In addition, many professional science and engineering societies are adding to the work of scientists around the country who are involved in guiding the federal government in issues relating to science and technology. As the ranking Democrat on the International Security, Proliferation, and Federal Services Subcommittee, I know the importance of these men and women who support our nation's ability to make informed science policy decisions.

Throughout this Congress, the Government Affairs Committee has held extensive hearings on the challenges facing the federal government to ensure adequate staffing levels in the face of aggressive competition from the private sector for skilled employees. A common theme of these hearings is the shortage of information technology employees, and the federal government is taking steps to fill the critical gaps in IT personnel through enhanced recruitment, retention, and training programs. The Office of Personnel Management recently announced new pay schedules for some levels of IT employees, and a new scholarship program will offer financial assistance to undergraduate and graduate students in exchange for a two-year commitment to work for the government in information security. The program was authorized by the FY2004 Defense Authorization bill.

However, in the rush to ensure adequate IT and computer information security staffing levels, we should not forget to also make sure that the federal government continues to attract and retain the best and brightest natural scientists. The November 24, 2000 issue of Science discusses the difficulties and rewards facing faculty scientists when entering public service. These "civilian scientists" are employed at all levels of government, as well as serving on federal advisory panels and review groups. Their activities play a critical role in making decisions for funding priorities, new initiatives, and regulatory actions that depend increasingly on scientific expertise.

The scientific community and the federal government have a mutually beneficial relationship. Which is nurtured through programs that bring scientists into policy staff positions, either as career employees or as temporary staff. I know my colleagues are well acquainted with the Idea Grant Fellowship program that offers an educational experience to graduate students in marine or aquatic studies to work in a congressional, executive branch, or science association office. Now we are strangers to the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Fellows program that introduces over 100 scientists and engineers from diverse fields to executive and legislative policy positions for one to two years. These fellowship programs provide unique opportunities for scientists and serve as an introduction to working for the federal government.

Scientists who move from the laboratory into public service, and from the forecourt into the background, will experience culture shock. An outstanding speech or position paper on which the scientist's name does not appear replaces an article published in a peer-reviewed journal. Egos must fade from view; instead, satisfaction comes from being part of the process and seeing it work. That requires learning to speak for someone else. In someone else's voice, to someone else's credit. Why should any self-interpreting scientist want to do this? Because there is more at stake than acclaim by one's professional community. There is a larger and public responsibility. Beyond advice, staff work allows another expression of the competitive values of science. In a high-stakes, high-temperature environment, scientists can make a difference by drawing on their research and diagnostic skills while mentoring new ones. Many have done so admirably, but we need more scientists who are willing to help staff science policy-making.

In the United States, a number of programs exist to provide orientation and on-the-job training for scientists willing to enter this public role. For example, ResearchAmerica connects scientists in all federal legislative districts with representatives there. The Ecological Society of America is cultivating a cohort of Atlas Leadership Fellows. The Congressional Fellows program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, initiated scientists to the policy-making process. Many U.S. universities now offer undergraduate and graduate students a semester in Washington to gain an insider's view of congressional, executive, or think tank work. These programs and others must translate into staff roles at the federal and local levels and create cultures of politically informed citizens. Scientists must take these and find a way to make more.

There are repeated calls for scientists to be more visible and to make science policy decisions. As science policy decisions span the gamut from political appointments through a myriad of advisory panels, review groups, and professional associations to consultees, all of whom provide scientific input—selected and unselected—we need to adopt measures to keep our scientists engaged in public policy-making. I ask that the text of the "Science" article be printed in the Record.

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