The Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR) strongly urges the Administration and Congress to strengthen the nation’s investments in Science and Technology (S&T) programs at the Department of Defense (DOD). These programs are even more critical now, as the nation addresses new threats and dangers to national security. CNSR supports the findings and recommendations of the 1998 Defense Science Board Task Force and the recently completed Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). For FY 2003, CNSR encourages the Administration and Congress to provide 3 percent of the total Defense Department budget, or $11 billion, for the DOD basic (6.1), applied (6.2) and advanced technology development (6.3) accounts, which make up the S&T program.

The benefits of a strong DOD S&T investment can be witnessed as our troops respond to unprecedented threats to U.S. national security. Due to its superiority, much of it brought about by investments in S&T, this nation's military is successfully waging war against terrorism. Successes of technological developments such as the rapid multilingual support device and the laser-guided and global positioning systems are undeniable and made possible by past investments in DOD S&T. In this new environment, characterized by unforeseen and unpredictable threats, maintaining and enhancing technological superiority will become even more imperative. Supporting a merit-based military research enterprise at the level recommended by CNSR would maintain and improve the military’s ability to respond to its future responsibilities and ensure that U.S. Armed Forces always have access to new technologies at the frontiers of science.

DOD’s S&T programs provide critical investments in scientific disciplines vital to ensuring future security, including engineering, mathematics, and physical, computer, and behavioral sciences. The S&T programs make essential contributions to national defense by fueling innovation and training the scientists and engineers of tomorrow. DOD S&T programs support research in our nation’s universities, DOD laboratories, and private sector laboratories, which link fundamental scientific discoveries and future military applications.

Specifically, basic research focused in broad strategic areas such as nanotechnology, bio-inspired systems, cognitive readiness, smart materials and structures, human centered systems, compact power, propulsion, hypersonics and information technology should be pursued in support of the Department’s transformation goals and future missions.

The QDR states: “A robust research and development effort is imperative to achieving the Department's transformation objectives. DOD must maintain a strong science and technology (S&T) program that supports evolving military needs and ensures technological superiority over potential adversaries. … To provide the basic research for these capabilities, the QDR calls for a significant increase in funding for S&T programs to a level of three percent of DOD spending per year.”

CNSR applauds the support that Congress and the Administration have provided to DOD S&T programs. To sustain this momentum, CNSR recommends an increase to $11 billion in FY03, and the continued, stable investment in DOD's S&T programs necessary to protect and equip new generations of American soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines in the 21st century.