God's blessing does not come without expectations, however. God commands us to obey Him and follow His laws. When calling for a day of national humiliation, fasting and prayer in 1863, President Abraham Lincoln admonished our nation in the following statement:

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown.

But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious Hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us!

It behooves us then to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

Those words are as true today as they were when spoken by Abraham Lincoln many years ago. God has given us commands to follow so that we might be able to fully enjoy His creation and receive the benefit of His blessing. When our nation has turned our back on God's commands, we have been plagued by such tragedies as slavery, crime, drug abuse, and abortion. If our nation is to continue to be blessed by God, we must renew our commitment to God daily through prayer.

President Ronald Reagan designated the first Thursday in May to celebrate the National Day of Prayer. My challenge is to make every day a day of prayer, so that we might follow God's will and continue to receive His blessing into the 21st century and beyond.

SAFE SCHOOLS AND SENSIBLE GUN LAWS

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the year that has passed since the tragic events at Columbine High School has been a time of soul searching for many Americans. We have had to ask ourselves some troubling questions. How did we let this happen? Why have we failed to pass sensible gun safety measures? Why doesn't the safety of our children count as much in Congress as the lobbying muscle of the National Rifle Association, NRA? Why did it take 15 deaths at Columbine to get us to take notice? Why wasn't a single death of a school child enough to make us realize the danger to which we have exposed our children in schools across the land?

Speeches alone will not turn the tide in the battle over sensible gun laws. But those of us who believe we must do more to close the loopholes in the law which give minors access to guns have to match the single-mindedness of a single issue group like the NRA with our own focused determination.

Just a few weeks ago, knowing that Congress was about to recess after again failing to take action on gun safety legislation, I offered these words:

For the students of Columbine, every day is a struggle, every day takes another act of courage. There is nothing we can do in Congress to change that, but there is something we can do to protect other students from the nightmares, the anger, and the pain, as told by these students. Congress owes it to Columbine and to the American people to try to end school shootings and reduce access to guns among young people. As of the one-year anniversary, Congress has failed to do so.

Over the last year, many Americans have decided to speak out on this issue. They are fed up with the intolerable level of gun violence in this country. They are outraged by the sight of a chain of preschoolers fleeing hand-in-hand from a deranged gunman. And, they are disheartened by the thought of a first grader shooting another first grader.

On Mothers' Day, May 14, they will bring a powerful message to Washington and to 30 communities across the Nation, including Lansing: it is time for Congress to pass commonsense gun legislation. What began 9 months ago, with two mothers and unparalleled dedication, has become the Million Mom March, the first-ever national march for gun safety. As a Dad who supports this march, I plan to walk along side Michigan mothers, future mothers, and all those willing to be ''honorary mothers'' calling for sensible gun laws and safe kids.

In a few weeks, another school year will come to an end, but the push to enact sensible gun legislation will continue during this Congress, and every one thereafter, until we get it done. And, because of the efforts of the Million Mom Marchers and other Americans who are speaking out on this issue, I believe we will prevail.

INCREASING FEDERAL INVESTMENTS IN RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Mr. President, I wanted to bring to the attention of my colleagues an important letter dated March 22, 2000 sent to our Senate leadership by forty-seven leaders of our high technology companies, universities and labor organizations who are members of the highly-respected Council on Competitiveness. The letter argues for a significant increase in federal Research and Development funding as key to our economic future. It also points out that much of the current technology talent shortage Congress has been spending so much time on could be alleviated through increased R&D support, since that funding supports our technology education and training system. It is frankly unique in my Senate experience to see a letter signed by such a significant segment of our nation's technology leaders and I hope the Senate will heed its counsel.

This letter comes to us in the context of the recently passed Budget Resolution which calls for a small increase in federal investments in science and technology over last year's levels. I believe that a strong bipartisan majority

of the Senate would agree that more is needed. Past investments in research, made in all scientific disciplines and supporting work performed in universities, industry, and government labs, have been the driving force for creating the technologies that have driven our high tech economic boom, preserved our national security, and created fantastic new advances in medical care. The Senate has recognized this, and last year passed the Federal Research Investment Act (S. 296) unanimously—legislation which had 42 bipartisan cosponsors and which calls for a doubling of funding for civilian science and technology over the next decade.

I note that this year the Administration has submitted an aggressive program for civilian science investments for many key agencies, consistent with both the spirit and text of the Senate's legislation, and with the points made in the letter. In particular, I want to call attention to the Administration's efforts to restore balance to the federal research portfolio by aggressively funding work in the physical sciences and engineering, through programs at the National Science Foundation and Department of Energy. Consistent with the March 22nd message sent to us by our country's technology leadership, I hope the Congressional Appropriations Committees will be able to support critical civilian federal Research and Development programs at least at the levels called for in the FY01 Administration Budget Request. This investment, administered by the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, Department of Energy, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and other agencies, funds university, government lab, and industrial efforts to develop the technologies that energize our economy and protect our health.

I also hope the Congress will increase funding for the Department of Defense's Science and Technology program—whose products are critical to our security. Defense science and technology has in the past given us the technologies—including stealth, advanced computing, the Global Positioning System, and precision munitions—that have provided our defense technology edge and led to our victories in the Gulf and Kosovo. These investments have been drastically reduced over the years—risking both our national security and our technological leadership in a variety of key physical sciences and engineering disciplines.

On April 5th, I and the other members of the Senate Science and Technology Caucus had the opportunity to learn about an example of excellent federally-funded science—the fantastic new world of nanotechnology—from a group of world renowned academics and industrial researchers. Investments in nanotechnology will help create the systems that will shrink microelectronics down to the scale of atoms and molecules and create entire chemistry labs on a single computer chip, potentially leading to a technology revolution along the lines of those generated by the transistor and the Internet. One of my constituents, Professor Mark Reed of Yale University, is already taking steps to turn federal investments in fundamental nanotechnology research into technologies that will enhance our nation's productivity. He recently announced the creation of a single molecule electronic switch, using a chemical process called ''self-assembly.'' A nano-scale switch is a breakthrough that may lead to huge performance improvements in digital electronics. Professor Reed has just established a new company aiming to move the integrated electronics world into the era of molecular manufacturing, by making the building blocks of computer circuits out of single molecules.

But these kinds of commercial ventures and the resulting gains in productivity and economic growth that result will only occur if the federal government maintains and increases its investments in science and technology. The Internet, the Human Genome Project, the Space Shuttle, miracle drugs, and global telecommunications networks are but a few examples of what previous investments by the federal government in science and technology have generated. Current work in nanotechnology and other fields supported by sufficient and stable federal investments can also lead to developments that will affect and improve our lives in ways we cannot imagine today. Congress will soon enter the annual Appropriations cycle and I hope that our Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee leaders over the course of this session can work together in a bipartisan fashion to insure that we adequately invest in our nation's technological future.

I ask unanimous consent that the March 22nd letter from the Council on Competitiveness members be printed in the RECORD in full immediately following my remarks. The letter demonstrates to the Congress that our constituents and the leaders of our high-tech industries and institutions are calling for more far aggressive action in increasing Federal support for science and technology research.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

COUNCIL ON COMPETITIVENESS,
Washington, DC, March 22, 2000.

Hon. TRENT LOTT,
U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR LOTT: As you and your colleagues shape America's budget priorities for 2001, the undersigned members of the Council on Competitiveness urges you to strengthen America's science and technology enterprise.

Decades of bipartisan congressional investments have contributed decisively to the current U.S. economic boom. These investments created the advances in knowledge as well as the pool of technical talent that underpin America's competitive advantage in information technology, biotechnology, health science, new materials, and many other critical enablers.

Nevertheless, public-sector investments in frontier research have declined sharply relative to the size of the economy. An additional $100 billion would have been invested if the federal share of such research had been maintained at its 1980 level. Physical sciences, math, and engineering have been particularly affected. The recent ramp up of private sector investment in R&D, while vitally important, is no substitute for the federal role in creating next generation knowledge and technology.

We are also training fewer and fewer American scientists, engineers, and mathematicians despite soaring demand for these skills. Education and training of scientists and engineers are tied to federally sponsored research performed in the nation's laboratories and universities. When federal R&D commitments shrink, so too does the pool of technically trained talent, forcing industry and academia to look abroad for skilled knowledge workers.

In this time of prosperity, we ask that you use this year's budget resolution, authorization and appropriations process to start America down the path toward significantly higher long-term investments in our national science and technology enterprise. Your commitment to continued U.S. technological leadership will generate high-wage jobs, economic growth, and a better quality of life for all Americans for decades to come.

Raymond V. Gilmartin, Chairman, Council on Competitiveness, Chairman, President & CEO, Merck & Co., Inc.; Jack Sheinkman, Labor Vice Chairman, Council on Competitiveness, Vice Chairman, Amalgamated Bank of New York; Richard C. Atkinson, President, University of California; Craig R. Barrett, President and CEO, Intel Corporation; William R. Brody, President, Johns Hopkins University; Vance D. Coffman, Chairman and CEO, Lockhead Martin Corporation; L.D. DeSimone, Chairman of the Board & CEO, 3M Company; F. Duane Ackerman, Industry Vice Chairman, Council on Competitiveness, Chairman & CEO, BellSouth Corporation; Roger Ackerman, Chairman and CEO, Corning Incorporated; David Baltimore, President, California Institute of Technology; Alfred R. Berkeley, III, President, The Nasdaq Stock Market Inc.

Richard H. Brown, Chairman and CEO, Electronic Data Systems Corporation; Jared Cohon, President, Carnegie Mellon University; Gary T. DiCamillo, Chairman and CEO, Polaroid Corporation; Charles M. Vest, University Vice Chairman, Council on Competitiveness, President, Massachusetts Inst. of Technology; Paul A. Allaire, Chairman, Xerox Corporation; Edward W. Barnholt, President and CEO, Agilent Technologies, Inc.; Molly Corbett Broad, President, University of North Carolina; G. Wayne Clough, President, Georgia Institute of Technology; Philip M. Condit, Chairman and CEO, The Boeing Company; Sandra Feldman, President, American Federation of Teachers, AFL–CIO.

Carleton S. Fiorina President and CEO, Hewlett-Packard Company; Joseph T. Gorman, Chairman and CEO, TRW Inc.; Shirley Ann Jackson, President, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; Jerry J. Jasinowski, President, National Association of Manufacturers; Patrick J. McGovern, Chairman of the Board, International Data Group Inc.; Michael E. Porter, Professor, Harvard University; David E. Shaw, Chairman, D.E. Shaw & Co., LP; George M.C. Fisher, Chairman of the Board, Eastman

Kodak Company; William R. Hambrecht, President, W.R. Hambrecht & Co., LLC; Irwin M. Jacobs, Chairman & CEO, QUALCOMM, Inc.; Peter Likins, President, University of Arizona.

Henry A. McKinnell, President and COO, Pfizer Inc.; Heinz C. Prechter, Chairman, ASC Incorporated; Frederick W. Smith, Chairman, President & CEO, FDX Corporation; Louis V. Gerstner, Jr., Chairman and CEO, IBM Corporation; Charles O. Holliday, Jr., President & CEO, E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company; Durk I. Jager, Chairman, President & CEO, The Procter & Gamble Company; Richard A. McGinn, Chairman and CEO, Lucent Technologies, Inc.; Mario Morino, Chairman and CEO, Morino Group; Eric Schmidt, Chairman and CEO, Novell; Michael T. Smith, Chairman and CEO, Hughes Electronic Corporation.

Ray Stata, Chairman of the Board, Analog Devices, Inc.; Mark Wrighton, Chancellor, Washington University; Gary L. Tooker, Vice Chairman of the Board, Motorola Inc.; John Young, Founder, Council on Competitiveness; G. Richard Wagoner, Jr., President & COO, General Motors Corporation.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, I rise today to join my colleagues in highlighting a powerful call to action on science and technology funding issued by our nation's high technology, academic, and labor leaders.

On March 22, 2000, forty-seven CEOs of high technology companies, Presidents of our leading universities, and representatives of labor organizations came together in an unprecedented Council on Competitiveness letter petitioning Congress for ''significantly higher long-term investments in our national science and technology enterprise.'' This investment, they stated, should come in the form of increased ''public-sector investments in frontier research'' such as research in the ''[p]hysical sciences, math, and engineering.'' This letter also includes a clear warning—Congressional failure to appropriate more funding for science and technology research will threaten America's competitive advantage in information technology, biotechnology, health science, new materials, and other critical technology-intensive fields. As we all know, many economists, including Alan Greenspan, have asserted that our country's leadership in these areas is an important reason for our current economic success. A refusal to support America's dominant position with adequate appropriations today threatens our economic success tomorrow.

The Council on Competitiveness letter also reveals that increased federal funding to science and technology will positively affect another key policy issue—the scarcity of technologically skilled workers. The debate over whether to raise the number of H1–B visas has alerted all of us to the technology industry's critical need for more highly skilled workers. In the New Economy large numbers of ''knowledge-based'' workers are essential to economic growth. Because we are not training enough American knowledge-based workers, high-tech companies have asked Congress to increase the number of H1–B visas granted to skilled workers who are willing to immigrate from other countries.

Appropriating more funding for science and technology research will increase the number of technologically trained Americans, thus addressing the current scarcity of knowledge-based workers. The letter explains that: ''Education and training of scientists and engineers are tied to federally sponsored research performed in the nation's laboratories and universities. When federal R&D commitments shrink, so too does the pool of technically trained talent, forcing industry and academia to look abroad for skilled knowledge workers.'' I therefore urge all my colleagues who support increasing the H1–B cap to support increased federal science and technology funding—we must develop more American technology workers.

It is important to understand that this letter's signatories are not alone in their recommendation for more substantial funding for science and technology research. The House Science Committee wisely wrote in a 1998 study titled ''Unlocking Our Future: Toward a New National Science Policy'' that ''[t]he federal investment in science has yielded stunning payoffs. It has spawned not only new products, but also entire industries. To build upon the strength of the research enterprise, we must make federal research funding stable and substantial, maintaining diversity in the federal research portfolio, and promoting creative, ground breaking research.''

Similarly, a Business Week editorial on July 26, 1999 stated that ''[b]ecause of productivity gains, the economy can now operate at a higher speed without inflation. . . . [P]romoting the New Economy also requires wise policy from Washington. We need to support basic research and education at all levels, the seed corn of innovation.''

These arguments are supported by noted MIT economist Lester Thurow in a June, 1999 Atlantic Monthly article, where he comments that: ''[a] successful knowledge based economy requires large public investments in education, infrastructure, and research and development. . . . Private rates of return on R&D spending (the financial benefits that accrue to the firm doing the spending) average about 24 percent. But societal rates of return on R&D spending (the economic benefits that accrue to the entire society) are about 66 percent. . . . This result, never contradicted in the economic literature, provides powerful evidence that there are huge positive social spillovers from research and development . . . Because the government doesn't care exactly which Americans reap the benefits, it has a very important role to play in R&D. Rates of return on R&D spending are far above those found elsewhere in the economy. Government now pays for about 30 percent of total R&D, but with a 66 percent rate of return it should be spending much more.''

In recognition of this need for greater public support of science and technology research, last year the Senate unanimously passed the Federal Research Investment Act (S. 296). This bill would double our investment in civilian science and technology over the next decade. The Administration also understands how critical publicly funded R&D is to the country's vitality. Its budget includes a strong and balanced program which will begin to recharge our sagging R&D portfolio. The administration's program is consistent with the spirit and the text of the Federal Research Investment Act and the Council on Competitiveness letter.

Unfortunately, our Congressional Budget Resolution calls only for a small increase in federal investments in science and technology. We have a chance to make an important investment in our country's future and to lay the groundwork for continued American high-tech leadership. I urge my colleagues to heed our high-tech, academic, and labor leaders' call to action on federal R&D support and work together to achieve more substantial appropriations for science and technology.

Mr. BAYH. Mr. President, I am very pleased today to join with a number of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to call attention to the remarkable letter sent to our Senate leadership by the nearly fifty members of the Council on Competitiveness. The letter points out the importance of basic scientific research to our economy, and shows how such public-sector investments have been on the decline. When so many prominent leaders agree on an issue of public policy, it is incumbent upon us to pay attention to their views.

I believe that the recent increases in private-sector research are no substitute for the government's traditional role in funding the most basic research that may or may not yield important discoveries. It is this so-called ''market failure'' in basic research—those making the investments are not assured of positive outcomes, and cannot realistically capture all of the economic gains from new discoveries—that makes the government's role so vitally important. What's more, the private sector's new investments have been increasingly focused on biotechnology and product development, while investment in basic sciences such as math, chemistry, and physics has experienced sharp declines. This has important implications for today's workforce, as well as the rate of innovation that will drive future increases in living standards.

While advances in the health sciences, such as the Human Genome Project, are extremely exciting, there are areas in the physical sciences that are on the verge of generating important discoveries, and where government ought to be focusing additional

resources. One area in which I am keenly interested is the area of nanotechnology. This groundbreaking area—which examines structures atom-by-atom and molecule-by-molecule, on the scale of just a few billionths of a meter—may lead to discoveries that will change the way almost everything, from building materials to vaccines to computers, are designed and made. Neil Lane, the President's science advisor, says that this area of science and engineering will most likely lead to tomorrow's breakthroughs. It's a very important new area, but one where the practical applications are a few years away. Basic research is the key to pushing the envelope forward.

Yet despite the potential applications of these and other discoveries—and President Clinton's half-billion-dollar National Nanotechnology Initiative—recent trends do not bode well for the physical sciences. The Senate voted last year to double our investment in basic scientific research over the next decade, but the budget recently passed by this Congress places a higher priority on tax cuts and therefore will make such increases very difficult without forcing important cuts in other areas. Nevertheless, I hope that my colleagues understand that basic research is an appropriate role for government, and that such investment is clearly in the national interest.

To be sure, the R&D picture as a whole—public and private sectors combined—has been improving. R&D had reached a peak of nearly three percent of GDP in the early 1960s, and the number has recently risen close to its 1960s peak. But the overall federal investment in R&D is still relatively flat, because much of the recent gains have come from private industry. And as I already mentioned, much of that is in product development, rather than the most basic research.

If we look exclusively at the federal role in basic research, the numbers show the trend even more clearly. The federal R&D budget as a percent of GDP was nearly two percent in the mid 1960s, and it is less than eight-tenths of one percent today. These declines have not been shared equally. Funding for the National Institutes of Health is much higher, and funding for the National Science Foundation is up slightly. But the other traditional big science agencies are significantly lower, with defense R&D cuts playing a central role. Defense R&D is down thirty percent over the past six years.

Again, some claim that this problem is overstated, because the private sector has picked up the slack. But there are two problems. First, with such a short time horizon for corporations, the private sector often looks to short-term projects like product development, rather than long-term projects with unsure real-world applications. This makes basic research more dependent on the federal government.

Second, public and private investment is only increasing in two areas, information technology and biotech/pharmaceuticals. Math, chemistry, geology, physics, and chemical, mechanical, and electrical engineering are all declining. The United States risks falling behind in the area of innovation, as other nations such as South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Israel, and even Japan increase their investments in new ideas and new technologies.

The shift in federal R&D resources to health and biotech is a major reason we see so many talented people in the life sciences, but fewer and fewer mathematicians, chemists, physicists, and engineers. You could make a very strong argument that the stagnation in U.S. degrees in physical sciences and engineering is related to the decline of federal research dollars in these areas, because R&D funds not only science projects, but also the graduate students and researchers who will be tomorrow's scientists, technical workers, and teachers.

Consider the upcoming debate over increasing the number of H–1B visas, a special visa that allows foreign workers with special skills to work in the United States. Our national talent pool is being raided so heavily by the life sciences—in large part because the research money is there, meaning more opportunities for students—that the high tech industry desperately needs workers. By some estimates, hundreds of thousands of well-paying high-tech jobs remain unfilled because the U.S. talent pool is stretched so thin. While some in Congress—including myself—are willing to allow more H–1B workers if there is additional money for job training and science scholarships, we also know that job training alone is not the answer to the high-tech labor shortage. We must put more research money into the physical sciences so that more young people are attracted to these fields of work.

Another problem that we must deal with is entitlement reform. The constant growth of entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare squeezes other areas of the budget and puts every program on the discretionary side in direct competition with each other. All discretionary programs, including research, are coming out of a smaller and smaller share of the pie.

The numbers here are telling. In the early 1960s, discretionary spending—where all of the research money comes from—was two-thirds of the budget, while mandatory spending and entitlements accounted for only one-third. Today, this is completely reversed, with discretionary spending now accounting for only one-third of all spending. Some estimates show that if we don't make changes soon, the entire budget could go to entitlements just a few decades from now. We must all recognize that future increases in science and research will suffer if entitlements are not reformed.

Michael Porter of Harvard University has done a great deal of research on what makes countries competitive in the global economy. He writes that continuous innovation is the key—but innovation requires research. For example, where will tomorrow's Internet come from? No one could have known that government's investment in this area would have such a huge impact on all of our lives. If we fail to shift our budgetary priorities to make investments in the future, we cannot promise our children an ever-growing economy.

In closing, I am encouraged that the Council on Competitiveness has recognized the importance of basic science research to our economic well-being. I hope that the Senate, in a bipartisan fashion, will recognize that such investment is an appropriate role for government and is without question in the national interest, and that we will find ways to make the ''doubling bill'' a reality.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I would like to make a few brief remarks about an usual letter I received on behalf of forty-seven leaders of the nation's premier high technology companies, universities, and labor organizations. This is the first time in its history that the Council on Competitiveness, a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening U.S. innovation, has sent such a letter to Congress on behalf of its outstanding membership. The message is loud and clear: substantially increased funding for R&D is necessary to continue our national economic success and our international leadership.

Michael Porter, noted professor at the Harvard School of Business stated, ''the key to U.S. competitiveness is innovation—the ability to deliver products, processes, and services that cannot be easily or inexpensively produced elsewhere. Data shows that the U.S. is strong, but that a number of other countries are successfully making the transition from imitator to innovator.'' Economists argue that such an investment in innovation, through its impact on economic growth, will not drain our resources, but will actually improve our country's fiscal standing.

Current economic expansion and growth, however, cannot be maintained if we do not provide the necessary funds and incentives to perform critical R&D throughout the scientific disciplines. During the 1990s, the funding for math has declined 20 percent, physics has declined 20 percent, chemistry has dropped by 10 percent and engineering has dropped 30–40 percent. These reductions have the combined effect of eroding the base from which new technologies can be derived.

The Government plays a critical role in driving the innovation process in the United States. The majority of the federal government's basic R&D is directed toward critical missions to serve the public interest in areas including health, environmental pollution control, space exploration, and national defense. Federal funds support nearly 60 percent of the nation's basic research, with a similar share performed

in colleges and universities. It is this fundamental research, combined with a strong talent pool, that ultimately drives the innovation process.

Throughout my career in the Senate, I have spent a considerable amount of time advocating for greater funding levels for civilian R&D. Together with many of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle, I have been trying to educate others on the value of the federal government's role in funding merit-based and peer-reviewed programs. One only has to look at lasers, mechanical cardiac assist devices, and automatic internal defibrillators to find an examples of prudent federal investments in R&D.

The Federal Research Investment Act, which I authored with Senators ROCKEFELLER, DOMENICI, and LIEBERMAN, passed the Senate last July for the second year in a row. Yet it has unfortunately languished in the House. The bill would double the amount of federally-funded civilian R&D over an eleven year period, while at the same time, establishing strong accountability mechanisms. I believe that a balanced portfolio of research across all scientific disciplines will enable our national economy to continue to grow and to raise our standard of living.

We rally around increased federal funding for basic R&D, yet we are faced with daunting prospects each year of drastic cuts in the federal investment. Somehow, we are stuck in the same position each year of trying to convince Congress of R&D's necessity to the well-being of our nation, as we confront very real budgetary limitations. We must set priorities. While I strongly believe that Congress must strive to stay within the budget caps, I also firmly believe that funding for R&D should be allowed to grow in fiscal year 2001 and beyond.

As a result of the current fiscal environment in Congress and the desire to utilize the surplus prudently, I am confident that investing in basic R&D, and in turn the technological innovation of the future, is a proper use of the federal taxpayers dollars. This pivotal need for a resurgence in basic R&D investments is evident when we further consider our nation's increased dependency on technology and the global competition that threatens our sustained leadership position. R&D drives the innovation process, which in turn drives the U.S. economy. Now is not the time to turn our backs on the nation's future prosperity.

Mr. President, I want to thank the Council on Competitiveness again for it poignant statement and strongly encourage each of my colleagues to consider its message as we continue to make budgeting decisions this year.

PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK 2000

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I rise today during Public Service Recognition Week 2000 to encourage my colleagues to take a moment to honor the many selfless actions and outstanding accomplishments of our nation's state, local, and Federal public servants. As the ranking member on the Senate Subcommittee on International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services, with direct jurisdiction over the Federal civil service, I take particular pride in honoring the millions of dedicated men and women who work around the clock on our behalf.

Their responsibilities are as varied as the challenges presented by their jobs. Our armed forces and civilian defense workers keep us out of harms's way—both domestically and abroad—our public school teachers instruct our children, and the U.S. Postal Service provides delivery to every address in the nation. Our public servants safeguard our food supplies; support our social services infrastructure, oversee and protect our economy; and so much more. These men and women are the backbone of what makes America great. We often take them for granted and in certain instances subject them to scorn and ridicule. With little recognition from the public they serve, these employees are unwavering in their dedication, honor, purpose, and ability to serve their cities, counties, states, and Federal Government.

I am heartened that so many school districts are fostering public service by requiring their students to serve as volunteers prior to graduating high school. As a former school teacher and administrator, I believe that voluntary service is useful and appropriate in developing a sense of community and fellowship, and I am hopeful that as each generation matures it will see the value of continuing their public service by working in state, local, or Federal Government. However, I am aware that Congress must play a role in supporting public service.

At a Governmental Affairs Committee hearing this week on the effectiveness of Federal employee incentive programs it became evident that the lack of sufficient funds to support viable and much-needed compensation, recognition, and incentives program for Federal employees was hampering efforts to recruit, retain, and relocate Federal workers.

Federal agencies, if given adequate funding, would be better positioned to utilize incentive programs that are already available. Flattened budgets and the pressure to reallocate limited resources do not benefit Federal employees or the ultimate end-user: the American taxpayer.

Our Nation's Federal civil servants have given much to their country, especially when Congress was balancing the budget during times of crunching deficits. Now that the country is enjoying record-breaking surpluses, I believe Federal employees should be rewarded for their contributions, and I will continue to push for realistic budgets and salaries for Federal agencies and their employees.

I proudly join all public service workers in observance of the 16th annual Public Service Recognition Week, and I heartily salute the past accomplishments, outstanding service, and future contribution that these outstanding men and women make to our Nation's greatness.

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, I rise today to spotlight the significant achievements of all those who make up our Nation's public workforce.

This week, from May 1st to the 7th, is Public Service Recognition Week, organized by the Public Employees Roundtable. The Public Employees Roundtable was formed in 1982 as a nonpartisan coalition of management and professional associations representing approximately one million public employees and retirees. The mission of the Roundtable is to educate the American people about the numerous ways public employees enrich the quality of life throughout our Nation and advance the country's national interests around the world.

I am indeed proud to join the Public Employees Roundtable in their ongoing efforts to bring special attention to the dedicated individuals who have chosen public service as a career. While we should all appreciate the efforts of public employees throughout the year, this week-long celebration is an invaluable opportunity to honor their contributions and learn about the vast array of programs and services public employees provide every day. For four days, starting today, a wide variety of organizations will sponsor exhibits on the Mall to spotlight the work public employees perform. This year, among the numerous agencies represented, will be the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps; and the Social Security Administration.

These exhibits sponsored by civilian and Department of Defense agencies will showcase the amazing variety of public employees that make ours the greatest Nation in the world—at the Federal, state, and local government levels. This year, I was also pleased to join with several of my House and Senate colleagues in circulating to every Congressional office a videotape entitled ''Salute to Excellence,'' produced by the Public Employees Roundtable. In a brief 10 minutes, the video clearly demonstrates that our Nation's public servants are hard-working individuals who perform vital work for the country each and every day.

The total impact of the work of public employees is impossible to measure. Without them, senior citizens would wait in vain for Social Security checks, cities would not have the funds and assistance to improve their highways, and our entrepreneurs could not protect their new inventions. In short, all of our citizens would suffer.