Committee on Science

Report to the Council

Washington, DC

Wednesday, August 23, 2017

Madam President and Members of Council:

The Committee on Science, ComSci, continues to focus on identifying new frontiers for chemistry, including emerging challenges and opportunities; on public policies related to the chemical sciences; and on nominating outstanding chemical scientists for prominent awards. The committee concentrated much of its attention at this meeting on public policy statements, approving policy statements on visas for academic study and conference attendance; scientific integrity in public policy; a competitive business climate; and sustainability and the chemistry enterprise. ComSci will review existing policy statements on energy and hydraulic fracturing in 2018, and will begin work on a new policy statement in collaboration with Corporation Associates and the Public Affairs and Public Relations working group on the weaponization of chemicals.

On Monday, ComSci organized a symposium on “Sustaining Water Resources: Environmental & Economic Impact” and sponsored the Transformative Research and Excellence in Education (TREE) Award Symposium. Topics under consideration for activities at future ACS National Meetings include threat mitigation through chemistry, emerging areas in pharmaceutical sciences, and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency “Make It” program, which is automating small molecule discovery and synthesis. The Committee welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with other committees and technical divisions on these activities.

In order to increase the Committee’s awareness and understanding of emerging issues, a speaker from the Department of Energy’s Office of Science presented an overview of the agency’s Basic Research Needs workshop series. The Committee received highlights from DOE’s recent workshop on “Basic Research Needs for Catalysis Science to Transform Energy Technologies.”

The Committee will work with Corporation Associates to identify nominees for the 2018 National Medal of Technology and Innovation, and it will identify potential nominees for the 2018 National Medal of Science.

ComSci received information and provided feedback on the impact of immigration on the chemistry enterprise, a proposed bylaw change from the Membership Affairs Committee, and an opportunity to participate in the Patent Examiner Technical Training Program. ComSci is planning to hold a strategic planning retreat in 2018.

Madam President, this concludes my report.

Mark Cesa, Chair