

declines are due in large part to the difficulties foreign students now face in getting a visa to study in America.

We must not compromise our security needs to host foreign businesspeople or students. But there must be ways to streamline visa procedures and otherwise lighten the burden to make it easier for foreigners to study and conduct business here.

American universities and research institutes do much of the most innovative research in the world. But over the last 20 years, Federal research funding in the physical sciences and engineering has actually declined by nearly one-third as a share of the economy.

Money invested in Federal research programs pays dividends many times the investment. For example, National Science Foundation funding of research in the basic sciences and engineering has helped discover new technologies that have led to multi-billion dollar industries and created countless new jobs. These include jobs in fiber optics, radar, wireless communication, nanotechnology, plant genomics, magnetic resonance imaging, ultrasound, and the Internet.

We should invest in our future by fully funding research support organizations such as the National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, and the Office of Science at the Department of Energy.

Without Government support, private investment in research and development would be less than it should be. The society as a whole needs to foster the research that will build a better nation in the future. The R&D tax credit has helped. But we can improve the R&D tax credit by simplifying it and making it permanent.

The Government has expended a tremendous amount of time, money, and manpower negotiating trade agreements with countries like Bahrain, Morocco, and Colombia. None of these small economies offers much to American exporters.

By contrast, last year, American companies lost more than \$3.8 billion to business software piracy in China alone. Putting more resources toward defending American intellectual property rights would have a real effect on the bottom line for many American companies.

American companies sold \$626.6 billion in copyrighted products in 2002, 6 percent of American GDP, and employed 5.5 million workers, or 4 percent of the American workforce. Their foreign sales and exports amount to \$89 billion, more than most other export sectors. Our intellectual property is among our most valuable assets. Some would say it is now the American comparative advantage. We must do a better job protecting it.

The political bargain that has kept a consensus in support of liberalized trade has long been that in exchange for labor market flexibility, those hurt by trade would have help finding new jobs. That bargain has eroded.

America spends less on labor-adjustment assistance than any major industrialized country. Japan spends nearly twice the share of GDP, Canada nearly three times, and Germany more than eight times as much.

Trade adjustment assistance provides retraining, income support, a health insurance tax credit, and other benefits to workers who lose their jobs due to trade. TAA is not a handout for idle workers, but a means to retrain them for competitive employment and help them through the transition.

We should expand trade adjustment assistance to service workers and emphasize, and possibly expand, the wage insurance program.

And we need to do more to keep jobs in America. For most American companies, health care costs are the single biggest disincentive to hiring new workers. The costs are enormous, increasing at a double-digit pace, far outstripping health care costs in other countries.

America spends more on health care than any other country in the world. Per capita spending on health care in America is nearly 2½ times the average in the industrialized world.

Employers in America also bear much of the cost of the rising number of uninsured Americans through cost-shifting by hospitals and other health care providers. Last year, employers paid an average of nearly \$2,900 for single employee coverage and more than \$6,500 for family coverage.

By contrast, most employers in other industrialized countries do not pay anything for their employees' health care. A Government-sponsored universal health program bears those costs. The difference is hurting America's competitiveness.

We can take several small, practical steps to help lessen health care's burden on American companies. We could provide tax credits to small employers, fund employer-based group-purchasing pools, increase funding for high-risk pools, expand Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program, and permit a Medicare buy-in for the near-elderly.

But we cannot keep kidding ourselves. We need real change to address the problem of American health care costs. We need to do so, to meet the challenge to America's place in the world.

In reality, the economic reforms in China, India, and Eastern Europe that cause the challenge to American leadership are a good thing. We should want China, India, and Eastern Europe to educate their people, open their markets, and trade with us.

Since World War II, there has been no greater advocate for free markets around the world than America. America has much to gain in a world of free markets. When foreign workers move into more productive work, their incomes will rise. As foreign workers become more prosperous, they will become better able to buy American

goods and services. And by keeping our markets open to foreign products, consumer prices fall on everything from footwear to electronics, making the American consumer's dollar go further. Everyone can be better off.

Trade is not a zero sum game. Increasing competition from China, India, and Eastern Europe does not mean that America will suffer.

Remember, after World War II, America prospered as it helped to rebuild a shattered Europe. Competition from recovering European economies did not hurt America. Rather, as Europe emerged from the devastation of war, the American economy grew along with Europe's. With the right policies, much the same can happen perhaps with much larger positive effects with the growth in China, India, and Eastern Europe.

Remember, in 1957, when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, the first man-made satellite to orbit the Earth. The challenge of Sputnik gave America the political will to devote the resources needed to become the world's premier space power.

In the same vein, the economic challenge of the next 2 decades presents its own opportunities. The challenge posed by economic development in China, India, and Eastern Europe could help create a political consensus in favor of change and growth.

The former Librarian of Congress Daniel Boorstein wrote: "The most important lesson of American history is the promise of the unexpected. None of our ancestors would have imagined settling way over here on this unknown continent. So we must continue to have a society that is hospitable to the unexpected, which allows possibilities to develop beyond our own imaginings."

We cannot rest on our laurels. But if we remain open to the unexpected, if we allow the possibilities to develop, we can maintain America's leadership in the world.

It will take work. But if we redouble our education, if we open more markets, if we better manage our healthcare, then we can face the challenges of the decades to come.

We must get to work. But if we do, we can make an America that, in Pericles's words, "comes to her testing time in a greatness that surpasses what was imagined of her."

If we do, America can continue to "stand with the allies of freedom" throughout the world.

And if we do, "Future ages will wonder at us, as the present age does now."

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNER). The Senator from Utah.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. BENNETT. I ask unanimous consent the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations on today's Executive Calendar: Calendar Nos. 173, 174,

175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, and 184.

I further ask unanimous consent that all of the mentioned nominations be confirmed en bloc, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nominations considered and confirmed en bloc are as follows:

THE JUDICIARY

A. Noel Anketell Kramer, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals for the term of fifteen years.

Laura A. Cordero, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Linda Morrison Combs, of North Carolina, to be Controller, Office of Federal Financial Management, Office of Management and Budget.

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Linda M. Springer, of Pennsylvania, to be Director of the Office of Personnel Management for a term of four years.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Emil A. Skodon, of Illinois, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Brunei Darussalam.

Joseph A. Mussomeli, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Larry Miles Dinger, of Iowa, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of the Fiji Islands, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Nauru, the Kingdom of Tonga, Tuvalu, and the Republic of Kiribati.

Ronald E. Neumann, of Virginia, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

Gregory L. Schulte, of Virginia, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Vienna Office of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Gregory L. Schulte, of Virginia, to be Representative of the United States of America to the International Atomic Energy Agency, Vienna Office of the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador.

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Michael E. Hess, of New York, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, vice Roger P. Winter, resigned.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Dina Habib Powell, of Texas, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Educational and Cultural Affairs), vice Patricia de Stacy Harrison.

NOMINATION OF LINDA SPRINGER

Mr. VOINOVICH. Mr. President, I would like to thank the Senate for its

expeditious consideration of Ms. Linda Springer of Pennsylvania to be the Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

On Wednesday, June 15, I chaired a hearing of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs to consider the nomination of Ms. Springer. One week later, the committee unanimously approved her nomination. As my colleagues in the Senate know, I am committed to finding solutions to the human capital challenges of the Federal Government. Clearly, there is no more important partner in the executive branch of Government than the Director of the Office of Personnel Management in addressing these issues.

The Federal civil service now is undergoing the most dramatic changes in more than a quarter century. For example, agencies are implementing new performance management and a related pay for performance systems for the senior executive service. The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Defense are designing new, modern, and flexible personnel systems to meet their national security missions. As these and other reforms continue, leadership from the Office of Personnel Management is imperative to guarantee that the merit principles that are the core of our Federal civil service are upheld and that the new personnel systems are fair and equitable for employees.

During the committee's hearing, I found Ms. Springer to be focused, dedicated, and more than capable of taking on this important job. Prior to the hearing, I met with Ms. Springer in my office and was impressed with her candor and recognition of the challenges confronting the workforce.

Ms. Springer's experience in the private sector and as Controller of the Office of Management and Budget has prepared her to lead this Federal agency. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to support this nomination. Thank you.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will return to legislative session.

APPOINTMENT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic leader, pursuant to Public Law 108-136, appoints the following individual to serve as a member on the Veterans' Disability Benefits Commission: Mr. Ken Jordan of California vice Mr. Mike O'Callaghan of Nevada.

ORDERS FOR MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2005

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it

stand in adjournment until 1 p.m. on Monday, June 27. I further ask that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved, and the Senate then begin a period of morning business until 3 p.m., with the majority leader or his designee in control of the first half of the time, and the Democratic leader or his designee in control of the second half of the time; provided that at 3 p.m. the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 2361, the Interior appropriations bill, as provided under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. BENNETT. Mr. President, on Monday, following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of the Interior appropriations bill. Under a previous agreement, all amendments to the bill must be offered during Monday's session. There will be no rollcall votes on Monday, but Senators who have amendments to the bill should make themselves available to offer and debate their amendments. We will begin voting with respect to amendments to the Interior appropriations bill on Tuesday.

I also inform our colleagues the next vote will occur on Tuesday morning shortly before 10 a.m. That vote will be on passage of H.R. 6, the Energy bill.

Finally, on behalf of the majority leader, I would like to remind all Senators that next week will be the final week prior to the Fourth of July recess, so Senators should expect a busy week with rollcall votes throughout.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 1 P.M. MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2005

Mr. BENNETT. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in adjournment under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 1:18 p.m., adjourned until Monday, June 27, 2005, at 1 p.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate Friday, June 24, 2005:

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

LINDA MORRISON COMBS, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE CONTROLLER, OFFICE OF FEDERAL FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET.

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

LINDA M. SPRINGER, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

EMIL A. SKODON, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO BRUNEI DARUSSALAM.

JOSEPH A. MUSSOMELI, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE KINGDOM OF CAMBODIA.

LARRY MILES DINGER, OF IOWA, TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF THE FIJI ISLANDS, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF NAURU, THE KINGDOM OF TONGA, TUVALU, AND THE REPUBLIC OF KIRIBATI.