Dr. Clough:

- I, too, would like to extend my thanks to Senator Ensign and Senator Lieberman.

- Their leadership on the Hill on the topics of innovation and competitiveness are unparalleled – we are very fortunate to have them as champions for the critical role that innovation plays in driving the prosperity of our nation.

- I have had the privilege of testifying before subcommittees of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation just last month, and the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources two years ago. And I found all Senators I talked to eager to find answers to the economic development challenges we face.

- As Duane has noted, innovation takes place within an ecosystem – one in which world-class talent, long-term investment and critical infrastructures are the fundamental building blocks.

- The omnibus legislation the two Senators plan to introduce recognizes this complex interplay of the forces driving innovation in the 21st century.

- Their efforts to recognize this complex innovation ecosystem in legislation is a public sector innovation in and of itself – and is exactly the approach policymakers across the country should emulate.

- Universities, like my own, are critical stakeholders in this innovation ecosystem. I want to recognize my fellow research university presidents who are here as part of this delegation, demonstrating how seriously we take our role in the innovation economy.

- But I hope that the presence today on Capitol Hill of the Council on Competitiveness Executive Committee and National Innovation Leadership Council also demonstrates that leaders from across all sectors of our society – universities, business and labor – need to work with each other and with the public sector to make the changes we envision happen.

- As our chairman Duane Ackerman has noted, the members of the Council on Competitiveness are poised to act and support the work of our Senators in their ongoing efforts.