

June 8, 2009

I rise today in support of H.R. 1736, the international Science and Technology Cooperation Act of 2009. This bill would, formally establish a committee on the President's National Science and Technology Council to identify and support opportunities to strengthen U.S. foreign policy through cooperation in the fields of science and technology. The President recently announced new initiatives to promote science and technology partnerships between the United States and Muslim-majority countries. I applaud these efforts, and I would note that an across-the-board commitment to integrating science into our diplomatic portfolio would reap enormous benefits.

We should marshal the scientific and technical capacity and expertise in our federal agencies to contribute more directly to our foreign policy goals. In conversations with experts like Dr. Norm Neureiter of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, I have found strong support for a NSTC committee dedicated to planning and coordinating these kinds of interagency efforts. Such a committee would be a critical component in effectively implementing a broader vision of U.S. engagement in international science and science diplomacy. I look forward to working with my colleagues in Congress and the administration to more fully develop robust and lasting capacity in these areas.