

Democrats and GOP Announce Platforms on Science and Technology

During the Republican National Convention held in San Diego August 12-15 and the Democratic National Convention held in Chicago August 26-29, each party presented its respective platform on science and technology. While both platforms support science and technology, the major difference is that the GOP emphasizes federal investment in basic research and the Democrats emphasize technology.

Acknowledging developments made through investments in technology—computer, jet aircraft, and the Internet—the Democratic platform states, "We will continue to invest in world-class research and development, advanced technologies in transportation, information, and other industries, and agricultural and environmental research in partnership with American business." Along the lines of working in partnership with industry and universities, the platform acknowledges a program started by the Clinton-Gore administration involving industry, schools, and state and local governments with the goal of bringing Internet accessibility to all schools and libraries.

The democrats support federal invest-

ment in research colleges and universities. Their platform offers a \$10,000 tax cut for families to pay for higher education, and a tax deduction of \$1,500 for first-year college students which continues into the second year for students who maintain a B average.

The Republican platform supports federal investment in basic research with a tax incentive to encourage research and development. The platform supports the "private-sector funding of applied research, especially in emerging technologies." The GOP states that "the marketplace, not bureaucrats, can determine which technologies and entrepreneurs best meets the needs of the public." To emphasize the need for privatization, the GOP proposes to eliminate the Department of Energy (DOE). DOE's defense projects would be taken over by the Department of Defense. The GOP also proposes the elimination of the Departments of Commerce and of Education.

In her statement before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on September 4, 1996, in response to bill S. 1678, Secretary of Energy Hazel R. O'Leary said that the elimination of DOE would not provide significant savings and that the transfer of projects would disrupt missions already put into place, with

weapons site clean-up among them. While DOE has pursued privatization initiatives, some projects should still remain a government function, according to O'Leary. She said, "Through risk-sharing between the Department and the private sector, we are accelerating the development of technologies for which there is a substantial public purpose—enhanced energy security—and for which private investments cannot be assumed."

The Republican platform supports environmentally responsible oil production, development of the domestic natural gas industry, research for cleaner coal combustion technologies, and, where economically competitive, the continued development of energy from wind, solar, and geothermal power.

While unable to respond to party platforms, public affairs specialist Michael Baum of the Advanced Technology Program (ATP), a grant provider for materials research at the National Institute of Science and Technology under the Department of Commerce, said that the ATP office opposes current legislation for the disbandment of the Department of Commerce. Baum said that ATP is a key program in the advancement of the U.S. economy. While

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the GOP platform supports privatization of advanced research, Baum said that ATP invests in research projects that specifically do not receive full funding from industry because the projects are risky or broadly based. He said the Clinton administration's budget proposals support ATP.

The full text of the Republican platform can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://www.rnc.org/hq/platform96/> and for the Democratic platform at <http://www.dncc96.org/platform/>.

NSF's FY 97 Budget Requests \$189.07 Million for Materials Research Subactivity

The National Science Foundation has proposed \$189.07 million for the FY 1997 Budget Request for the Materials Research Subactivity. This is an increase of \$15.11 million, or 8.7%, over the FY 1996 Estimate of \$173.96 million.

The FY 1997 Budget Request includes \$92.59 million, an increase of \$8.50 million, for Materials Research Project Support. Support will be provided for establishing Focused Research Groups (FRGs) that will address problems in areas such as nanoscience and engineering, optical science and engineering, biomolecular materials, and nonlinear phenomena. Emphasis

will be placed on innovative research approaches to the development of new instrumentation, new synthesis and processing methods, computational modeling, and characterization techniques for optimal design of materials for the future.

For Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers (MRSECs), NSF has requested \$58.59 million, an increase of \$2.0 million. MRSECs will increase activities to advance systemic change in primary and secondary science education.

And \$37.89 million, an increase of \$4.61 million, has been requested for National Facilities and Instrumentation for which emphasis will be placed on selected national facilities as well as major equipment development for shared multidisciplinary use. Particular attention will be given to high magnetic field research and technology at the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory at Florida State University.

Clinton Names Five Members to the National Science Board

President Clinton named the following five members to the National Science Board (NSB), an advisory body to the National Science Foundation. **John A. Armstrong** of Amherst, Massachusetts, is the former Vice President of Science and

Technology and member of the Corporate Management Board at IBM. His expertise is in the fields of quantum electronics and laser physics. **M.R.C. Greenwood** of Davis, California, is Chancellor of the University of California—Santa Cruz. She is the former Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of California—Davis, and is an expert in the fields of physiology and nutrition. **Stanley Vincent Jaskolski** of Cleveland, Ohio, is the Chief Technical Officer and Vice President of Technical Management for the Eaton Corporation, Cleveland, Ohio. He was a faculty member in the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Department at Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin for 15 years, serving as Chair during part of his tenure. **Vera C. Rubin** of the District of Columbia is a research astronomer with the Department of Terrestrial Magnetism of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. She has received numerous awards for her studies of motions of stars and gas within galaxies, and motions of galaxies in the universe. **Bob H. Suzuki** of Pomona, California, is President of California Polytechnic University, Pomona. He has conducted research in both engineering and educational sociology, and has had a distinguished career in both fields. □

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