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Washington, DC - Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-05) introduced the Scientific Communications Act of 2007 (H.R. 1453) to provide communications skills training for graduate students in the sciences. This legislation, co-sponsored by Congressman Bart Gordon (TN-06), Chairman of the Committee on Science and Technology, provides resources at the National Science Foundation (NSF) to improve the ability of scientists to convey the relevance and importance of scientific research and technical topics to policy makers.

"I am proud to introduce this legislation with Mr. Gordon to increase the voice of scientists in public policy. Science and technology play an increasingly large role in policy debates, as demonstrated by recent national discussions on such topics as stem cell research, alternative energy sources, and nanotechnology. Scientists are a critical voice in these debates. Communications training provided through this legislation will better equip our scientists to articulate their expertise to help inform the American people and the decision making process."

The legislation provides communications skills development opportunities by authorizing designated funds at the NSF. Applications for these funds will be competitively reviewed and awarded for the implementation of communications training for graduate students with the objective of promoting interaction of scientists with policy makers.

"By encouraging more institutions to help their graduate students become more effective communicators of technical information, we will enhance the ability of scientists to interact with policy makers, business leaders, the media, and the general public," Matsui said. "This legislation will diversify the education of our scientists, improve the public understanding of science, and ensure sound public policy based on scientific expertise."

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