

PRESIDENT SIGNS BILL CONTAINING LARSON INITIATIVES Bill Includes 'Tech Talent' Provisions; Doubles NS

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PRESIDENT SIGNS BILL CONTAINING LARSON INITIATIVES
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WASHINGTON, D.C.- The President today signed into law the National Science Foundation Authorization Act of 2002, H.R. 4664, which will double the National Science Foundation's (NSF) budget in five years and authorizes provisions of the "Tech Talent," education funding bill, which was originally sponsored by Congressman John B. Larson and Science Committee Chairman Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY). Larson has supported increasing the NSF's budget since arriving in Congress.

The Tech Talent bill, which was originally passed by the House in July, is designed to improve undergraduate education in the areas of math, science and technology to strengthen the U.S. workforce in these fields.

Larson stated: "I am thrilled that the President signed this critical piece of legislation. The bill addresses a growing problem in our nation's workforce: fewer and fewer Americans are seeking degrees in the scientific and technical fields as demand grows and more jobs go unfilled.

"Our strength and leadership in the world is based on the might of our defense, strength of our economy, and the quality of our education system. We must create a pipeline of technologically skilled individuals to serve as the backbone for this workforce. This legislation is an extremely timely and useful component in this effort. It will provide colleges and universities with incentives to provide increased opportunities for students interested in the areas of math, science and engineering as well as through incentives aimed at increasing their recruiting efforts and creating dynamic opportunities for interested students," said Larson.

The bill additionally authorizes a Math and Science Education Partnership Program based on legislation to improve science and math education in elementary and secondary schools. It also authorizes the training of "master teachers" and strengthens oversight capabilities of the National Science Board.

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Congressman Larson is a Member of the House Science Committee