

109TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3724

To enhance scientific research and competitiveness through the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 25, 2006

Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. INOUE, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. JOHNSON) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To enhance scientific research and competitiveness through the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “EPSCoR Research and
5 Competitiveness Act of 2006”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Ensuring regional diversity in research
2 funding is an essential strategy in strengthening
3 international competitiveness.

4 (2) Economic development in high technology
5 fields is often advanced by industrial partnerships
6 with near by strong research institutions from which
7 companies can acquire intellectual property, highly
8 trained staff, and vital resources.

9 (3) The National Science Foundation is an
10 independent Federal agency created by Congress in
11 1950 “to promote the progress of science; to ad-
12 vance the national health, prosperity and welfare,
13 and to secure the national defense”.

14 (4) Congress has subsequently directed that, “it
15 shall be an objective of the Foundation to strengthen
16 research and education in the sciences and engineer-
17 ing, including independent research by individuals,
18 throughout the United States, and to avoid undue
19 concentration of such research and education”.

20 (5) Currently, Foundation research investments
21 are concentrated in a small number of States. In
22 contrast, 25 other States together receive less than
23 10 percent of the Foundation’s research funding, yet
24 these States are home to 20 percent of the popu-

1 lation, 25 percent of doctoral/research universities,
2 and 18 percent of academic scientists and engineers.

3 (6) Insufficient research infrastructure dimin-
4 ishes the ability of many universities to compete ef-
5 fectively for research funding, and thereby limits
6 their contributions to regional economic development
7 and international competitiveness.

8 (7) The Foundation's Experimental Program to
9 Stimulate Competitive Research, or EPSCoR, is the
10 primary program by which the Foundation seeks to
11 improve the research infrastructure of institutions in
12 States that presently receive small portions of Foun-
13 dation funding. EPSCoR is thus an important com-
14 ponent of national efforts to increase innovation and
15 improve competitiveness.

16 **SEC. 3. FUNDING.**

17 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Foun-
18 dation for EPSCoR—

19 (1) \$125,000,000 for fiscal year 2007; and

20 (2) for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2011,
21 an amount equal to the sum of—

22 (A) \$125,000,000; and

23 (B) \$125,000,000 multiplied by a percent-
24 age equal to the percentage by which the Foun-
25 dation's budget request for such fiscal year ex-

1 ceeds the total amount appropriated to the
2 Foundation for fiscal year 2007.

3 **SEC. 4. RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT**
4 **GRANTS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—In the administration of the
6 Foundation’s research infrastructure improvement grant
7 program, the Director shall authorize States participating
8 in the grant program to include partnerships with out-of-
9 State research institutions if the amount of funding trans-
10 ferred to another State does not exceed 5 percent of the
11 amount of the grant in any fiscal year.

12 (b) AUTHORIZATION LEVEL.—From amounts appro-
13 priated pursuant to section 3, the Director shall make
14 available to the research infrastructure improvement grant
15 program—

16 (1) \$65,000,000 for fiscal year 2007; and

17 (2) for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2011,
18 an amount equal to the sum of—

19 (A) \$75,000,000; and

20 (B) \$75,000,000 multiplied by a percent-
21 age equal to the percentage by which the Foun-
22 dation’s budget request for such fiscal year ex-
23 ceeds the total amount appropriated to the
24 Foundation for fiscal year 2007.

1 **SEC. 5. CO-FUNDING.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years 2007
3 through 2011, the Director shall obligate and expend not
4 less than 20 percent of the amount available for EPSCoR
5 on co-funding projects that are ranked, by a peer-review
6 process, in the top 20 percent of all proposals submitted
7 in response to an announced competition.

8 (b) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Director shall submit an
9 annual report to the Senate Committee on Commerce,
10 Science, and Transportation and the House of Represent-
11 atives Committee on Science that provides information
12 about—

13 (1) co-funded projects on a State-by-State basis
14 for the preceding year; and

15 (2) the amount and use of co-funding by each
16 of the Foundation's directorates for that year.

17 **SEC. 6. CYBER INFRASTRUCTURE.**

18 Within 180 days after the date of enactment of this
19 Act, the Director, through the Office of Cyber Infrastruc-
20 ture, shall develop and publish a plan enabling States par-
21 ticipating in EPSCoR to participate fully in the Founda-
22 tion's Cyber Infrastructure Initiative.

23 **SEC. 7. MAJOR RESEARCH INSTRUMENTATION.**

24 Within 180 days after the date of enactment of this
25 Act, the Director, through the Office of Major Research
26 Instrumentation, shall develop and publish a plan enabling

1 States participating in EPSCoR to develop partnerships
2 and participate fully in the Foundation’s major research
3 instrumentation program.

4 **SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.**

5 In this Act:

6 (1) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
7 the Director of the National Science Foundation.

8 (2) EPSCoR.—The term “EPSCoR” means
9 the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive
10 Research authorized by section 113 of the National
11 Science Foundation Authorization Act of 1988 (42
12 U.S.C. 1862g).

13 (3) FOUNDATION.—The term “Foundation”
14 means the National Science Foundation.

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