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**SENS. DOMENICI, BINGAMAN, ALEXANDER MEET WITH PRESIDENT BUSH
TO DISCUSS NATIONAL ACADEMIES' AUGUSTINE REPORT**
Senators Preparing Legislation to Maintain America's Competitive Edge in the Global Economy

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Pete Domenici (R-NM), Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), and Lamar Alexander (R-TN) met with President Bush at the White House today to discuss the findings of the National Academies October report, "Rising Above The Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future." The senators are preparing legislation to implement the recommendations and expect to introduce it early next year.

"Our economy and a promising future for our children and their children depend on America's ability to maintain its competitive edge in science and technology. I fear we are losing that edge and believe we must act quickly and decisively to regain it. Our lag in science and technology is reflected in our growing dependence on other nations for energy. It's seen in corporate America's growing interest in foreign workforces. I look forward to a bipartisan effort in the Senate and with the administration to swiftly and surely remedy this serious problem. In my discussion with President Bush today, he was concerned about the problem and interested in a solution. He shares our commitment to creating more high-tech, high-paying jobs here at home," said Domenici.

"While America today is the world's research and development powerhouse, tomorrow is another matter. We are slipping in our international leadership role. To reverse that trend, we must recommit ourselves to funding R&D in science and technology, and recommit ourselves to investing in education to ensure we are training the best scientists, engineers, and mathematicians in the world," said Bingaman.

"Other than the war against terror, keeping our brain power advantage so we can create new jobs here in the United States and keep our jobs from going to China, India, Finland, and Ireland, is the biggest challenge we face as a nation," said Alexander. "We asked the experts what to do. They've told us. Now it's up to us to do it."

Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-MD), who has joined the Senators in developing legislation to support the National Academies' report, said, "In order to compete in this global economy, we must foster an innovation society. We must create new ideas that lead to new breakthroughs, new products and new jobs. We also need to develop innovations that have the power to save lives, create prosperity and make America safer, stronger and smarter."

In May 2005, Bingaman and Alexander, with the encouragement of Senate Energy Committee Chairman Pete Domenici, asked the National Academies of Sciences and Engineering and the Institute of Medicine the question, "What are the ten top actions, in priority order, that federal policy makers could take to enhance the science and technology enterprise so the United States can successfully compete, prosper and be secure in the global community of the 21st century?"

The National Academies responded by assembling a distinguished panel of business, government, and university leaders headed by Norm Augustine, former CEO of Lockheed Martin. As part of its deliberations, the panel reviewed over 150 proposals and made 20 recommendations in four broad categories: K-12 education, research, higher education, and incentives for innovation.

In their report, released Oct. 12, the Academies noted:

- Chemical companies closed 70 facilities in the United States in 2004 and have tagged 40 more for shutdown. Of 120 chemical plants being built around the world with price tags of \$1 billion or more, one is in the United States and 50 are in China.
- U.S. 12th graders recently performed below the international average for 21 countries on a test of general knowledge in mathematics and science.
- In 2001, U.S. industry spent more on tort litigation than on research and development.

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