

## AISLE Conference Aids Massachusetts

### Lawmakers

In a report just released, Massachusetts State Legislature leaders stated that the AISLE (An Intersociety Liaison Committee) conference on "Lawmaking, Technology, and Quality Growth" held in Boston last June has resulted in establishing "a powerful base of mutual understanding and concern regarding the solution of urgent public problems."

The conference was the second of what may become a national series of experimental interactions between legislative and technical professional communities. The conference also strengthened components of the developing science resource system of the Massachusetts Legislature. AISLE consists of representatives of more than 30 professional societies spanning engineering, science, and several other areas. AAAS has been one of the most active societies and has served as an administrative base for the AISLE conferences.

The Massachusetts conference involved more than 135 persons, including 38 elected members of the Legislature and representatives from 35 professional societies, according to the report's authors R. H. Bolt, M. S. Doeble, D. P. Richtmann, and C. H. Stevens. These four scientists in collaboration with 20 other professional society representatives, state legislators, and legislative staff planned and managed the conference. Legislative leaders included Representative Thomas H.

D. Mahoney and Senator Robert E. McCarthy, cochairmen of the Science Resource Committee of the State Legislature.

During the 3-day meeting, speakers addressed such topics as "The Legislator's Need for Science and Technology;" "Massachusetts in the National Economy;" and "Federal, State, and Local Relationships in Science and Technology." Workshops for the participants were held on economic opportunities and incentives; energy alternatives; environmental responsibilities; manpower development; and societal problems and legislative issues, among other subjects.

According to Mahoney and McCarthy, besides benefiting the resource system already in the Massachusetts Legislature, the conference led to the preparation of a 2-day session on economic forecasting for the Northeast; the development of a dialogue on federal R & D support opportunities for the region; and the convening of a series of dialogues for the Legislature's new Joint Standing Committee on Energy, "the creation of which," say the legislators, "was influenced significantly by results of the June conference." They also cite advances sparked by the meeting in an inventory of data bases on the local economy.

Mahoney and McCarthy estimate that the meeting already has benefited some 40 or 50 pieces of legislation. "Whatever this first half-year after the conference

may have shown in the way of legislative value," they conclude, "we believe that the future will bring continuing benefit from this conference and the communication process it has put into motion."

The Intergovernmental Science Division of NSF/RANN and the Massachusetts Legislature supported the conference.

The full report of the AISLE conference is available from the Science Resource Network, Massachusetts Legislature, Room 34, State House, Boston, Massachusetts 02133.

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## Conference on American Indian Science and Health Education

*The Conference on Health and Science Education in American Indian Post-Secondary Institutions was convened by the AAAS Project on Native Americans in Science, with support from the Division of Research Resources, National Institutes of Health (NIH), 17-19 February in Denver. Following is a report of and commentary on the conference proceedings by Rayna Green, director of the Project, and Janet Welsh Brown, head of the AAAS Office of Opportunities in Science (OOS).*

Thirty-nine American Indian post-secondary institutions exist in the United States, varying in age, facilities, support, and function, but sharing a common goal of providing education to meet needs as Indians themselves have defined them. The predominantly Indian colleges have begun to develop educational programs to meet tribal needs—for Indians based both on and off reservations—in fields such as natural resources, energy, health care delivery, and technological/engineering sciences. Recognition of the potential of these institutions for improving the general health and science literacy of Indian people, for broadening health and science-related career options for Indian students, and for supplying Indian human resources in technical fields, led the AAAS Office of Opportunities in Science

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H. BENTLEY GLASS, *Chairman*  
 AAAS Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility

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