

**President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST)**

**TWELFTH MEETING**

**July 15, 2011**

**MINUTES**

Washington, DC

Members Present: John P. Holdren (Co-Chair), Eric Lander (Co-Chair), William Press (Vice Chair), Maxine Savitz (Vice Chair), Rosina Bierbaum, Christine Cassel, Chris Chyba, S. James Gates Jr., Shirley Ann Jackson, Chad Mirkin, Mario Molina, Ernest J. Moniz, Craig Mundie, Ed Penhoet, Barbara Schaal, Eric Schmidt, David E. Shaw

Members Absent: Mark Gorenberg, Richard C. Levin, Daniel Schrag, Ahmed Zewail

Staff: Danielle Evers, Dara Fisher, Amber Hartman Scholz, Deborah Stine

Public Attendance: Approximately 100 observers attended.

Video Webcast Archive: The archive of the video webcast is available at [www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/pcast](http://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/pcast)

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The President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST) convened in open session at 10:00am with Dr. John Holdren and Dr. Eric Lander presiding on Friday, July 15, 2011.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome from PCAST Co-Chairs

Dr. Holdren, PCAST Co-Chair, opened the meeting and briefly discussed the current fiscal challenges affecting science, technology, and innovation policy within the Federal Government.

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Agenda Item 2: Overview of the Patent and Trademark Office

Dr. Holdren introduced David Kappos, Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) of the Department of Commerce. In his presentation, Mr. Kappos provided an overview of USPTO activities as related to innovation and business growth. He described the process of developing comprehensive patent reform, which is currently being completed in Congress through a bipartisan coalition. This reform will re-engineer and streamline the process of securing intellectual property rights. Dr. Kappos expressed the view that this upcoming patent reform may enable the United States to lead the charge in articulating the need for building a global intellectual property system.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Kappos also described several USPTO initiatives unrelated to legislative efforts, including the development of Internet-based USPTO systems, the green technology pilot program, and the reduction of the USPTO patent application backlog.

At the conclusion of Mr. Kappos' remarks, PCAST members asked questions regarding funding issues related to the patent reform process, increasing efficiency in software patent review, distribution of patent claims by region, quality of and priority in review, and USPTO data use.

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## Agenda Item 2: National Academies Study on Future of Research Universities

Dr. Lander introduced Mr. Charles Holliday, Chair of the National Academies Study on the Future of U.S. Research Universities. With Dr. Peter Henderson, Director of the National Research Council Board on Higher Education and Workforce, Mr. Holliday presented an overview of the study, including committee membership, prospective timeline for release, and general recommendation themes and goals for implementation. The report strongly supports increased collaboration among stakeholders in universities, government, and business.

After this broad overview, PCAST members posed inquiries regarding the types of proposals considered for study recommendations, the importance of the connection between university research and education, necessary transformative changes for U.S. research universities, “stove piping” of disciplines and barriers to interdisciplinary activities, resource allocation, and the nature of the partnerships proposed in the report. Other topics discussed included cyber infrastructure and state support of public universities.

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## Agenda Item 3: American Academy of Arts and Sciences Study on the Impacts of Federal and Industry Funding of Science, Engineering, and Medicine on American Universities (ARISE II)

Dr. Lander introduced Dr. Keith Yamamoto and Dr. Venkatesh Narayanamurti, Co-Chairs of the ARISE II study of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In their presentation, Dr. Yamamoto and Dr. Narayanamurti presented the broad goals of the ARISE II study, primarily the examination of interfaces among government, academia, and industry that are currently affecting science, engineering, and medicine. Additionally, Dr. Yamamoto presented specifics for the life sciences and Dr. Narayanamurti discussed issues related to the physical sciences.

At the conclusion of this introduction, PCAST members raised questions concerning a number of issues, including engagement of industry stakeholders in discussion of research funding, policies regarding high-risk high-return research, recommendations as related to the medical community, and the balance of basic and applied research in industry and at universities.

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## Agenda Item 4: Reflections from the Federal Chief Information Officer

Dr. Holdren introduced Mr. Vivek Kundra, Federal Chief Information Officer (CIO) at the Office of Management and Budget. During his opening remarks, Mr. Kundra reflected on his time as CIO, including challenges he inherited at the start and initiatives he undertook during his tenure.

Several PCAST members had comments and questions for Mr. Kundra, concerning the mosaic effect, standardization of the Federal information technology system, Federal data usage and release, and challenges in cybersecurity. At the conclusion of the question-and-answer session, Dr. Holdren thanked Mr. Kundra for his attendance and commended him on his years of service as CIO.

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## Agenda Item 5: Public Comment

One member of the public provided comments to PCAST in person. The following individual provided oral comment: *Jerome Dancis*, Associate Professor Emeritus, Math Department, University of Maryland.

Additionally, numerous individuals provided written comments to PCAST; one of these comments was read aloud by PCAST staff and all submitted comments are posted on the PCAST website.

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Dr. Holdren adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted:



Deborah D. Stine  
Executive Director  
President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology

Approved:



John P. Holdren  
Co-Chair  
President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology



Eric Lander  
Co-Chair  
President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology

Attachments:

Appendix A: PowerPoint Presentations

Appendix B: Written Public Comments