

AAAS & AAU Science Advisor Letter to the Presidential Candidates

To Senators John McCain and Barack Obama:

The next President of the United States will face a wide range of domestic and international challenges, from financial and regulatory reform, to healthcare and rising energy costs, from global climate change to ensuring U.S. economic competitiveness and national security. These challenges share one thing in common: long-term solutions that will be impossible without groundbreaking scientific and technological advances. It is therefore critical that the next President seek out and rely upon sound scientific and technological advice *early* and *often* in the new Administration.

Your responses to the *ScienceDebate 2008* questions reflect your acknowledgment of the important relationship that science will play in a new Administration. With this in mind, it is essential that you be prepared to quickly appoint a science advisor who is a nationally respected leader with the appropriate scientific, management and policy skills necessary for this critically important role.

For these reasons, the undersigned organizations representing the business, education and scientific communities urge you to pledge now that if elected President, you will appoint your White House science advisor by January 20, so this individual can participate immediately in coordinating relevant policy and personnel decisions relating to science and technology.

We further urge that the next President give the science advisor the title of Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and assign the position a cabinet rank, the same status currently given to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Trade Representative.

The next President must lead our country in addressing the national issues of concern to us all. To do so effectively, science and technology must be part of the solution. Only by ensuring that a science advisor is in place early and has adequate stature and authority within the White House can the new President effectively address the challenges we face.

Sincerely,