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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Science and Technology Advisory Council Announces Legislative Agenda

Plan Builds on \$6.75 Million Federal Award

(April 10, 2006, Providence, RI) — Governor Donald L. Carcieri, Senator Jack Reed, members of the Rhode Island General Assembly, and members of the Rhode Island Science and Technology Advisory Council (STAC) today announced plans to support STAC's 2006 recommendations. Governor Carcieri created STAC by Executive Order in April 2005 to advise the state on innovation policies that would help promote economic growth.

STAC's legislative response includes budget allocations totaling \$2.1 million dollars and new legislation intended to strengthen Rhode Island's research capacity and support investment in early stage technology companies. Chief among these allocations is \$1.5 million in research funding to match a \$6.75 million National Science Foundation (NSF) grant recently awarded to Rhode Island through NSF's Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research initiative (EPSCoR).

"Since signing the Executive Order forming this Council in April 2005, members of Rhode Island's Science and Technology Advisory Council have brought a tremendous sense of commitment to their task of focusing the state's capacity for innovation, and advising me and the leadership of the General Assembly on recommendations that will serve our state for years to come," stated Rhode Island Governor Donald L. Carcieri. "There is no doubt that the STAC has been a unifying force within the science and technology community, and has showcased the importance and power of the state's science and technology community to collaborate with one another."

"That is why I am proud to announce that I have submitted an appropriation of an additional \$1.5 million in this year's budget as a state match to the \$6.75 million grant from the National Science Foundation Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) recently awarded to Rhode Island," Governor Carcieri continued. "I believe that this critical funding represents an investment in future statewide collaboration within our science and technology communities."

Earlier this year, STAC presented state leadership with five recommendations for actions Rhode Island can take to strengthen its research institutions, promote entrepreneurial development, and enable all organizations to become more innovative. "Our intention was to support an ambitious innovation agenda that was immediately actionable, yet responsive to the state's fiscal realities," says STAC Co-chair and Vice President for Research at Brown University

Andries van Dam. "With assistance from Governor Carcieri, Representative Fox, Senator Walaska and their colleagues in the General Assembly, we've made a strong start."

The \$1.5 million research funding allocation will be used to magnify the positive impact of the \$6.75 million NSF EPSCoR award. The NSF award—a first for the state—is the result of an effort led by the University of Rhode Island and Brown University to foster and support the synergistic integration of research, education, innovation, and communications to build a strong statewide network of Rhode Island research institutions. In particular, the EPSCoR funding will be used to support life and marine sciences research. (See appendix for more information on the EPSCoR award).

"I am proud to have helped secure this \$6.75 million EPSCoR grant for Rhode Island's institutions of higher education and the state's scientific community by passing federal legislation to make the state eligible for EPSCoR. This funding will serve to strengthen the state's innovation capacity and provide the latest equipment, training and staff to propel Rhode Island forward," says Senator Jack Reed, who was instrumental in securing support for Rhode Island's EPSCoR application. "This grant will help us to maintain a competitive edge in today's global marketplace and provide the basis for economic development in the future."

The NSF funding and the pending state match will be used to purchase new equipment, hire research personnel at various Rhode Island academic institutions, and train academic staff and students.

In addition to recommending the EPSCoR match, STAC's 2006 recommendations also called for an effort to strengthen the research capacity of the University of Rhode Island, the introduction of an incentive to attract and retain serial entrepreneurs, support for the Rhode Island Wireless Innovation Networks (RI-WINs) project, and continued support of STAC council.

In response, Governor Carcieri has requested \$500,000 in state funding to support the RI-WINs project, an effort to make Rhode Island the first state in the country with border-to-border broadband wireless. The Governor also requested \$100,000 in funding to support STAC's operating expenses in FY 2007.

Similarly, the Rhode Island General Assembly, under the leadership of House Majority Leader Gordon Fox and Senator William Walaska, has introduced three pieces of new legislation in support of the STAC recommendations:

Senate Bill No. 2988, seeks to establish a commission that will recommend specific actions to strengthen the University of Rhode Island as a nationally competitive public research university and a key institution in Rhode Island's effort to strengthen its innovative economy.

Senate Bill No. 2995, named Tax Incentives for Innovation and Growth, offers tax relief to Rhode Island entrepreneurs who create and grow businesses in Rhode Island.

Senate Bill No. 2997 seeks to formalize the STAC council as an entity through enabling legislation that will empower STAC to continue its efforts into the future.

"We are grateful for the support Rhode Island's leadership has shown for STAC's initial recommendations and encouraged by how quickly we were able to move from idea to action," says STAC co-chair Jeffrey Seemann, Dean of the College of the Environment and Life Sciences at the University of Rhode Island. "This process reaffirms that through continued collaboration we can accelerate the state's evolution toward an innovation economy better able to meet the present and future needs of Rhode Island's citizens."

For more information about the Rhode Island Science and Technology Advisory Council, contact Melissa Withers at 401-222-2601 x134 or mwithers@riedc.com or visit www.stac.ri.gov

STAC Members:

Co-Chair, Jeffrey Seemann, Dean of the College of the Environment and Life Sciences, University of Rhode Island

Co-Chair, Andries van Dam, V.P. for Research, Professor of Computer Science, Brown University

Joseph Amaral, President, Rhode Island Hospital

David Bengston, V.P. and General Manager, Rhode Island Operations, Amgen

Paul Choquette Jr., Chairman/CEO, Gilbane Construction Company

David Hibbitt, Former Chairman, ABAQUS, Inc.

Saul Kaplan, Deputy Director, Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation

Margaret Leinen, Assistant Director for Geosciences, National Science Foundation

Richard Nadolink, former Chief of Technology, Naval Undersea Warfare Center

Thomas Rockett, Governor for Higher Education and Vice Provost, Emeritus, University of Rhode Island

Thomas Ryan, Chairman, President, and CEO, CVS, Inc.

Cheryl W. Snead, President and CEO, Banneker Industries

Donald Stanford, President, Stanford Scientific

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Appendix: EPSCoR Fact Sheet

- The Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) is a program designed to fulfill the National Science Foundation's (NSF) mandate to promote scientific progress nationwide.
- The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent federal agency that supports fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering, with an annual budget of \$5.58 billion. NSF funds reach all 50 states through grants to nearly 1,700 universities and institutions. Each year, NSF receives about 40,000 competitive requests for funding, and makes nearly 10,000 new funding awards. The NSF also awards over \$400 million in professional and service contracts yearly.
- The EPSCoR program is directed at those jurisdictions that have historically received lesser amounts of NSF Research and Development (R&D) funding. Twenty-five states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the U. S. Virgin Islands currently participate. Through this program, NSF establishes partnerships with government, higher education and industry that are designed to effect lasting improvements in a region/jurisdiction's research infrastructure, research & development capacity and hence, its national research & development competitiveness.
- In late March 2006, the NSF (responding to the Rhode Island EPSCoR research infrastructure improvement proposal entitled, *Rhode Island EPSCoR: Catalyzing a Research, Education and Innovation Network*) announced that Rhode Island would be the recipient of a \$6.75 million grant which has been approved on the basis of scientific/technical merit.
 - The EPSCoR grant will be received in increments of \$2.25 million for each fiscal year through 2008;
 - During the initial 24 months of the award, the Rhode Island EPSCoR team must report semiannually on the progress of research infrastructure activities in the state; and
 - The grant funds will be administered by the University of Rhode Island.
- The Rhode Island EPSCoR partnership, led by the University of Rhode Island and Brown University, has had two desired goals at the core of their work—
 - Attain national prominence and competitive research excellence in the life sciences; and
 - Foster and support the synergistic integration of research, education, innovation, and communications to build a strong statewide network of RI EPSCoR partners.
- The Rhode Island EPSCoR partnership will use the first round of NSF funding to establish three shared core facilities for genomics, proteomics and marine life sciences research and development, including the purchase of state-of-the-art high technology equipment; hire key personnel and graduate students at various Rhode Island academic institutions; train key academic staff through the EPSCoR Academy program as well supporting the ongoing management of the overall Rhode Island EPSCoR program.

Rhode Island State EPSCoR Committee

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Chairman and CEO, CVS Pharmacy, Inc.

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Vice President for Research, Brown University

Dr. Jeffrey Seemann (Co-Chair and Project Director)
Dean, College of the Environment and Life Sciences, University of Rhode Island

Representative Fausto C. Anguilla
State of Rhode Island House of Representatives

Saul Kaplan
Deputy Director, Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation

Nancy Langrall
Policy Director for United States Senator Jack Reed

Dr. Richard H. Nadolink
Chief Technology Officer, Naval Undersea Warfare Center

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Dean, School of Engineering, Roger Williams University

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Member of the Board of Governors of Higher Education and Vice Provost Emeritus,
University of Rhode Island

Senator William A. Walaska
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