

**Remarks at the Press Conference Announcing the  
USA Science and Engineering Festival  
September 29, 2010  
Koshland Science Museum**

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Good morning. I am pleased to be here in what I've discovered is the "city of science," and be the only non-scientist, non engineer in the group. I sort of feel a little bit defensive; I am a lawyer. And I hear Chuck Vest, the distinguished former president of MIT saying that of course the future of this country depends upon scientists and engineers. And I agree with that. So, I can only say I'm a public interest lawyer -- it's in the public interest that I'm no longer a lawyer. And I say that because what is essential for the future of this country in terms of preparing the next generation of scientists and engineers is a pipeline. And let me just give you a few facts that stand out. We all know that we have an enormous influx of international students coming to our colleges and universities in this country -- from China, from India and from Korea and maybe other countries. But those are the three principal feeders. The vast majority of them are majoring in science and engineering. That is fact number one.

Fact number two. When I stand and shake their hands at commencement, I would say 70% of the PhD's in engineering are going to international students.

Fact number three. This country is undergoing an extraordinary demographic change. We were once a microcosm of Europe. We are increasingly becoming a microcosm of the world. It is a country that is aging, revitalized only because of immigration; and it is a country that's diversified. So, the future of our country cannot depend solely upon those who come from abroad. Indeed, I think we do need them, we shall welcome them, they are source of revitalization, of new energy and new talent. And indeed I embrace Bill Gates's proposal that every student who graduates in science and engineering, who gets a diploma, should at the same time get a green card.

But at the same time we have to address the fact that, as has just been mentioned, very, very few women are in engineering. I can count with the fingers on my hand the number of women who are chairs of departments of engineering in this country. Why do we have so few women engineers? Why do we have so few native born Americans who go into science? The place to start is at the earliest stage. And that is why I think your vision, Larry, your energy in trying to excite the next generation, to inspire them to go into science and engineering is important; it is very important for the future of this country and competitiveness.

And let me just say one other thing. We will have 20 exhibits at the Festival, but what I think is symbolically important is that the opening event is at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center. It will be a choral production with children singing "The Powers of Ten." What is so symbolic about it? Yes, we have to address the grand challenges of the day, of food, energy, sustainable environment, clean water, health. But these are not only technical issues. To make an impact,

we have to address issues of culture, of values, of ethics, of attitudes. What I'm saying is that to really develop a culture of innovation in science and engineering we have to nurture the spirit and the arts and humanities ... because that is what broadens up the sense of excitement and curiosity and imagination.

Thank you and thanks for the opportunity to participate in this fantastic festival.