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## **President Bush Announces “American Competitiveness Initiative” With Focus on Research, Innovation, and Education**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – President Bush announced in his State of the Union address last night the *American Competitiveness Initiative* (ACI) to encourage American innovation and to strengthen the Nation’s ability to compete in the global economy. The plan will increase Federal investment in critical research, ensure that the U.S. continues to lead the world in opportunity and innovation, and provide American children with a strong foundation in math and science.

The *American Competitiveness Initiative* commits \$5.9 billion in FY 2007, and more than \$136 billion over 10 years, to increase investments in research and development (R&D), strengthen education, and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation. Because federal investment in R&D has proven critical to keeping America’s economy strong by generating knowledge and tools upon which new technologies are developed, the centerpiece of the *American Competitiveness Initiative* is the President’s commitment to double over 10 years investment in key federal agencies that support basic research programs in the physical sciences – the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy’s Office of Science, and the Department of Commerce’s National Institute of Standards and Technology.

“The vision President Bush presented last night integrates to an unprecedented extent the concept of an adequately prepared workforce with the role of leadership in science and technology required to maintain the vitality of our economy,” said Dr. John H. Marburger III, Science Advisor to the President and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy. “This initiative, following a rigorous prioritization process, both strengthens federal research in the physical sciences and supports private sector R&D, where two-thirds of our national R&D occurs. Together with significant education and workforce training programs, this plan provides a foundation for America’s future economic competitiveness.”

One of the guests of the First Lady Mrs. Bush at the President’s State of the Union address was Dr. Deborah Jin, a physicist with the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Dr. Jin, a winner of the MacArthur Fellowship, commonly known as the “genius grant,” is also a JILA Fellow and an adjoint associate professor of physics at the University of Colorado.

“If you don’t do the fundamental research, you don’t know what is possible,” said Dr. Jin following the State of the Union. “The wonderful thing about science is that you don’t know what you are going to find – you learn new things through both theory and experiment. Moreover, federal support for basic research leads to crucial advances in technology discovery. This endeavor has great potential for economic opportunity and benefit to society.”

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