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**Association for Women Geoscientists JOINS COMMISSION'S CALL FOR
NATIONAL IMPERATIVE AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP TO PROMOTE
DIVERSITY IN THE SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE**

***Report Highlights Investment Required To Build A Domestic
High-Tech Workforce For A Strong Economy***

CITY, STATE – The Association for Women Geoscientists joined representatives of the Commission for the Advancement of Women and Minorities in Science, Engineering, and Technology Development (CAWMSET) as they released recommendations today calling for a national imperative to recruit, train and retain individuals for our domestic workforce among populations vastly underrepresented. Specifically, women, minorities and persons with disabilities represent a potential pool of science, engineering and technology (SET) workforce not being tapped. Commission members issued a call to action to business, government and academe to meet the growing need for workers skilled in science, engineering and technology. The Association for Women Geoscientists is partnering in this effort, joining legislators, educators and businesses from throughout the U.S. in addressing this vital issue.

“AWG’s members nationwide have long been aware of the problems addressed by the CAWMSET, and are committed to advancing their recommendations for greatly increasing the inclusion and representation of America’s women and minorities in SET training and careers,” said Dr. Marguerite Toscano, AWG’s President.

Congresswoman Connie Morella, who authored the legislation establishing the Commission commented: “We must ensure that we are utilizing the talent of our entire population – not just a narrow slice of it. As Americans, we have begun to recognize the problem, but until we give it priority on our national agenda, and until our scientific and technological workplace reflects our diversity, we are not working to our full potential as a nation.”

The Commission’s Report was presented on Capitol Hill at a press conference preceding a Hearing of the House Committee on Science. At the press conference, in addition to a nationwide call to action, the Commission outlined specific recommendations on how to better promote diversity within SET jobs. Recommendations include:

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- Creating a strong early education foundation through the promotion of ongoing education reform efforts, including adoption of statewide standards in math and science, increases in the number of qualified math and science teachers, and legislation to require school districts to disaggregate achievement data by race/ethnicity, sex, socioeconomic status, and disability status.
- Promoting greater access to higher education among diverse groups through targeted intervention efforts and increased financial support for students at the high school transition points into postsecondary education and at the community college transition into four year colleges.
- Promoting greater parity in job retention, pay and promotion by developing and disseminating a national model of a diverse workplace environment that successfully recruits, retains and advances the careers of women, minorities and persons with disabilities.
- Changing the often negative public image of scientists, engineers, and high-tech workers through the establishment of public/private partnerships that coordinate media and image campaigns promoting positive and diverse images of SET workers.

Finally, the Commission called for the establishment of a public-private partnership to implement and benchmark the recommendations established by the Commission with the development of appropriate programs and action items through government, industry and academe partners to monitor and further progress towards the Commission's goal of domestic workforce parity.

The Association for Women Geoscientists endorsed the Commission's recommendations and highlighted internal programs that address this issue. AWG maintains a long-standing and comprehensive approach to science outreach for girls, and provides scholarships and awards for college and graduate students. AWG's presence at major scientific meetings includes leadership training and topical lectures for women, job-hunting workshops, and networking events. AWG gives an annual award for excellence in college teaching, and provides white papers and position statements on career and scientific issues.

In addition to Congresswoman Morella and CAWMSET Chair Elaine Mendoza, participants in the press conference included: Dr. Rita Colwell, Director of the National Science Foundation; Dr. Neal Lane, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology Policy, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy; Dr. George Campbell Jr., formerly President and CEO of NACME, Inc., America's largest privately funded source of minority engineering scholarships; and the new President of the Cooper Union; and Dr. Kathryn O. Johnson, Owner & Project Manager of MATRIX Consulting Group, a South Dakota firm that consults on issues related to environmental science.

The Commission on the Advancement of Women and Minorities in Science, Engineering, and Technology Development (CAWMSET) was established by Congress on October 14, 1998 to research and recommend ways to improve the recruitment, retention, and representation of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities in science, engineering and technology education and employment. Congresswoman Constance Morella, Chairwoman of the House Subcommittee on Technology, authored the legislation establishing the Commission, which has coordinated its study and development of the Report through the National Science Foundation. The Commission is also supported by an Interagency Steering Committee comprised of senior officials at the federal agencies whose missions encompass human resources in science, engineering, and technology.

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