

Address to the Delaware General Assembly

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Thank you Representative Miro.

It is an honor to address this eminent body on behalf of the more than 160,000 chemists and chemical engineers of the American Chemical Society, the largest scientific society in the world. Our organization is committed to improving people's lives through the transforming power of chemistry. Our members come from large industries and small businesses, colleges and universities, government agencies and more. Some of our 2,300 members here in Delaware have joined me today.

I want to share with you today some thoughts on the connection between scientific and technological innovation and the U.S. competitiveness. In a state where high-tech companies employ a large percentage of workers, the health of the science and technology enterprise—which drives innovation and job growth—is of major interest to you as state leaders. I am sure that the importance of companies like DuPont, Hercules, ICI Americas, Astra-Zeneca, and my own company, Rohm & Haas, to the Delaware economy is well known in this chamber.

Industry cutbacks, job outsourcing, increased competition for recent graduates and related factors have prompted serious questions about the capacity of the U.S. science and technology enterprise to create the jobs of the future. Businesses, academic institutions, and governments of all stripes have come together over the last two years to advance an agenda to strengthen U.S. innovation.

The conversation in Washington has focused considerable attention on research support, science education, highly skilled foreign workers, and new cooperative research models between industry, government and universities and colleges. With Thomas Friedman's *The World is Flat*

in its 105th week on the *New York Times* bestseller list and President Bush's two-year commitment to an American Competitiveness Initiative, I am confident that you and most of your constituents have heard about the ties between innovation and competitiveness.

Public and private investments in science and technology drive the industrial innovations that lead to economic and job growth in Delaware and nationwide. It's a proven recipe that has provided substantial returns for more than half a century — not just in the form of economic and job growth, but also to our environment, public health, and security.

In a risk-averse, competitive global market, where corporate time horizons are measured in months, rather than years, investment by government in science and technology is absolutely essential. That's why your efforts to provide seed funding for technology-based businesses are so important. I strongly urge you to continue investing for the long-term.

Colleges and universities also play an important role as technology partners. The Delaware Biotechnology Institute at the University of Delaware, and the Delaware Technology Park, are good examples of collaboration in cross-disciplinary research and education. We hope you will continue to build on these efforts to boost Delaware's standing in current and emerging areas, including biotechnology, nanotechnology, and energy technology.

At the same time, education needs your support. As we move ahead, we will need to develop new technologies and train the next generation of scientists and engineers to use those technologies. The number of U.S.-born students choosing careers in chemistry and other physical sciences is distressingly low. I believe government incentives for colleges and universities can help draw more students into these critical areas.

We also need to improve the quality of teachers, particularly in the sciences. Unfortunately, today's middle and high school students on average lag well behind their European and Asian counterparts. To address this challenge, the American Chemical Society engages in partnerships to improve the professional preparation and development of pre-service and in-service teachers

who educate these students in science and technology. We encourage you to look at the certification barriers to recruiting additional working scientists and engineers into the classroom to share their knowledge and experience.

The American Chemical Society takes great pride in the responsibility set out in our congressional charter to provide expertise to policymakers in areas that involve chemistry. The breadth and depth of experience among our members is great, especially here in our Delaware Local Section. I encourage you to seek us out regularly as a resource on the wide range of science-related policy issues that this Senate must address.

Thank you again for this distinct privilege. We look forward to future opportunities to share our views and expertise with you.