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California Capitol Hill Bulletin

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To expand communications between Washington and California, the California Institute provides periodic news bulletins regarding current activity on Capitol Hill that directly impacts the state. Bulletins are published weekly during sessions of Congress, and occasionally during other periods.

APPROPRIATIONS: HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDS APPROVED IN HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE

On Wednesday, June 11, 2008, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security approved by voice vote its \$45.9 billion fiscal 2009 funding bill. The bill provides \$39.9 billion in discretionary spending, about \$2.3 billion over the President’s request and about 6 percent more than in fiscal 2008.

The bill includes \$4.8 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, \$60 million above the request, and mandates that \$800 million of this be targeted to identifying dangerous criminal aliens and prioritizing these individuals for removal once an immigration judge orders them deported. ICE officials would also be required, under the bill, to cancel contracts with private detention facilities that fail two consecutive audits of health standards. The bill also includes \$50 million for REAL ID grants.

For U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Subcommittee’s bill includes funding for 4,085 additional personnel, including 2,200 additional Border Patrol agents and 539 additional CBP personnel that were requested by the Administration. In addition, the Subcommittee’s bill provides \$42 million to fund an additional 734 CBP Officers at airports and land borders and 100 additional agricultural specialists.

In his opening remarks at the markup, Chair David Price (NC) said: “Regarding border funding, the Subcommittee bill repeats a requirement in last year’s bill that the Department notify the public 15 days before it waives any law in order to build fencing or other tactical infrastructure along the border. The bill also requires the Secretary to certify that the Department has consulted with local communities on the placement of border infrastructure and technology before it can obligate related funds. Also like last year’s bill, we are requiring the Department to present an analysis of its proposed infrastructure and technology solution for individual border segments so that Congress can be assured that the Department is taking the most effective approach.”

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The bill also limits the availability of US-VISIT funding for an air exit solution until completion of at least two pilot tests, one involving the Department's current proposal, which would rely on the airlines to collect biometric data at check-in counters, and a second pilot in which the Department would be responsible for capturing exit biometrics at departure gates.

For state and local programs, the bill would spend \$3,056,000,000 a reduction of \$122 million from FY 2008 actual spending but more than \$1 billion than had been proposed for the programs by President Bush's 2009 budget. Within those accounts would be \$950 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP), the same amount as in 2008, and \$850 million (\$30 million more than in 2008) for the Urban Area Security Initiative. California receives a relatively small share of SHSGP funds and considerably more from UASI. Level funding is proposed for port security grants (\$400 million), Rail and transit security (\$400 million), and \$50 million each for REAL ID grants and interoperable communications grants.

Firefighter grants would rise from \$750 million to \$800 million (California sees only a tiny percentage of this rurally-dominated program's funds).

Full committee markup of the Homeland Security measure is expected on Wednesday, June 18, 2008.

For more information, go to: <http://appropriations.house.gov> .

APPROPRIATIONS: HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVES CJS SPENDING BILL

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce-Justice-Science approved its FY 2009 spending bill by voice vote on Thursday, June 12, 2008. The total funding level is set at \$56.8 billion in discretionary spending. That includes \$2.6 billion for the Census Bureau, but not an additional \$540 million that had been requested in preparation for the 2010 census. The additional funding may be considered during full Committee markup which is expected the week of June 16.

The bill increases CJS spending by about 10 percent over the \$51.8 billion appropriated for FY08, and is about \$3 billion more than the Administration's request. The Department of Justice is slated to receive \$25.4 billion, an increase of \$1.9 billion over FY08 and \$5.1 billion more than the President requested. Included in that is \$550 million for Byrne Justice Assistance Grants – about \$380 million more than the FY08 level. The President's budget called for significant cuts in state and local law enforcement funding totaling about \$1.6 billion. The bill also includes \$68 million for methamphetamine enforcement

Under the bill, the Commerce Department's funding would be set at \$8.7 billion, \$1.8 billion more than FY08 and about \$500 million more than the President's request. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's budget would also increase to \$4.3 billion – \$400 million more than in FY08 and \$180 million more than the Administration's request. NASA, too, would see an increase in funding to \$17.8 billion, which is \$500 million more than FY08 and \$200 million more than the President's budget request. The National Science Foundation would be funded at \$6.9 billion.

For further information, go to: <http://appropriations.house.gov> .

APPROPRIATIONS: HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS MARKS UP INTERIOR AND ENVIRONMENT LEGISLATION FOR 2009

The House Appropriations Interior and the Environment Subcommittee marked up its FY 2009 funding bill on June 11, 2008. The bill provides \$27.9 billion for Interior and Environment programs, an increase of \$1.3 billion, or about 4.9 percent, over the 2008 enacted level. It includes \$2.6 billion for the National Parks, including a \$158 million increase in funding for the operational budgets of the parks.

The bill provides an increase of \$473 million over the President's budget request for the U.S. Forest Service. Funding of \$2.97 billion is provided for the wildland fire accounts of the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of the Interior, which is \$141 million above the level requested by the President and \$217 million above the FY 2008 enacted level. In addition to maintaining fire fighter staffing and preparedness funding, the total reflects a \$194 million increase requested for fire suppression operations.

The bill includes a total of \$7.8 billion for environmental protection programs at the EPA, including \$850 million for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, \$295 million more than requested in the President's budget. According to the Subcommittee, this amount will fund approximately 300 additional low interest loans to local communities to upgrade their wastewater systems to meet national standards.

The bill was approved by the Subcommittee by voice vote. Full Committee action is expected June 18.

For more information, go to: <http://appropriations.house.gov> .

HEALTH: WAYS AND MEANS SUBCOMMITTEE ADDRESSES HEALTH CARE DISPARITY

On Tuesday, June 10, 2008, the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health heard testimony on health care disparities in the United States. The hearing, entitled "Addressing Disparities in Health and Healthcare: Issues for Reform," included testimony from members of Congress who represent underserved medical communities, as well as industry experts on the issues facing their communities. Members also discussed HR 3014, the Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2007.

Chairman Pete Stark (Walnut Creek) said the purpose of the hearing was to learn more about health care disparities, noting that "some people question whether this disparity exists." However, he said, "the response to Katrina showed us that we have a two-tiered health care system," one for the wealthy, and one for everyone else. "We know minorities are for the most part on the second tier... The most important thing we can do to reduce these disparities is to get everyone covered."

Rep. Hilda Solis (El Monte), who is the Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Task Force on Health and Environment, delivered witness testimony. Solis stated that our country's most vulnerable communities are most affected by this disparity. She noted that Latinos are the fastest growing minority group in the U.S., representing 14% of the population, but are among the highest group of uninsured. "In my district of East LA, 60% of the population is Latino... [and] Spanish speakers have more difficulty" receiving proper care, she said. She recommended that "all of the Culturally Linguistic Appropriate Services (CLAS) standards should be adopted by Medicare."

Solis said Medicare has the potential to provide a solution. She commented: "Medicare, as a leading purchaser of health care, has the opportunity and responsibility to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities." Solis argued that addressing issues of Language Access are integral to addressing disparities in care. Improving communications between providers and limited English proficiency patients will lead to improved care, she said. She also expressed the belief that the "healthcare system has looked at majority population as far as how to provide service." This, in her view is a mistake. She referenced a Kaiser study that found that providers can "save money by tailoring services to reflect the population that is being served."

Rep. Solis spoke about the lack of access to care facilities in areas with high concentrations of minorities and how this contributes to the disparity. To address this issue, she suggested the need to look at geographic diversity in medical schools so that doctors are more likely to return to their underserved communities.

During the question-and-answer period, Congressman Xavier Becerra (Los Angeles), responding to Solis' testimony, commented on the fact that three-quarters of limited English proficiency patients receive translation services from a family member rather than a trained medical interpreter. He believes this is a

significant barrier to providing proper care to this community, and is not in compliance with the Civil Rights Act. He commented: "Having a family member do translation is one of the biggest mistakes we make in providing care. The Civil Rights Act says medical facilities are required to provide interpretation services, but Medicare does not cover reimbursement for such services." He further stated that to provide these services would add, on average, four dollars to the cost of medical visits. Becerra and Solis agreed that this is an issue that must be addressed to end these disparities.

Additional testimony was provided by Anthony B. Iton, M.D., J.D., MPH, Director of Public Health & Health Officer, Alameda County; and Michael A. Rodriguez, M.D., MPH, Associate Professor and Vice Chair of Research, UCLA, Department of Family Medicine, Los Angeles. Iton spoke about the larger context of health care disparities, public health, and social inequality. He argued that health disparities are worsening and are overwhelmingly driven by chronic disease; chronic disease is preventable; individual responsibility versus community responsibility is a false dichotomy; and the 'Immigrant Health Paradox' and the myth of immigrants bleeding our health care systems is untrue. These beliefs support his further explanation of the root causes of health care disparities, and the inherent misunderstanding of these ideas. Iton commented: "Health does not equal healthcare. Access to a high quality system of affordable healthcare is an important human right and a necessary strategy for improving health and quality of life and reducing health disparities, but healthcare alone is not sufficient to 'produce' health in populations. Health disparities do not equal healthcare disparities. Healthcare disparities are a subset of health disparities and can only be reduced by increasing accountability and transparency within healthcare delivery systems. However, the healthcare system cannot effectively eliminate health disparities which are firmly rooted in larger social inequities related to the historical legacy of discrimination by race, class, gender, disability, and immigration status. These historical and present injustices are only remediable by focused social policy targeted at increasing opportunity across a broad range of policy domains."

He said he supports the idea of universal health care, but "universal access to medical care alone will not eliminate the profound and worsening health disparities in the U.S. because these health disparities are rooted in deeply entrenched social inequity. Racial and ethnic health disparities are patterned on profound race/ethnic disparities in income, employment, education, and other critical social resources."

Dr. Rodriguez, echoing the sentiments of Rep. Solis, spoke about the importance of linguistically and culturally appropriate care; the need for data collection by race, ethnicity and primary language; and, the need for payment for language assistance services as well as compliance with and enforcement of national standards on CLAS.

For more information visit <http://www.waysandmeans.house.gov> .

IMMIGRATION: SUBCOMMITTEE EXAMINES EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION

The House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law, chaired by Rep. Zoe Lofgren (San Jose) held a hearing on "Electronic Employment Verification Systems: Needed Safeguards to Protect Privacy and Prevent Misuse" on Tuesday, June 10, 2008.

Witnesses included: Rep. Ken Calvert (Corona); Jonathan R. Scharfen, Deputy Director, Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security; Carolyn Shettle, Senior Study Director, Westat; Tim Sparapani, Senior Legislative Counsel, American Civil Liberties Union; Chris Williams, Executive Director, Working Hands Legal Clinic; and Glenda Wooten-Ingram, HR Director, Embassy Suites.

Congressman Calvert, who was an original author of the E-Verify program, discussed two bills he has introduced: H.R. 19, which would make the program mandatory, and H.R. 5596, which would extend the current program by ten years.. He also discussed investigating concerns raised about problems with the current voluntary program in Arizona, stating that "E-Verify has never been notified of an incorrect final non-confirmation." He noted that this is good news because of the expanded use of the program and President Bush's recent Executive Order requiring all federal contractors to use the program. Rep. Calvert concluded: "E-Verify is not perfect – no system is – but it is a very good system that has safeguards to ensure that employers and employees rights are being protected in accordance with the law."

Director Scharfen detailed how E-Verify works and the steps that CIS has and is taking to improve the program. He noted that CIS in cooperation with the Social Security Administration is working to “decrease mismatch rates and ensure that E-Verify is fast, easy to use, and protects employees’ rights. Over the past year, E-Verify has automated its registration process, instituted a system change to reduce the incidence of typographical errors, incorporated a photo screening tool for DHS documents to combat more sophisticated forms of document and identity fraud, established Monitoring and Compliance staff to maintain system integrity, and added new databases that are automatically checked by the system. In addition, it established a new process for employees to call USCIS’ toll-free number to address citizenship mismatches as an alternative to visiting SSA, all in an effort to establish efficient and effective verification,” Scharfen reported.

Scharfen also argued that E-Verify is capable of handling the volume that a nationwide mandatory employment verification system would produce. He stated that SSA and DHS conducted tests in September of 2007 that showed E-Verify has the capacity to handle up to 60 million queries per year – in line with the projected 60 million new hire queries per year that would result from mandatory E-Verify legislation applicable to all U.S. employers.

Mr. Scarapani begged to differ, however. He testified that the ACLU “conclude[s] that the mandatory imposition of E-Verify or similar systems cannot prevent the hiring of undocumented workers and, therefore, will not resolve the nation’s immigration dilemma. Proponents’ claims to the contrary, we expect E-Verify and similar systems as currently proposed only to make life miserable for American workers. Mandatory electronic employment verification will entangle them in a massive knot of government red tape and bungling bureaucracy both to get hired and resolve inevitable data errors. During the period these unfortunate workers are wrongly denied employment, they will be unable to work lawfully, which will surely cause them severe economic distress.”

For the testimony of all the witnesses, go to: <http://www.judiciary.house.gov> .

TRANSPORTATION: TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE HEARS TESTIMONY ON INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

On Tuesday, June 10, 2008, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure held a hearing to examine methods for financing investment in our nation’s infrastructure, including roads, bridges, public transportation, aviation, ports, waterways, and wastewater treatment infrastructure. The hearing was informational, but included discussion on the Our Nations Trade, Infrastructure, Mobility, and Efficiency Act, (the ON TIME Act), introduced by Rep. Ken Calvert (Corona), who presented testimony at the hearing.

Rep. Calvert commented: “ I represent a...District in southern California that encompasses some of the fastest growing communities in the nation. As is often the case, population growth has been closely followed by increased demands in transportation infrastructure...My district is more than 40 miles from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, yet my constituents see and feel the impact everyday. Freight moving from the ports out to the highways, along our rail lines...results in congestion. The growing interaction between commuters and freight affects them both in an equally negative manner.”

To address these issues, Rep. Calvert introduced H.R. 5102, the ON TIME ACT, which would assess a fee based on the fair market value of articles imported into the United States and articles exported from the United States and use the money collected to make grants for transportation projects in the transportation trade corridors where fee is collected. The fee is capped at \$500. “The fee established in the ON TIME Act is designed to ensure that it is paid by the beneficial cargo owner, rather than transportation service providers, such as steam ship, trucking, or railroad companies”, said Calvert.

Rep. Grace Napolitano (Norwalk) said she was “glad that we have vision” in the proposals discussed, she believes the issue has been neglected for many years. She emphasized that investment in infrastructure should also create lasting jobs and boost our economy. She also said that she would like to see the idea of the container fee being used to fund inspection of containers as well.

Rep. Laura Richardson (Los Angeles) mentioned that the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles were already in the process of implementing a type of “container fee”. She suggested that the bill’s author look into

their process, and she suggested the Committee hold a hearing on that issue alone. She took issue with the scope of the container fee in its current form, as the money produced can be used to support infrastructure improvement up to 300 miles from the Port. She commented: “300 miles from my District includes San Diego and Sacramento, I don’t see why they should benefit” from fees levied in her district.

Additional witnesses raised other ideas to be considered by the Committee, some of which have already been discussed in previous hearings. Those ideas include toll roads, public-private partnerships, the development of a national infrastructure bank, congestions prices, and fuel taxes.

For more information visit <http://transportation.house.gov>

IMMIGRATION: HOUSE PANEL ASSESSES NEED FOR SKILLED WORKER GREEN CARDS

The House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security and International Law, chaired by Rep. Zoe Lofgren (San Jose), held a hearing on Thursday, June 12, 2008 on “The Need for Green Cards for Highly Skilled Workers.” Witnesses included: Edward Sweeney, Chair of the Semiconductor Industry Association Semiconductor Workforce Strategy Committee, and Senior Vice President, Worldwide Human Resources, National Semiconductor Corporation; Lee Colby, Electrical Engineer, Lee Colby & Associates and Past Chair of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Santa Clara Valley Section; and John Pearson, Director of the Bechtel International Center, Stanford University Association of International Educators.

Mr. Sweeney testified that the Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA) strongly supports several bills sponsored by Rep. Lofgren aimed at increasing and retaining high-skilled workers in the United States. Specifically, he testified, that by exempting Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) graduates from the current employment-based admissions quotas, H.R. 6039, will ensure that this talent is retained to benefit the U.S. for the long term. H.R. 5921 will put an end to the long delays for skilled foreign professionals from certain countries by eliminating unduly restrictive per country limits on employment-based immigration. And H.R. 5882 will help to reduce visa backlogs and processing delays in immigrant admissions by “recapturing” unused employment-based visas from prior years for immediate use.

Mr. Sweeney noted the critical role that foreign nationals play in maintaining U.S. leadership in semiconductors, with foreign nationals comprising half of the masters and 71 percent of the PhDs graduating from U.S. universities in electrical engineering. SIA companies, he said, seek permanent resident status for 97% of their H-1B skilled worker hires – roughly 3,800 employees currently, 20% of whom were hired four or more years ago. However, while waiting for adjustment of status, these employees are limited in their ability to change jobs or be promoted without restarting the green card process, and international travel can be problematic. Additionally, the employees’ spouses are often not able to work due to the temporary status.

Mr. Sweeney was pleased to report that last fall, the SIA found common ground on green card issues with the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers – United States of America (IEEE-USA). They agreed to support raising the employment-based immigrant visa cap with an exemption for foreign professionals with advanced degrees in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields from U.S. universities and creating a new foreign student visa category to allow U.S. STEM bachelor’s or higher degree holders who have a job offer to transition directly from student visas to green cards.

Mr. Colby also supported the Lofgren bills, stressing that “balanced reforms in the nation’s legal permanent and temporary admissions programs are particularly important if U.S. employers and U.S. workers are to compete and succeed in an increasingly knowledge-based, technology-driven global economy. Instead of becoming more dependent on temporary non-immigrant visa programs, like the H-1B, IEEE-USA recommends that Congress make permanent immigrant admissions programs the preferred option for adding skilled and educated workers to our economy.”

Mr. Pearson testified in support of H.R. 6039, which would allow STEM graduates with a master’s or higher degree, and a job offer, to become permanent residents. He said that the current law, which caps the number of green cards issued annually, even to those who graduate from U.S. colleges and universities with

degrees, will make it increasingly difficult to attract and retain bright and talented students, because of the current global competition for international students and scholars.

For the testimony of all the witnesses, go to: <http://judiciary.house.gov> .

EDUCATION: PPIC RELEASES REPORT ON PREDICTING SUCCESS RATES IN CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAM

On Monday, June 9, 2008, the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) released their latest report, "Predicting Success on the California High School Exit Exam: An Investigation of the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE)."

The report's authors, Andrew Zau and Julian Betts, have "developed a highly accurate method for identifying students likely to fail the CAHSEE. They are able to predict who will pass the CAHSEE as early as grade 4", PPIC reports. The report emphasizes that it is not necessary to wait until high school to identify students likely to fail the CAHSEE. Grade 4 student characteristics predict CAHSEE passage almost as well as those from grade 9.

Some of the report's findings include:

- Academic grade point average (GPA) is the strongest predictor of eventual outcomes on the CAHSEE.
- African American, English Learners, and special education students are less likely than white, non-EL, non-special education students to pass the exam, even after controlling for grades and test scores.
- Notably, after accounting for GPA and test scores, Hispanic students are no less likely than white students to pass the CAHSEE

The report makes several recommendations to policy makers seeking to improve educational outcomes in California, including:

- Develop an "early warning" system to forecast which elementary or middle school students will be at risk of failing the CAHSEE.
- Consider targeting additional tutoring funds at elementary and middle school students at risk of failing the exam.
- Allow districts increased flexibility in how they spend AB 128 and AB 347 dollars to help to create such funds.
- Commission rigorous statewide studies of the effect of AB 128 and AB 347 funding on outcomes for seniors and post-senior year students.

To review the full report, visit <http://ppic.org> .

ELECTED OFFICIALS: NEW STATE ASSEMBLY SPEAKER KAREN BASS VISITS WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS BUDGET CHALLENGES

Newly-elected California State Assembly Speaker Karen Bass (Los Angeles) traveled to Washington, D.C. this week for several days of bipartisan meetings to discuss various topics, with a particular emphasis on the potential for closing California's large budget gap.

During the visit, Bass met with California Senators and House members. She met with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (San Francisco), where the two discussed assistance to California. Speaker Bass visited with California's members of the House Appropriations Committee including Ranking Member Rep. Jerry Lewis (Redlands), Rep. Ken Calvert (Corona), Rep. Mike Honda (San Jose), Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (Los Angeles), Rep. Barbara Lee, (Oakland), Rep. Sam Farr (Monterey), and Rep. Adam Schiff (Burbank).

In addition, the Speaker joined a meeting of the state's Democratic Congressional delegation, hosted by Delegation Chairwoman Rep. Zoe Lofgren (San Jose), as well as a meeting of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Citing statistics from the California Institute, Speaker Bass said, "With California taxpayers still getting only 79 cents back for every dollar we spend, it's vital that Washington become a partner in helping us

balance on our budget.” She added, “I’m hoping to shake the trees in Washington to push for passage of programs that will help California’s bottom line.”

The Speaker’s website is <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a47/>.

BIOTECH: CALIFORNIA HEALTHCARE INSTITUTE HOSTS BRIEFING ON VALUE OF NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH FUNDING

On Wednesday, June 11, 2008, the California Health Care Institute (CHI) hosted a briefing unveiling its new report addressing the importance of funding National Institutes of Health (NIH) research to pursue advances in healthcare innovation and public health.

The report features perspectives of California’s biomedical industry leaders, who focus on the state’s groundbreaking work and its implications. It includes articles highlighting technology transfer success stories and innovations founded in academic research, achieving commercial success and improving public health. Finally, the report illustrates why NIH funding is critical to California’s continued global leadership in biomedical research, development and innovation.

California’s academic research institutions lead the world in investigating potential cures for hundreds of diseases that affect billions of people. Researchers in the state have made countless breakthrough discoveries that have increased the body of scientific knowledge, advanced medical practice, and led to the development of new and improved therapies, devices and diagnostics to prevent, treat and cure human diseases. Their labs attract the most promising science, engineering and medical students, furthering the future of biomedical science and extending California’s leadership in education as well as research.

“Today’s medical advances in cancer, HIV/AIDS and cardiovascular and infectious diseases are the products of basic scientific research that took place decades ago, largely funded by governmental grants from NIH,” said David Gollaher, Ph.D., CHI’s president and chief executive officer. “The U.S. has to make a commitment to provide sustained funding to NIH so that the next generation of innovations that will improve public health come to fruition, or we risk not only America’s competitiveness, but global health.”

Gollaher presented the findings of the report and discussed the detrimental impact that NIH funding cuts would have on important research. He said California has the 15 largest grant recipients of NIH funding; the University of California, San Francisco receiving the most. The University of California as a whole is the largest recipient in the country. California receives around 15% of total NIH grant funding. This funding drives California’s health sciences and bio-medical industries and is integral to future growth in those areas. Investment in health sciences and basic research today will result in future economic activity for California, Gollaher said.

NIH funding cuts will result in a lost opportunity to take advantage of the previous doubling in funding. Research proposals that have been granted initial funding may not be able to receive funds that will allow their original products to be realized, he said. Furthermore, there will be low success rates on the first submittals of research projects, requiring scientists to re-submit proposals numerous times to receive funding, which delays results.

When asked about why there haven’t been greater outcomes from the doubling of NIH funding, Gollaher explained the process of taking a drug from idea to market. He said that the investments made in infrastructure will not pay off in a short time frame. “The time it takes for a new drug to get to market from discovery to approval by the Food and Drug Administration is about 12 years. There is no way to confirm the value of these investments so soon”, he said. He went on to emphasize that investment in basic science research will lead to innovations in the future, as it has in the past.

Danny Andrade, an administrator at the Salk Institute, spoke about the challenges that will be faced by non-profit research institutes as a result of NIH funding cuts. Andrade said that NIH grants provide between 65-75% of the Institute’s budget each year. With the cost of science increasing, and the funding decreasing, the ability to bring the best scientists to non-profit institutions is decreasing. He emphasized that non-profit research institutes are there “not to make money but make medicine,” so it is difficult to find alternative funding for their research.

Moreover, other countries that are investing in basic science research are drawing their scientists back, and recruiting American scientists as well. The “brain drain” is now working in the reverse. “Singapore is investing hundreds of millions of dollars in basic science research”, he said, and some U.S. scientists are going there because they are getting more money and resources for their work. Further compounding the issue is the level of funding for postdoctoral research, which has been stagnant at \$37,000 per year. This is not only a disincentive for scientists to stay in the U.S., but discourages American students from beginning science careers.

For more information visit <http://www.chi.org> .

IMMIGRATION: ACLU AND MALDEF CO-HOST BRIEFING ON LANGUAGE RIGHTS

On Friday, June 6, 2008, the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund (MALDEF) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) hosted a briefing on language access. The briefing, “Language Rights: An Integration Agenda for Immigrant Communities”, sought to educate attendees on a proactive agenda to assist new immigrants, and English language learners generally, with successful integration into American society.

According to the coalition, “The ability to communicate with government and private sector providers, schools, businesses, emergency personnel and many others in the United States depends greatly on language proficiency...the United States is home to millions of citizens and legal permanent residents with limited English proficiency (LEP)...Lack of translated information and oral assistance means that Americans with limited English proficiency are less likely to understand and exercise their rights and obligations, less able to access government services, and less able to achieve economic stability. The obligations to provide meaningful access to language minorities have been affirmed by Congress, the Supreme Court, and the Executive Branch through the Civil Rights Act (CRA) of 1964...and Executive Order 13166.”

The briefing featured a discussion panel which included Paul Igasaki, Deputy CEO of Equal Justice Works (speaking for himself); Wendy Ho, the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS) Fellow in the Office of Rep. Mike Honda (San Jose); and Sam Jammal, Legislative Staff Attorney with MALDEF.

Igasaki explained that “the link between language access and civil rights is historic. He gave examples of how limited English proficiency has affected all communities, including recent European immigrants in the 1900's who are mostly left out of today's debates. The reaction to non-English speaking communities has changed with the ethnic make-up of the communities, he explained. In past generations, in areas where many languages were spoken, there was not the same “hostility” or “fear” that is associated with non-English speakers today. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 included anti-discrimination clauses for national origin, which implicitly covered linguistic traits. Today, however, there are “English only” movements that would counteract the protections afforded by Title VII; movements that Igasaki and other panelists agree are counterproductive.

Ms. Ho said it is important to move toward a more proactive agenda to integrate new Americans. As a “nation of immigrants”, she said, it is important to ensure LEP communities are equipped to participate in our society. To address this issue, she said Rep. Honda is introducing the “Strengthening Communities through English and Integration Act.” According to Ho, this Act provides a “pro-active response to anti-immigrant and English only movements.” A major provision of this legislation is the “Investing in Civil and Literacy Education” program, which would establish grant programs for middle-schools and high schools looking to expand programs for LEP students and offer tax credits to businesses that supplement English as a Second Language (ESL) classes to employees. Ho also noted that, importantly, the “native born limited English proficiency population is outpacing the immigrant population.”

Jammal further expounded on the legal protections already covering LEP persons in the CRA and Executive Order 13166. He said that Congress is trying to roll back these protections. An English-only law will not address practical protections; enacting an English only law will not magically teach people English, he exclaimed. Jammal also noted that 67% of workforce growth has been from immigrant populations.

WATER: DROUGHT LEADS GOVERNOR TO PROCLAIM STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR MUCH OF CENTRAL VALLEY

On Thursday, June 12, 2008, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger proclaimed a state of emergency in the following nine Central Valley counties due to severe water shortages: Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and Kern. When the Governor issued his Executive Order last week declaring a statewide drought, he directed his state agencies and departments to take immediate action to address the serious drought conditions and water delivery reductions that exist in California, and Thursday's announcement builds on those actions.

"Just last week, I said we would announce regional emergencies wherever the state's drought situation warrants them, and in the Central Valley, an emergency proclamation is necessary to protect our economy and way of life," Governor Schwarzenegger said. "Central Valley agriculture is a \$20 billion a year industry. If we don't get them water immediately the results will be devastating."

According to a statement by the Governor, the decision was based in part on an assessment of the full impact that "additional, unexpected cuts" recently made by federal water officials to San Joaquin Valley farmers have had in the middle of the growing season. As a result, the Governor's proclamation directs the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to work with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to deliver more water now through the State Water Project when it's needed most. It also orders DWR to transfer groundwater through the California Aqueduct to benefit farmers in the affected counties and the State Water Resources Control Board to review water transfers as quickly as possible.

California Farm Bureau President Doug Mosebar commented, "As California family farmers and ranchers, we applaud the governor's swift action on declaring emergencies in those counties impacted by reduced water allocations." Mosebar also emphasized that California is currently at a water crossroads and the governor's declaration is a wake-up call. He stated that family farmers are having to make tough decisions regarding continuing with crops already in the ground, fallowing fields and stumping trees due to the extreme uncertainty of immediate and future water supplies. "We cannot be dependent on other countries for our basic food needs or we will find ourselves in the exact situation that we are now in with fuel," Mosebar said, adding, "This is not a turf war anymore; it is a statewide crisis and we must all work together to craft solutions that balance the needs of all water users."

The Governor's website is <http://www.gov.ca.gov> , and the California Farm Bureau is <http://www.cfbf.com> .

AEROSPACE: CRB STUDY EXAMINES STATES' INCENTIVES TO ATTRACT AIRCRAFT AND DEFENSE FIRMS

A recent report by the California Research Bureau compares the efforts underway in other states to lure away or retain aerospace contractors.

The report, by CRB's Rosa Moller, notes that the aerospace industry (including the manufacturing sectors of: aircraft and related parts; guided missiles, space vehicles and related parts; and search, detection, and navigation instruments) is important because it contributes significantly to the economy of the state, provides a number of well-paid jobs and is a springboard of innovation for other sectors. The CRB paper includes a section on the history of California aviation and aerospace to emphasize the historical importance of this industry in California.

According to the report, the presence of the aerospace industry in the state is still strong. A significant proportion of aerospace electronic components and parts are produced in California, and the state has a leading role in space activities and programs. California can enhance the competitiveness of its aerospace industry, the report argues, by offering (as other states are doing) a variety of incentives discussed in the paper. One of the industry's main challenges is that its current workers are approaching retirement age, and it will be difficult to replace them since the pool of labor with the skills required by aerospace activities is

limited. Hence, the author suggests, the support of development programs that enhance these skills in the labor force is important.

The report is available online at <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/08/08-005.pdf> . (Note: Because planned maintenance of the California State Library website from June 13 to June 16 may cause the original document to be unavailable for several days, we have temporarily loaded a cached copy of this report on the California Institute website at <http://www.calinst.org/pubs/CRB-AerospaceIncentives-May2008.pdf> .)

2008 CALIFORNIA STATE SOCIETY ANNUAL PICNIC: SATURDAY, JUNE 21

On Saturday, June 21, 2008, the California State Society holds its Annual Picnic, which will be held in West Potomac Park, at Ohio Dr. & Independence Ave, SW, near the Lincoln and FDR Memorials across from the shores of the Potomac River.

The event attracts several hundred California transplants from throughout the DC area. The picnic is free for current members of the California State Society -- the \$20 cost of attendance also buys an annual CSS membership, which affords admission to other CSS events through the year. Sign up as a member before the picnic on the website, or just pay at the gate. You may RSVP to rsvpforssevents@yahoo.com or call 202-543-9559. Wrist bands are distributed at the entrance, so to drink it is a good idea to bring ID.

The picnic will feature live music, ample food and refreshments (including the always-popular "Taste of California"), a volleyball tournament, kid and young adult games, a moonbounce, face painting & body art, live music, and a charity raffle with many great prizes.

SCHEDULE: The picnic begins at 11:00 am with the opening of registration and the "Taste of California" table. At 11:30 am, the moonbounce starts up, and the volleyball tournament gets underway. From noon through 3:00 pm there will be live music at the main stage and face painting at the kids area. From 12:30 to 2:30, barbecue lunch will be served. And then at 3:00 pm, a charity raffle begins.

LOCATION: "West Potomac Park" -- Ohio Dr. between Independence Ave. and West Basin Drive, SW. The site is near the Lincoln and FDR Memorials and the shores of the Potomac River, just west of the polo grounds across Independence Avenue to the south of the Lincoln Memorial. Enter the site from Ohio Drive, across the street from the river.

METRO/FREE SHUTTLE BUS: The picnic is accessible from the Smithsonian Metro (orange & blue lines). A shuttle bus will run continuously from the Smithsonian Metro (corner of 12th Street & Independence Avenue) to West Potomac Park between the hours of 10:45 am and 4:45 pm.

PARKING: Parking is extremely scarce. We encourage you to use the metro. There are public, non-reserved parking lots located under the 14th Street bridges. A shuttle bus will run continuously from these parking lots to West Potomac Park between the hours of 10:45 am and 4:45 pm. These small lots are designated A, B, and C, and there is a shuttle bus pickup location between lots B and C. (There is also very limited three-hour street parking along Ohio Drive near the picnic site.)

VOLLEYBALL: For the Volleyball Tournament, contact Alison Amor Contact Alison Amor at: alisonamor@gmail.com . (Volleyball players are admitted to the picnic at a discounted rate -- \$15 per person instead of \$20.)

For still more about CSS and the picnic, or to join, visit <http://www.californiastatesociety.org> .