

MIT Washington Office

The president established the MIT Washington Office within his office during the spring and summer of 1991. The office opened on August 12, 1991. The vice president for federal relations heads the office and reports to the president. In addition to the vice president, the staff includes Jason Van Wey, senior legislative assistant, and Helen Haislmaier, staff associate.

Mission

The mission of the Washington Office is to support the advocacy activities of the president in Washington and to represent the Institute in Washington as one of the nation's premier research universities. The office contributes to a steady flow of information between MIT and the federal government. Staff members gather and disseminate information to the MIT campus concerning government activities and actions. The staff also makes the university's resources available to federal officials, facilitating the sharing of them with Congress, the executive branch and other national organizations. The office maintains liaison with the offices of the Massachusetts congressional delegation and other congressional offices.

Advocacy Coalitions and Working Groups

The vice president and senior legislative assistant are engaged in the activities of the major organizations and coalitions that work in support of the federal investment in university research and education, including the following:

- x The Science Coalition*
- x The Council on Competitiveness (COC)
- x The Association of American Universities (AAU)
- x The AAU Council on Federal Relations (CFR)
- x The National Association of State Universities and Land, Grant Colleges (NASULGC)
- x The NASULGC Council on Government Affairs (CGA)
- x The Council on Government Relations (COGR)
- x The Coalition for National Science Funding (CNSF)*
- x The Coalition for National Security Research (CNSR)*
- x The Energy Sciences Coalition (ESC)*
- x Coalition for Plasma Science (CSP)*
- x Fusion Energy Sciences Day*

- ☒ The Science, Engineering and Technology Working Group (SET)¹
- x The AAU Space Sciences Working Group (SSWG)¹
- x Space Grant Day*¹

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The office annually engages MIT faculty and students as advocates with members of Congress and their staffs. Nine faculty, four administrators, and two students participated in advocacy events sponsored by the groups marked above with an asterisk.¹

Legislative Initiatives

The office continues to collaborate with colleagues at MIT and in national organizations to respond to a continuing series of policy proposals designed to strengthen homeland security. These activities continue to span issues related to the flow of foreign students and scholars into the United States as well as matters related to the conduct and management of federally sponsored research. Significant contributions to the work of national organizations and the work of the office continue to be made by the vice president for research, the senior counsel, the director of the office of sponsored research and the international scholars and students offices. Working collaboratively as a team, MIT officials continue to pursue acceptable policy and legislative outcomes.¹

MIT Lincoln Laboratory, Center for Fusion and Plasma Science, Bates Laboratory

The Lincoln Laboratory, the Center for Fusion and Plasma Science, and the Bates Laboratory are among MIT's largest research entities. In terms of federal research support, they are among the most vulnerable to abrupt shifts in funding priorities. The vice president continued to accompany the associate provost and Lincoln Laboratory senior staff on visits to key congressional offices. The objectives were to brief key staff on current activities and accomplishments of the Laboratory, and, at the end of the congressional cycle, to express appreciation for the continued support of key members and staff.¹

MIT Congressional Staff Seminar on Science and Technology

In 1993, with the financial support of the Sloan Foundation, MIT began an annual seminar for senior congressional staff on science and technology issues. Annually, the president invites more than 200 staff leaders of key committees and related policy groups to attend an intensive two-day seminar with senior MIT faculty and presenters from industry and other universities. The first attendees in 1993 established the format; topics are suggested by participants. Professors Eugene Skolnikoff, Claude R. Canizares, and Stephen Ansolabehere are codirectors of the program. On April 14–16, 2004, twenty senior staff attended the seventh seminar, entitled "Social and Policy Implications of Advancing Health Science and Technology." Professors Jonathan Gruber and Robert A. Weinberg, of the departments of Economics and Biology, respectively, led the planning committee. The Washington Office again identified invitees, made travel arrangements,¹

and served as program staff throughout the seminar. Senior career staff of the Executive Office of the President also attended the seminar.

Executive Branch

The vice president continued to accompany the associate provost on visits to senior officials of executive branch agencies.

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John C. Crowley

Vice President for Federal Relations

More information about the Washington Office can be found online at <http://web.mit.edu/dcl/>.